

*The Guru
and what
Prabhupada Said*

*“One who is now the disciple is the next spiritual master.”
(SB 2.9.43, Ppt)*

ALL GLORY TO SRI GURU AND GAURANGA



The Guru
and what
Prabhupada Said

A Compilation and Analysis of Relevant Quotes about
the Spiritual Master, from the Teachings of His Divine Grace

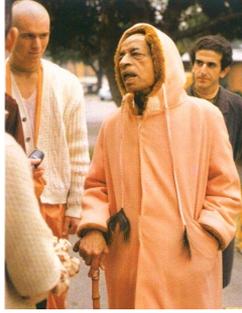
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada,

by

Virabahu Dasa

Second Edition

Back Cover Picture: *In the background, the author on a morning walk with Srila Prabhupada at Cheviot Hills Park (Los Angeles, December 26, 1973, the day after his initiation.)*



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*vancha-kalpa-tarubhyas ca
krpa-sindhubhya eva ca
patitanam pavanebhyo
vaisnavebhyo namo namah*

*To my departed dear Godbrothers Tamal Kṛṣṇa Goswami,
Srinath Prabhu, Kusakratha Prabhu, Radhanatha Prabhu and Aindra
Prabhu, and to all of my Godbrothers and Godsisters, I offer this book
with my humble obeisances. By their mercy I am trying to be a servant
of what Prabhupada Said. May they be pleased by this attempt to do so
and tell of it to His Divine Grace.*

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Is The Servant That Prabhupada Spoke Of*

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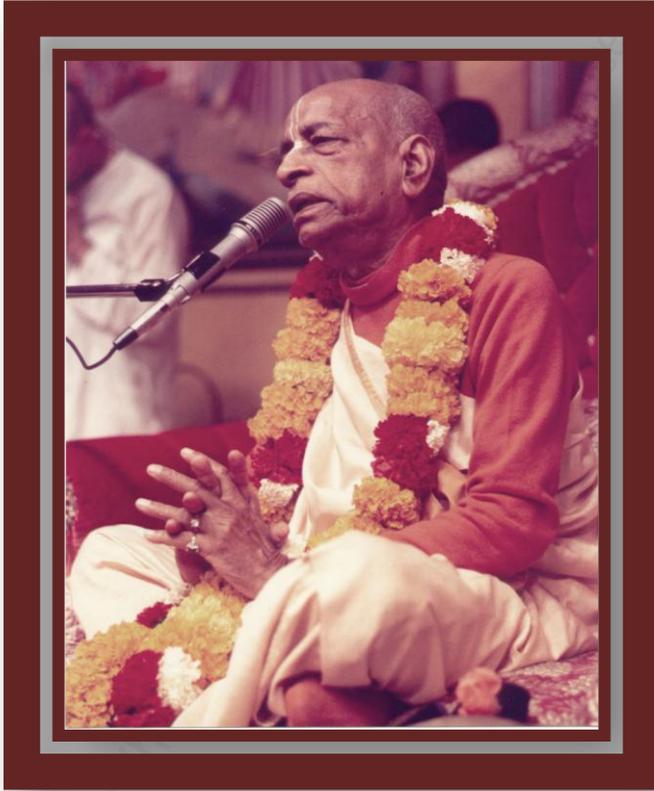
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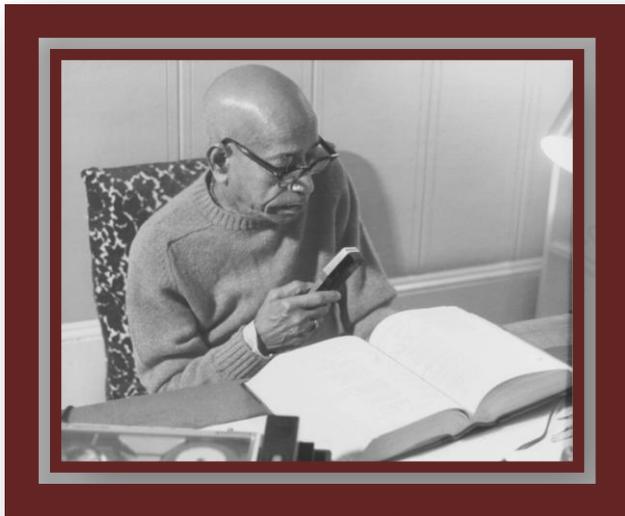
The Guru and What Parbhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said



Our Beloved Spiritual Master, His Divine Grace
A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPADA
The Founder-Acarya of the International Society for Krishna
Consciousness and Greatest Exponent of the Krsna-conscious
Philosophy in the Modern World

The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)



A Personal Note to the Reader (from the First Edition)

SRILA PRABHUPADA'S WORDS about the spiritual master are to be found throughout all of his teachings and therefore constitute a vast ocean of quotes. This book is obviously not a compilation of *all* that he said on the subject, but anyone familiar with what he said will agree that it is a very representative sample of it. Still, it should be noted that the only portion of Srila Prabhupada's teachings that we have actually researched thoroughly has been that of his letters. All the other quotes from his books, lectures, and conversations, are mostly those that this servant of his has remembered from personal contact with them as one of his disciples.

Of course, at the time I decided to work on this project¹ I was very fortunate in that most of Srila Prabhupada's spoken and written

¹ It was the summer of 1986.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

legacy (other than his published books) had been gathered by The Bhaktivedanta Archives in Los Angeles, and had already been transcribed and made available in the form of microfiches. That is how I was able to find the quotes I was looking for and many more. Otherwise, this book wouldn't have seen the light.

So I am very grateful that such a laborious enterprise as an Archives of Srila Prabhupada's legacy has been undertaken by some dedicated assistants of His Divine Grace, and I hope that this humble effort will serve as a good example of the importance of their work. As a token of our heartfelt appreciation we would like to encourage the reader to offer all possible support to the preservation of Srila Prabhupada's words for all time to come. The job is still to be completed, and you can be of great help. For more information please write or call:

THE BHAKTIVEDANTA ARCHIVES

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Sandy Ridge, NC 27046, USA

Tel: (336) 871-3636; fax: (336) 871-3641

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The reader will note that all the quotes have been carefully referenced, so that at his convenience he may be able to go to the original and examine the context if so desired. The books quoted are those published by The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust in Los Angeles, and the letters, lectures, and conversations are available from The Bhaktivedanta Archives & Tape Ministry at the above address.

It should also be noted that all emphasis in capital letters has been added by the compiler TO SPECIALLY MARK A POINT UNDER DISCUSSION. For the sake of expediency and because of the immediate lack of the adequate resources, we have not included the diacritic marks for the words in Sanskrit. For the same reasons we were not able to keep a uniform standard in referencing the quotes.

A Personal Note to the Reader

Nevertheless, there is no chance for confusion, as the quotes are –on their own– very clearly referenced.

Lastly, I must “warn” the reader (if as of yet you haven’t noticed) that English is not my native tongue. At this point all I can do is hope that you won’t mind, and with folded hands present to you our first quote, of which I take full shelter:

“We know that our honest attempt to present this great literature conveying transcendental messages for reviving the God consciousness of the people in general and respiritualizing the world atmosphere is fraught with many difficulties. OUR PRESENTING THIS MATTER IN ADEQUATE LANGUAGE, ESPECIALLY A FOREIGN LANGUAGE, WILL CERTAINLY FAIL, AND THERE WILL BE SO MANY LITERARY DISCREPANCIES DESPITE OUR HONEST ATTEMPT TO PRESENT IT IN THE PROPER WAY. BUT WE ARE SURE THAT WITH ALL OUR FAULTS IN THIS CONNECTION THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE SUBJECT MATTER WILL BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION, and the leaders of society will still accept this due to its being an honest attempt to glorify the Almighty God.

“When there is fire in a house, the inmates of the house go out to get help from the neighbors who may be foreigners, and yet without knowing the language the victims of the fire express themselves, and the neighbors understand the need, even though not expressed in the same language. The same spirit of cooperation is needed to broadcast this transcendental message of the Srimad-Bhagavatam throughout the polluted atmosphere of the world. After all, it is a technical science of spiritual values, and thus we are concerned with the techniques and not with the language. If the techniques of this great literature are understood by the people of the world, there will be success.”

–Sri Prabhupada in SB 1.5.11

List of Abbreviations

A.: Answer

BG or Bg.: *Bhagavad-gita* As It Is

BTG: Back to Godhead Magazine

Cc or C.c.: Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta

CONV.: Conversation

EJTOP: Easy Journey to Other Planets

GBC: ISKCON's Governing Body Commission(er)

KB: "Kṛṣṇa Book" (Kṛṣṇa, The Supreme
Personality of Godhead)

K.C.: Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

LIT.: Literally

NOD: The Nectar of Devotion

NOI: The Nectar of Instruction

POP: The Path of Perfection

PQPA: Perfect Questions, Perfect Answers

Q.: Question

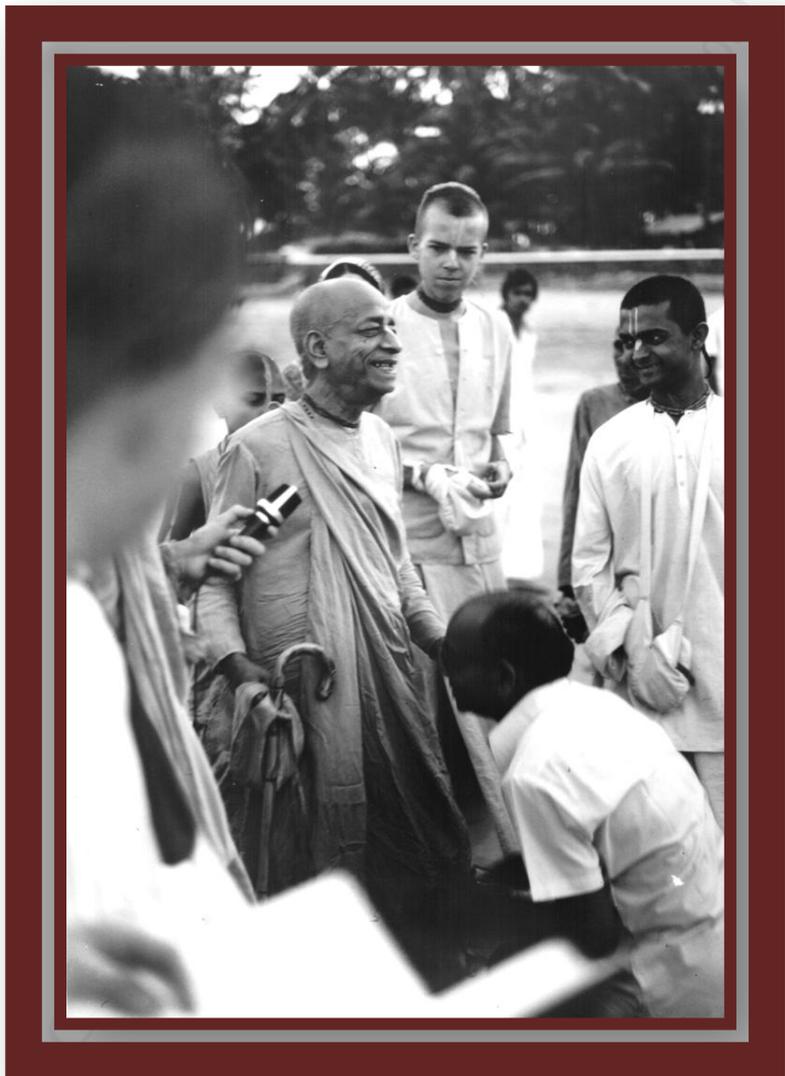
SB or S.B.: *Srimad-Bhagavatam*

SSR: The Science of Self-realization

TLC: Teachings of Lord Caitanya

The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said



Acknowledgments

“One should not write books or essays on transcendental subject matter for material name, fame or profit. Transcendental literature must be written under the direction of a superior authority because it is not meant for material purposes. If one tries to write under superior authority, he becomes purified. All Krsna conscious activities should be undertaken for personal purification (apana sodhite), not for material gain.”

– Srila Prabhupada in Cc Adi 11.7

I WANT TO THANK all of my Godbrothers who have befriended me in these difficult years, in which we have had to learn how to be with Srila Prabhupada through what he said. They have requested me to put this book together, and in their words of encouragement I have found “the direction of a superior authority” that is required to present a work such as this one. May they be pleased by it, for in their pleasure I will also find the satisfaction of that superior authority.

Amongst my Godbrothers, special thanks to my good friend Ekanatha Prabhu, as well as to Radha Krsna Swami, Rama Govinda Swami, Makhanlal Prabhu, Rohini-Priya Prabhu, Rajendranatha Prabhu, Ranjit Prabhu and Radhanatha Prabhu, for their support in different ways.

Special thanks also to my mother, Mrs. Ana M. Zafarani, whose great appreciation for our movement and, very specially, for Srila Prabhupada’s books, has been an inspiration in all of my Krsna conscious activities.

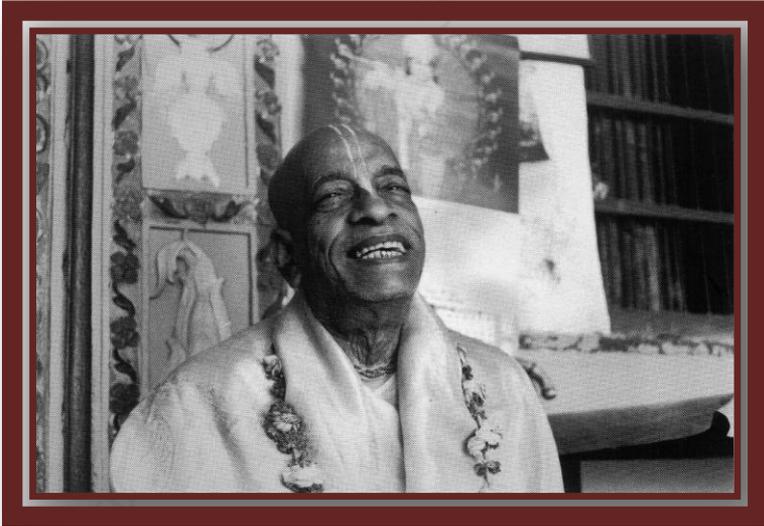
My thanks are also due to all who have helped finance and produce this publication. Most notably: Karuna Avatar Dasa and Dvaraka-lila-devi Dasi, Rupa Raghunatha Dasa, Prabhupada-seva Dasa, Prabhupadacarya Dasa, Gaura-priya-devi Dasi, Jagai Nitai Dasa and his mother (Mrs. Julia Stock), the Lopez-Sanchez family (Mrs. Maria, Cesar and Norma), and German Contreras.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

The First Edition of this book was produced by Vaikuntha-guna Prabhu, Rohini-Priya Prabhu, Caitanya-Nrsimha Dasa, Kesava-Puri Dasa, Upananda Dasa and Bhaktin Samantha. I am most grateful to them.

This Second Edition was produced and financed by Paratma Nistha Tridandi Gosvami Dasa and printed at his facility. A kind soul to all, he attracts the blessings of all the Vaisnavas. Thank you, prabhu.

Finally I bow down to all of these devotees and friends, whose kindness towards me is helping me become a better servant of Srila Prabhupada. May he bless them all!



The Guru and What Parabhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)

The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)



Invocation

*nama om visnu padaya krsna presthaya bhutale
srimate bhaktivedanta svamin iti namine
namaste sarasvati deve gaura vani pracarine
nirvisesa sunyavadi pascatya desatarine*

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto my beloved spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, who is very dear to Lord Krsna, having taken shelter at His lotus feet.

“Our respectful obeisances are unto you, O spiritual master, servant of Sarasvati Gosvami. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanyadeva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.”

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said



Invocation

nana-sastra-vicaranaika-nipunau sad-dharma-samsthapakau
lokanam hita-karinau tribhuvane manyau saranyakarau
radha- krsna-padaravinda- bhajanandena mattalikai
vande rupa-sanatanau raghu-yugau sri jiva-gopalakau

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto the six Gosvamis, namely Sri Sanatana Gosvami, Sri Rupa Gosvami, Sri Raghunatha Bhatta Gosvami, Sri Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, Sri Jiva Gosvami, and Sri Gopala Bhatta Gosvami, who are very expert in scrutinizingly studying all the revealed scriptures with the aim of establishing eternal religious principles for the benefit of all human beings. Thus they are honored all over the three worlds, and they are worth taking shelter of because they are absorbed in the mood of the gopis and are engaged in the transcendental loving service of Radha and Krsna.”

esaba-prasade likhi caitanya-lila-guna
jani va na jani, kari apana-sodhana

“[Srla Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami said:] It is by the mercy of all these Vaisnavas and gurus that I attempt to write about the pastimes and qualities of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Whether I know or know not, it is for self-purification that I write this book.” (Cc Adi 9.5)

sri-krsna-caitanya
prabhu nityananda
sri-advaita gadadhara
srivasadi-gaura-bhakta-vrnda

“I offer my obeisances to Sri Krsna Caitanya, Prabhu Nityananda, Sri Advaita, Gadadhara, Srivasa and all others in the line of devotion.”

esa prapanna-varado ramayatma-saktya
yad yat karisyati grhita-gunavatarah
tasmin sva-vikramam idam srjato 'pi ceto
yugjita karma-samalam ca yatha vijahyam

“[Lord Brahma said:] The Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, is always the benefactor of the surrendered souls. His activities are always enacted through His internal potency, Rama, or the goddess of fortune. I pray only to engage in His service in the creation of the material world, and I pray that I not be materially affected by my works, for thus I may be able to give up the false prestige of being the creator.” (SB 3.9.23)

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namo bhismakendra-priya-haranaya
namah krsna-padambujaptyai ca devyai
namo dvaraka-nayakabhyam parabhyam
namo rukmini-dvarakadhisvarabhyam

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto Lord Krsna, the chivalrous hero who kidnapped the daughter of King Bhismaka. I offer my respectful obeisances to Queen Rukmini, for whom the lotus feet of Lord Krsnacandra are more dear than life. I offer my respectful obeisances to Sri Sri Rukmini-Dvarakadhisa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His eternal consort, who are the transcendental monarchs of Dvaraka-puri.”
(Sri-Sri Rukmini-Dvarakadhisa-pranamastakam 8, by Kusakratha Dasa)

HARE KRSNA HARE KRSNA KRSNA KRSNA HARE HARE
HARE RAMA HARE RAMA RAMA RAMA HARE HARE



Invocation



*I offer my respectful obeisances to Sri Sri Rukmini-Dvarakadhisa,
the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His eternal consort,
who are the transcendental monarchs of Dvaraka-puri.”*
(“Sri-Sri Rukmini-Dvarakadhisa-pranamastakam” by Kusakratha Dasa)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said



Preface

by *Srila Prabhupada*

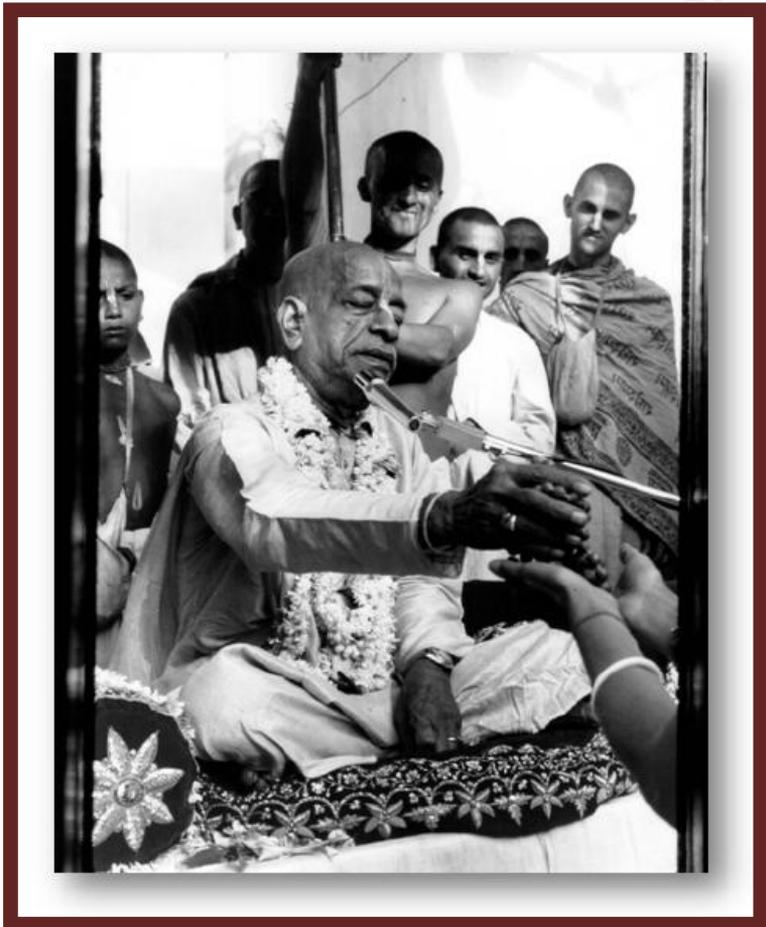
“[THE] ATTITUDE OF SURRENDERING to the Spiritual Master is the best qualification of spreading this movement of Lord Caitanya. That is the Vedic way. One should have unflinching faith in Krsna and similarly in the Spiritual Master. That is the way of understanding the secret of Krsna Consciousness. Unfortunately, attempt has been made lately in our Society to shake this formula. This mischievous attempt has done a great harm, but if you, the members of the Governing Body Commission, can rectify this mischievous attempt, then still there is hope of making our progress uninterruptedly. I hope Krsna will help us.



“There are two verses in the Canakya Sloka [of] how a family or an institution can be glorified or burned into ashes by one person. The Canakya Pandit says that if there is one tree in the forest producing nice aromatic flower, that one tree can glorify the whole forest by the flavor of its flower. Similarly if there is one tree in whose cavity there is a little fire, that one tree can burn into ashes the whole forest. So this simile is applicable anywhere. In a family if there is one good boy, he can glorify the whole family and similarly if there is bad boy he can turn the whole family into ashes. Similarly in this institution if there is a bad disciple he can burn the whole institution into ashes. The Governing Body Commission’s duty is therefore to see that every member is following the rules and regulations and chanting sixteen round regularly on the beads. I hope the GBC in cooperation with the *Sannyasis* in their touring program will be able to keep vigilance systematically in order to keep the Society as pure as possible.”

--*Srila Prabhupada in a Letter, 8/25/70*

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said



Introduction to the Second Edition

2012 -- Twenty-five Years Later and Thirty-five Years After -- And Counting --

AS I BEGIN THIS WRITING, it must be mentioned that already twenty-five years have passed since the time of the first edition,² almost thirty-five since Srila Prabhupada's departure from this world. It has been a long time on both counts, considering the extent of our lifespan. Much has happened in these many years that shows the great need for and importance of works like this one on the topic of the spiritual master within the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

In spite of the increased access to the complete teachings of Srila Prabhupada due to better audio, video and publishing technology,³ there are still doubts, and ignorance, about Srila Prabhupada's desires and instructions for the preservation and growth of the ISKCON branch of the disciplic succession. And this counter side of the subject (doubts and ignorance), too, is made available to all by modern technology: the now-ubiquitous internet.

All things considered, the present situation is not in the very least as bad as it was twenty-five years ago. At that time, when I wrote the Introduction to the first edition (included in this second edition as a historical piece), I commented,

"Evidently the situation is pathetic. ... It is very painful to see Srila Prabhupada's creation in danger of extinction or, at best, of becoming an apasampradaya (a deviated sampradaya)..."

I don't feel that way anymore. Srila Prabhupada's provision "for the preservation and growth" of his society kept in order what had not been undone, restored any order that was lost, and avoided the feared catastrophe mentioned above. At the end of the Preface, Srila Prabhupada also happens to mention his provision:

² The main body of the book was written in 1987.

³ (and the dedication of the prabhush and matajis at the Bhaktivedanta Archives)

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"I hope the GBC in cooperation with the Sannyasis in their touring program will be able to keep vigilance systematically in order to keep the Society as pure as possible."

It is to be noted that he says "as pure as possible." This reminds us of what he said about Utopia in a letter on the topic of problems and faults that we may encounter in his society. This letter is another of his masterpieces, so I include most of it:

"It is not so much that because there may be some faults in our godbrothers and godsisters, or because there may be some mismanagement or lack of cooperation, that this is due to being impersonalists, no. IT IS THE NATURE OF THE LIVING CONDITION TO ALWAYS HAVE SOME FAULT.

"EVEN IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD THERE IS SOME FAULT AND ENVY -- sometimes the Gopis will quarrel over Krishna's favor, and once Krishna was so much attracted to Radharani that by mistake he tried to milk the bull instead of the cow, and sometimes when the Gopis used to put on their dress and make-up for seeing Krishna, they would be too much hasty and smear kumkum and mascara in the wrong places and their ornaments and dresses would appear as if small children had been trying to dress themselves and they were not very expert, like that. There are so many examples. BUT IT IS NOT THE SAME AS MATERIAL FAULT OR MATERIAL ENVY, IT IS TRANSCENDENTAL BECAUSE IT IS ALL BASED ON KRISHNA.

"Sometimes when one Gopi would serve Krishna very nicely, the others would say, Oh, she has done so nicely, now let me do better for pleasing Krishna. That is envy, but it is transcendental, without malice. SO WE SHALL NOT EXPECT THAT ANYWHERE THERE IS ANY UTOPIA. RATHER, THAT IS IMPERSONALISM.

"PEOPLE SHOULD NOT EXPECT THAT EVEN IN THE KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS SOCIETY THERE WILL BE UTOPIA. BECAUSE DEVOTEES ARE PERSONS, THEREFORE THERE WILL ALWAYS BE SOME LACKING -- but the difference is that their lacking, because they have given up everything to serve Krishna -- money, jobs, reputation, wealth, big educations, everything -- their lackings have become transcendental because, despite everything

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they may do, their topmost intention is to serve Krishna. "One who is engaged in devotional service, despite the most abominable action, is to be considered saintly because he is rightly situated."

"THE DEVOTEES OF KRISHNA ARE THE MOST EXALTED PERSONS ON THIS PLANET, BETTER THAN KINGS, ALL OF THEM, SO WE SHOULD ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT AND, LIKE THE BUMBLEBEE, ALWAYS LOOK FOR THE NECTAR OR THE BEST QUALITIES OF A PERSON. Not like the utopians, who are like the flies who always go to the open sores or find the faults in a person, and because they cannot find any utopia, or because they cannot find anyone without faults, they want to become void, merge, nothing -- they think that is utopia, to become void of personality.

"So if there is sometimes slight disagreements between devotees, it is not due to impersonalism, but IT IS BECAUSE THEY ARE PERSONS, and such disagreements should not be taken very seriously. The devotee is always pessimistic about the material world, but he is very optimistic about the spiritual life; so in this way, YOU SHOULD CONSIDER THAT ANYONE ENGAGED IN KRISHNA'S SERVICE IS ALWAYS THE BEST PERSON.

-- From a letter to Atreya Rsi Dasa, Bombay, February 4, 1972

This is certainly a powerful beacon to guide us in our interpersonal dealings and in the understanding of the institution's "non-utopian" shortcomings following the departure of Srila Prabhupada.

After those thirty-five years of experience and maturation, the Society has finally attained a solid position. Nonetheless, the ease of misusing modern communications continues to facilitate spurious attempts to propagate misinformation. The motive is to create doubts among an unaware audience about that which is genuine, and establish *elsewhere* a sentimental and unauthorized concoction: imaginary initiations. It must be stated as "something to be done elsewhere," because in spite of some dissenters' intentions, there has been no opportunity to subvert the process within ISKCON --a process that was established by Srila Prabhupada himself.

It is the purpose of this book to inform the reader, beyond any doubt, of Srila Prabhupada's unequivocal instructions in regards to the continuation of the disciplic succession within his ISKCON society. The unequivocal nature of these instructions is proven by the fact that he stated them from the very

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beginning and reiterated them tirelessly throughout the twelve-year period in which he personally conducted his Society.

The book is composed in such a way as to help the reader identify this consistency of Srila Prabhupada's on the matter of succession: his final instructions are the very same ones that he had been insisting on repeatedly throughout all the previous years. Even in this, His Divine Grace was following his own Guru Maharaja.

"[H]is first opening version was that "You are educated young men. **Why don't you preach Caitanya Mahāprabhu's gospel in the Western countries?**"[...] So this was his blessing **in the first meeting.**"

(Lecture in Hyderabad, December 10, 1976)

"[I]n 1936, **just before His Divine Grace passed away at Jagannātha Puri**, I wrote him a letter asking what I could do to serve him. In reply, he wrote me a letter, dated 13 December 1936, **ordering me, in the same way, to preach in English the cult of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu** as I had heard it from him."

(Cc Antya-lila, Concluding Words)

His words "ordering me, in the same way" should be marked; please keep this statement always in mind. These are the crucial words that describe *when* and *how* Lord Caitanya's *supreme order*, Amara Ajnaya, was received by Srila Prabhupada.

yare dekha, tare kaha 'kṛṣṇa'-upadesa
amara ajnaya guru hana tara' ei desa

"Whomever you meet, instruct him on the teachings of Kṛṣṇa. In this way, **on My order**, become a spiritual master and deliver the people of this country." (Cc. Madhya 7.128)

In that very concise instruction, received from his spiritual master the first and the last time he contacted him, Srila Prabhupada heard Lord Caitanya's and his own Guru Maharaja's **order** to become guru.

"I was born in a different family, my Guru Maharaja was born in a different family. Who knew that I will come to his protection? Who

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knew that I would come in America? Who knew that you American boys will come to me? These are all Krsna's arrangement. We cannot understand how things are taking place.

"In 1936... Today is ninth December, 1938(68). That means thirty-two years ago. In Bombay, I was then doing some business. All of a sudden, perhaps on this date, sometimes between 9 or 10 December. At that time, Guru Maharaja was indisposed little, and he was staying at Jagannatha Puri, on the seashore. So I wrote him letter, "My dear master, your other disciples, brahmacari, sanniyasi, they are rendering you direct service. And I am a householder. I cannot live with you, I cannot serve you nicely. So I do not know. How can I serve you?" Simply an idea, I was thinking of serving him, "How can I serve him seriously?" So the reply was dated 13th December, 1936. In that letter he wrote, "My dear such and such, I am very glad to receive your letter. I THINK YOU SHOULD TRY TO PUSH OUR MOVEMENT IN ENGLISH." THAT WAS HIS WRITING. "AND THAT WILL DO GOOD TO YOU AND TO THE PEOPLE WHO WILL HELP YOU." THAT WAS HIS INSTRUCTION.

"And then in 1936, on the 31st December -- that means just after writing this letter a fortnight before his departure -- he passed away. But I TOOK THAT ORDER OF MY SPIRITUAL MASTER VERY SERIOUSLY, but I did not think that I'll have to do such and such thing. I was at that time a householder. But this is the arrangement of Krsna. If we strictly try to serve the spiritual master, HIS ORDER, then Krsna will give us all facilities. That is the secret. Although there was no possibility, I never thought, but I took it little seriously by studying a commentary by Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura on the Bhagavad-gita. In the Bhagavad-gita the verse vyavasayatmika-buddhir ekeha kuru-nandana [Bg. 2.41], in connection with that verse, Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura gives his commentary that WE SHOULD TAKE UP THE WORDS FROM THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AS OUR LIFE AND SOUL. We should try to carry out THE INSTRUCTION, THE SPECIFIC INSTRUCTION OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, very rigidly, without caring for our personal benefit or loss."

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"So I tried a little bit in that spirit. So he has given me all facilities to serve him. Things have come to this stage, that in this old age I have come to your country, and you are also taking this movement seriously, trying to understand it. We have got some books now. So there is little foothold of this movement." (Srla Bhaktisiddhanta Disappearance Day, Lecture -- Los Angeles, December 9, 1968)

"In 1936, just on the 13th, December, I wrote him one letter. Not 13th. I think by the beginning of December, 1936, I wrote one letter to Guru Maharaja. I knew he was little kind upon me, so I wrote that "Guru Maharaja, you have got many disciples. I am also one of them. But they are doing direct service to you. Some of them are brahmacharis, some of them sannyasis, but I am a householder. I cannot..."

"Of course, I was giving sometimes some monetary help, but I could not give any direct service, so I asked him that "If there is any particular service I can do for you?" So that letter was replied in 13th December, dated 13th December, from Puri. And he passed away on the 31st December. Just a fortnight before.

"So THE REPLY WAS THE SAME AS HE WANTED ME TO DO THIS PREACHING WORK IN 1922, WHEN I FIRST MET HIM, THAT "YOU TRY TO PREACH WHATEVER YOU HAVE LEARNED FROM ME TO THE ENGLISH-KNOWING PEOPLE IN ENGLISH. THAT WILL DO GOOD TO YOU AND TO THE PEOPLE TO WHOM YOU SHALL PREACH. THAT IS MY INSTRUCTION."

"So I took up, direction. And then he passed away in 1936, 31st December. So I consulted some of my Godbrothers, senior Godbrothers, "Guru Maharaja has told me like this. What can I do?" So you have heard the name of Professor Sanyal, and there were other Godbrothers. They asked me to write on the Vaisnava-siddhanta in English. So perhaps in 1935 I wrote one poetry. The part of it, somebody, you have got. He was very pleased. Since then he was insisting me that "You write on, preach on in English." (Srla Bhaktisiddhanta Appearance Day, Lecture -- Los Angeles, February 7, 1969)

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"[W]hen this friend, Mr. Mullik, took me to Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Maharaja, he immediately asked me that, "You are educated young boys. Why don't you take up Lord Caitanya's message and preach in the Western world?" IN THE VERY FIRST SIGHT, HE TOLD ME.

[...]"So that was in 1922. [...] And in 1936, or 1933, I was initiated officially, although I was initiated 1922. But officially, I was initiated in 1933, although from 1922 to 1933 I was always thinking of His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Maharaja. So in 1936, he was to pass away by 31st December. So I do not know... Out of my own accord, I wrote him one letter that "Guru Maharaja, you have got many disciples. Some of them are directly serving you. I could not do so. I am a householder. So if you give me some direct service to you, it will be very kind of you." So he replied that letter, that "You try to preach in English language. Then the persons who will be instructed by you and both yourself will be benefited." AGAIN, HE SAID THE SAME THING WHICH HE ORDERED ME IN 1922 AT THE FIRST SIGHT. Then there... He passed away 1936, 31st December." (Srla Bhaktisiddhanta Appearance Day, Evening -- Gorakhpur, February 15, 1971)

With the same sure consistency as his Guru Maharaja, Srila Prabhupada gave us that same instruction at the beginning and at the end, and he also did so profusely throughout the entire time in between--with the additional benefits for us, and posterity, that all along he was much more specific and that it is all recorded. Even a layman or outsider exposed to Srila Prabhupada's teachings will "hear" him loud and clear, sometimes shouting, ordering the listener to be guru. I say "the listener." Some of the times he seems to be talking just to anyone in the audience. Humorously, this serves to remind us of the following excerpt:

«The Mayavadis, the poor fund knowledge, they say, "Why you are worshipping God here? He is everywhere."

"He is everywhere? He is in the temple also!"

"No," they will say, "not in the temple. He is everywhere except in the temple. Don't go to the temple."

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This is rascaldom. If God is everywhere, why He is not in the temple? So this is their knowledge, poor fund of knowledge. Alpa-medhasa. Alpa-medhasa."»

(Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.5.19 -- Vrndavana, November 7, 1976)

Srila Prabhupada was ordering everyone to become guru --"except for his disciples," the dissenters say. Actually, not so funny. It is frightening to think of the people who are being misguided by this "logic," and of the hatred and blasphemy of Vaisnavas that it has promoted and continues to promote.

Therefore this book. As the readers go through it they will hear him give **the order** to everyone and in particular to his disciples. Please now "listen" and watch for that, beginning from the beginning:

"LORD CHAITANYA WANTED EVERYONE SHOULD BE A SPIRITUAL MASTER PROVIDED HE FOLLOWS THE ORDER OF LORD CHAITANYA. The Lord's mission was to defeat the Mayavada philosophy and establish in the philosophy of Krishna consciousness because Krishna is the Supreme Lord the Personality of Godhead. Anyone following the order of Lord Chaitanya under the guidance of His bonafide representative, can become a spiritual master and I WISH THAT IN MY ABSENCE ALL MY DISCIPLES BECOME THE BONAFIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER TO SPREAD KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE WORLD. I WANT IT..." (Letter to Madhusudan, 11/2/67)

1967. It is quite significant, as we are analyzing Srila Prabhupada's instructions and vision for the future of ISKCON, that as early as 1967 he was already speaking of his absence and expressing his wish that ALL OF HIS DISCIPLES "**become the bonafide spiritual master** to spread Krishna consciousness throughout the whole world."

"When I return to India my ambition is to construct an American House at Vrndaban and get some of you boys and girls there to train for our preaching work in this part of the world. AFTER ALL, I AM AN OLD MAN. THERE IS NO CERTAINTY OF MY LIFE, AND AT ANY MOMENT I CAN COLLAPSE AND IT WILL NOT BE SURPRISING. But I WISH TO LEAVE SOME OF MY SPIRITUAL CHILDREN who have so kindly joined me in faith and respect so that

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they may work, and this philosophy of Krishna Consciousness may be broadcast all over the world. You are all educated, cultured, young boys and girls, and if you understand the philosophy it will be a great help for the suffering humanity." (Letter to Jadurany, Book of Letters, #67-7-9)

"[T]here is a program for construction of an American house for training preachers at Vrindaban. Vrindaban is the only solitary transcendental abode within this universe where Krishna Consciousness automatically reveals. Therefore I HAVE A GREAT HOPE TO TRAIN SOME OF MY DISCIPLES FOR PREACHING WORK, EVEN IN MY ABSENCE. I AM NOW OLD MAN, AND ATTACKED WITH SERIOUS DISEASE; I MAY BE OVERCOME BY DEATH AT ANY MOMENT. Therefore I WISH TO LEAVE SOME TRAINED PREACHERS so that they can do the work of Krishna Consciousness in the western world. That is my ambition. I hope you all pray to Krishna so I may be able to execute my duty properly." (Letter to Janardan et al, 6/28/67)

"I AM TRAINING YOU ALL TO BECOME FUTURE SPIRITUAL MASTERS..." (Letter to Achyutananda and Jaya Govinda, 8/21/68)

"So on this occasion of my spiritual master's departure, AS I AM TRYING TO EXECUTE HIS WILL, **SIMILARLY**, I SHALL ALSO REQUEST YOU TO EXECUTE **THE SAME ORDER** THROUGH MY WILL. I AM AN OLD MAN, I CAN ALSO PASS AWAY AT ANY MOMENT. THAT IS NATURE'S LAW. NOBODY CAN CHECK IT. SO THAT IS NOT VERY ASTONISHING, but my appeal to you on this auspicious day of the departure of my Guru Maharaja, that at least to some extent you have understood the essence of Krsna consciousness movement. You should try to push it on. People are suffering for want of this consciousness."

[...] "So this Krsna consciousness movement is authorized, very important. Now, you American boys and girls who have taken to this movement, please take it more seriously and... **THAT IS THE MISSION OF LORD CAITANYA AND MY GURU MAHARAJA, AND WE ARE ALSO TRYING TO EXECUTE THE WILL BY**

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DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION. YOU HAVE COME FORWARD TO HELP ME. I SHALL REQUEST YOU ALL THAT I SHALL GO AWAY, BUT YOU SHALL LIVE. Don't give up pushing on this movement, and you'll be blessed by Lord Caitanya and His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Goswami Prabhupada.”

(Srla Bhaktisiddhanta Disappearance Day, Lecture -- Los Angeles, December 9, 1968)

That was in the beginning, and year after year he continued conveying the same message with insistence. The reader will find a large selection of those statements in this work, such as the following ones,

“A first examination will be held sometime next January on Bhagavad Gita As It Is, and those passing will have the degree of Bhaktishastri. Next year we will hold an examination on Srimad Bhagavatam, and the person who passes will have the title Bhaktibaibhava. And the next year we shall hold an examination on Teachings of Lord Caitanya, Nectar of Devotion and Vedanta Sutra, and those who will successfully pass will be awarded with the title of Bhaktivedanta. **BY 1975, ALL OF THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED ALL OF THE ABOVE EXAMINATIONS WILL BE SPECIFICALLY EMPOWERED TO INITIATE AND INCREASE THE NUMBER OF THE KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS POPULATION.**”

(Letter to Kirtanananda, 1/12/69)

“Regarding your question about the disciplic succession coming down from Arjuna, it is just like I HAVE GOT MY DISCIPLES, SO IN THE FUTURE **THESE MANY DISCIPLES MAY HAVE MANY BRANCHES OF DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION.** So in one line of disciples we may not see another name coming from a different line. But this does not mean that [that] person whose name does not appear was not in the disciplic succession.”

(Letter to Kirtanananda, 1/25/69)

“**EVERY ONE OF US SHOULD BECOME SPIRITUAL MASTER** because the world is in blazing fire... **SPIRITUAL MASTER IS NOT A NEW INVENTION.** It is simply following the orders of the spiritual master. So **ALL MY STUDENTS PRESENT HERE** who are feeling so much obliged... I am also obliged to them because they are helping me in

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this missionary work. At the same time, **I SHALL REQUEST THEM ALL TO BECOME SPIRITUAL MASTER. EVERY ONE OF YOU SHOULD BE SPIRITUAL MASTER NEXT.** And what is their duty? Whatever you are hearing from me, whatever you are learning from me, you have to distribute the same in toto without any addition or alteration. **THEN ALL OF YOU BECOME THE SPIRITUAL MASTER.** THAT IS THE SCIENCE OF BECOMING SPIRITUAL MASTER.

"[...]Don't be satisfied that you have understood [and] that's all. No. This should be distributed. Just like in my old age I have come to your country carrying the order of my spiritual master to distribute it, **YOU ARE ALL YOUNG BOYS AND GIRLS, TAKE THIS MESSAGE AND DISTRIBUTE IT.** The whole suffering humanity will be happy. **THAT IS OUR MISSION.** Thank you very much."

(Vyasa-puja Address, Hamburg 9/5/69)

"So today is a very auspicious day, Thakura Bhaktivinoda's birthday. Here is the picture of Thakura Sac-cid-ananda Bhaktivinoda. He was one of the acaryas of this disciplic succession from Krsna. **We have got a succession table from Krsna, genealogical table.** There are two kinds of genealogical tables, one by the semina. Father, his son, his son, like that. That is material genealogical table. And **there is one spiritual genealogical table, disciplic succession.** Just like Krsna. Krsna, the original father, Supreme Personality of Godhead, He spoke the Vedic knowledge to Brahma, Lord Brahma. He spoke to Narada. Narada spoke to Vyasa. Vyasa spoke to Madhvacarya. So in this disciplic succession, Lord Caitanya, from Lord Caitanya, the six Gosvamis, and similarly, coming down, down, Bhaktivinoda Thakura, then Gaurakisora Dasa Babaji Maharaja, then my spiritual master, then **WE ARE NEXT GENERATION, MY DISCIPLES. SO THERE IS A DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION.**"

(Lecture, London 9/23/69)

"[T]his Krsna consciousness movement is very, very essential, very, very essential. I am very glad to inform you that this movement is being especially received in the Western countries by the younger generation. **I AM VERY MUCH HOPEFUL. I AM OLD MAN OF SEVENTY-SIX YEARS AGE. NOW, I CAN PASS AWAY AT ANY**

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MOMENT, BUT I AM CONFIDENT THAT **MY DISCIPLES**, WHO ARE MOSTLY EUROPEANS AND AMERICANS, THEY **WILL CONTINUE THIS MOVEMENT**, and I wish there will be considerable change on the face of the globe."

(Lecture -- Bombay, March 18, 1972)

"Some time ago you asked my permission for accepting some disciples, NOW THE TIME IS APPROACHING VERY SOON WHEN **YOU WILL HAVE MANY DISCIPLES** BY YOUR STRONG PREACHING WORK. Stick to the line of our strong preaching method and many misguided persons will be blessed by your proper guiding."

(Letter to Achyutananda, 5/16/72)

"So we have got this message from Krsna, from Caitanya Mahaprabhu, from the six Gosvamis, later on, Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Bhaktisiddhanta Thakura. And we are trying our bit also to distribute this knowledge. NOW, TENTH, ELEVENTH, TWELFTH... MY GURU MAHARAJA IS TENTH FROM CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU, I AM ELEVENTH, **YOU ARE THE TWELFTH**. So distribute this knowledge. People are suffering."

[Arrival Lecture -- Los Angeles, May 18, 1972]

"I AM VERY MUCH HOPEFUL THAT MY DISCIPLES WHO ARE NOW PARTICIPATING TODAY, even if I die, my movement will not stop, I am very much hopeful, yes. All these nice boys and girls who have taken so seriously..."

"YOU WILL HAVE TO BECOME SPIRITUAL MASTER... YOU... ALL MY DISCIPLES...." (Vyasa-puja Address, London 8/21/73)

"So this movement [is] especially meant to establish the cult of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. THE CULT OF SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU IS THAT **YOU BECOME, EVERY ONE OF YOU, YOU BECOME A GURU**." (Lecture Cc 1.4, Mayapur 3/28/75)

"EVERY STUDENT IS EXPECTED TO BECOME ACARYA. Acarya means one who knows the scriptural injunctions and follows them practically in life, and teaches them **to his disciples...** KEEP TRAINED UP VERY RIGIDLY AND THEN YOU ARE BONA

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FIDE GURU, AND YOU CAN ACCEPT DISCIPLES ON THE SAME PRINCIPLE. But as a matter of etiquette it is the custom that during the lifetime of your Spiritual Master you bring the prospective disciples to him, and in his absence or disappearance you can accept disciples without any limitation. **THIS IS THE LAW OF DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION. I WANT TO SEE MY DISCIPLES BECOME BONAFIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER** and spread Krishna consciousness very widely; **THAT WILL MAKE ME AND KRISHNA VERY HAPPY.**" (Letter to Tusta Krishna, 12/2/75)

"So, so nice movement, everyone should take part in it and dedicate to the mission of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu. And it is not at all difficult. It is very easy. Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, *amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa, yare dekha tare kaha kṛṣṇa-upadesa*. Anywhere, either you are in this district or that district, it doesn't matter. Either you are at home or outside home, it doesn't matter. **YOU BECOME A GURU –EVERYONE.**" (Sannyasa Initiation, Mayapur 3/16/76)

"So we got this information from His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, and that knowledge is still going on. You are receiving through his servant. And in future the same knowledge will go to your students. This is called parampara system. *Evam parampara prap...* **IT IS NOT THAT YOU HAVE BECOME A STUDENT AND YOU'LL REMAIN STUDENT. NO. ONE DAY YOU SHALL BECOME ALSO GURU AND MAKE MORE STUDENTS, MORE STUDENTS, MORE.** That is Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission, not that perpetually... Yes, **ONE SHOULD REMAIN PERPETUALLY A STUDENT, BUT HE HAS TO ACT AS GURU. That is the mission of Caitanya Mahāprabhu.**" (Lecture, Hyderabad 12/10/76)

Anyone familiar with Srila Prabhupada's teachings knows well that there are innumerable more of his declarations similar to these. And those who are not familiar with such statements will certainly learn more about them if they read this book, particularly in regards to **What Prabhupada Said** about "The Guru in the International Society for Krishna Consciousness."

Reserving the detailed analysis of the central topic for the rest of the book, we now arrive at 1977, the year of Srila Prabhupada's final instructions. We

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have also reached the point of revealing to the reader the conclusion of this entire work. It is on the subject of Srila Prabhupada's succession, for which I will begin by drawing from the book itself:

«"As we will read later on in this book (see Part Two, Question Eight), on several occasions in different years Srila Prabhupada was asked who would succeed him. One of the last of such occasions was on May 1977, his final year with us, when the question became official: his entrusted directors of the movement⁴ asked who would initiate after him.

«"GBC1:...Then our next question concerns initiations in the future, particularly at that time when you're no longer with us. We want to know how first and second initiation would be conducted.

*"S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. I shall recommend some of you."»
(Meeting with GBCs, Vrndavana 5/28/77)*

There is much more to this conversation, which you will read later on. Here I want to concentrate on the fact that, as far as the question itself is concerned, *"We want to know how first and second initiation would be conducted,"* that was his unmistakable answer, *"Yes. I shall recommend some of you."*

Then there was some request for clarification as to what would be the exact status of those who he would "recommend:"

"GBC1: Then what is the relationship of that person who gives the initiation and the...

The following is a summary of what, interjecting, Srila Prabhupada replied:

He's guru. He's guru.

They're his disciple. [Who is initiating. He's granddisciple.]

WHEN I ORDER, 'You become guru,' he becomes regular guru. That's all. HE BECOMES DISCIPLE OF MY DISCIPLE. That's it.

And Caitanya Mahāprabhu says, amara ajnaya guru hana. One who can understand THE ORDER OF CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU, he can become guru. Or one who understands HIS GURU'S ORDER, the

⁴ Known in ISKCON as the Governing Body Commissioners or "GBCs."

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same parampara, he can become guru. And therefore I SHALL SELECT SOME OF YOU."

Taking into account all that has been discussed so far in this Introduction, would anyone think that the members of ISKCON could have expected some other reply? Is it a wonder that in his last year Srila Prabhupada said exactly the same that he had been saying from the beginning and throughout his years with us? *On the basis of his order and that of Caitanya Mahaprabhu's, his disciples would become "regular" gurus and initiate their own disciples.* Quite simple. No need for guesswork. It is perfectly in accordance with everything he had been saying all along, from the very beginning. Let us repeat some of those words already stated, to "hear" them now in this context:

From the initial years:

Anyone following the order of Lord Chaitanya under the guidance of His bonafide representative, can become a spiritual master and I WISH THAT IN MY ABSENCE ALL MY DISCIPLES BECOME THE BONAFIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER TO SPREAD KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE WORLD. I WANT IT..."
(Letter to Madhusudan, 11/2/67)

"I AM TRAINING YOU ALL TO BECOME FUTURE SPIRITUAL MASTERS..." (Letter to Achyutananda and Jaya Govinda, 8/21/68)

"So ALL MY STUDENTS PRESENT HERE who are feeling so much obliged... I am also obliged to them because they are helping me in this missionary work. At the same time, I SHALL REQUEST THEM ALL TO BECOME SPIRITUAL MASTER. EVERY ONE OF YOU SHOULD BE SPIRITUAL MASTER NEXT."

(Vyasa-puja Address, Hamburg 9/5/69)

From the middle years:

"Some time ago you asked my permission for accepting some disciples, NOW THE TIME IS APPROACHING VERY SOON WHEN YOU WILL HAVE MANY DISCIPLES BY YOUR STRONG PREACHING WORK. Stick to the line of our strong preaching method and many misguided persons will be blessed by your proper guiding."

(Letter to Achyutananda, 5/16/72)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

"[...] I AM VERY MUCH HOPEFUL THAT MY DISCIPLES WHO ARE NOW PARTICIPATING TODAY, even if I die, my movement will not stop, I am very much hopeful, yes. All these nice boys and girls who have taken so seriously...."

"YOU WILL HAVE TO BECOME SPIRITUAL MASTER... YOU... ALL MY DISCIPLES...." (Vyasa-puja Address, London 8/21/73)

Years pass and we continue hearing from him the same instruction:

"So this movement [is] especially meant to establish the cult of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. THE CULT OF SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU IS THAT YOU BECOME, EVERY ONE OF YOU, YOU BECOME A GURU." (Lecture Cc 1.4, Mayapur 3/28/75)

"I WANT TO SEE MY DISCIPLES BECOME BONAFIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND SPREAD KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS VERY WIDELY; THAT WILL MAKE ME AND KRISHNA VERY HAPPY." (Letter to Tusta Krishna, 12/2/75)

Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, *amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa, yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa*. Anywhere, either you are in this district

or that district, it doesn't matter. Either you are at home or outside home, it doesn't matter. YOU BECOME A GURU –EVERYONE."

(Sannyasa Initiation, Mayapur 3/16/76)

"So that is our mission. ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE COME TO KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT, THAT IS OUR REQUEST, THAT YOU, ALL OF YOU, BECOME GURU."

(Lecture, Honolulu 5/21/76)

As his last year among us was approaching, he said:

"So we got this information from His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, and that knowledge is still going on. You are receiving through his servant. And in future the same knowledge will go to YOUR STUDENTS. This is called parampara system. Evam parampara prap... IT IS NOT THAT YOU HAVE BECOME A STUDENT AND YOU'LL REMAIN STUDENT. NO. ONE DAY

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YOU SHALL BECOME ALSO GURU AND MAKE MORE STUDENTS, MORE STUDENTS, MORE. That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission, not that perpetually... Yes, ONE SHOULD REMAIN PERPETUALLY A STUDENT, BUT HE HAS TO ACT AS GURU. That is the mission of Caitanya Mahaprabhu."

(Lecture, Hyderabad 12/10/76)

Now, the following is not a repeat. It is taken from the first month in 1977:

"Caitanya Mahaprabhu said that YOU BECOME A GURU. Amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa. YOU BECOME A GURU AND DELIVER THEM. So I am a fool, I have no education. How can I become a guru? The answer is 'No no, Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa.' IF YOU SIMPLY ADVISE PEOPLE WHAT KRSNA HAS SAID, THEN YOU BECOME GURU...."

(Conversation, Bombay 1/7/77)

And Srila Prabhupada's insistence on this message-instruction-**order!** continues subsequently into the month of May, towards the end of which the official meeting with the GBCs took place:

"Guru, Caitanya Mahaprabhu has said, amara ajnaya guru hana tara' ei desa [Cc. Madhya 7.128]. He says that " I ORDER YOU THAT YOU BECOME GURU. So., and your business is to deliver this country." [...] Caitanya Mahaprabhu says it is not difficult: yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa [Cc. Madhya 7.128].

"So my request is that you people of Orissa, you are ordinarily Vaisnava, so take this seriously. [...] As Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa [Cc. Madhya 7.128]: YOU BECOME GURU. Whomever you meet, you simply speak what Krsna has spoken. That's all. It is already there. YOU HAVE TO REPEAT ONLY, AND YOU BECOME GURU."

(Lecture Bg 7.1 -- January 22, 1977, Bhuvaneshvara)

"kiba vipra kiba sudra nyasi kene naya
yei krsna-tattva-vetta sei guru haya
[Cc. Madhya 8.128]

"You become a sannyasi or you become a grhastha or you are a brahmana or a sudra, the Krsna consciousness has nothing to do with

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

these material things. IF YOU KNOW ACTUALLY WHAT IS KRSNA, THEN YOU CAN BECOME GURU."

"[...]So Krsna bhajana is so magnanimous, so exalted, in any position YOU CAN BECOME THE GREATEST GURU, PROVIDED YOU FOLLOW THE FOOTSTEPS OF SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU."

(Evening Lecture -- January 23, 1977, Bhuvanesvara)

My Guru Maharaja, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, he was not that type of Vaisnava. You should remember. That is his special gift. HE WANTED EVERY ONE OF HIS DISCIPLES TO GO AND PREACH THE CULT OF KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS. CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU WANTED. Here we are in the Caitanya Mahaprabhu's country, birthplace. We should remember. Caitanya Mahaprabhu of course asked every Indian to take His mission. At least Bengalis should take Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission. So Caitanya Mahaprabhu...What is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission?

amara ajnaya guru hana, tara ei desa
yare dekha, tare kaha 'krsna'-upadesa

[Cc. Madhya 7.128]

Even if you cannot go outside, it doesn't matter. Wherever you are, either you are here in Nabadwip or in Calcutta, anywhere, so YOU JUST BECOME A GURU. DON'T REMAIN A RASCAL. YOU BECOME A GURU. "Now, how can I become a guru? I am not very educated." No! You don't require to be very highly educated rascal. SIMPLY REPEAT KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS AS KRSNA SAID -- YOU BECOME GURU."

(Srla Bhaktisiddhanta's App. Day, Lecture -- February 8, 1977, Mayapur)

"YOU ARE MY DISCIPLES. "LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON." YOU SHOULD BE. Gaurangera bhakta-jane. Everyone. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, amara ajnaya guru hana tara' ei desa [Cc. Madhya 7.128]. HE ASKED EVERYONE, "JUST BECOME GURU." FOLLOW HIS INSTRUCTION, YOU BECOME GURU. Amara ajnaya. Don't manufacture ideas. Amara ajnaya. "What I say, you do. You become a guru." Where is the difficulty? "And what is Your

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ajna?" Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa. Bas. Everything is there in the Bhagavad-gita. You simply repeat. That's all. YOU BECOME GURU. TO BECOME A GURU IS NOT DIFFICULT JOB. FOLLOW CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU AND SPEAK WHAT KRSNA HAS SAID. BAS. YOU BECOME GURU."

(Room Conversation, April 15, 1977, Bombay)

"S.PRABHUPADA: I SHALL CHOOSE SOME GURU. I SHALL SAY, 'NOW YOU BECOME ACARYA. YOU BECOME AUTHORIZED.' I AM WAITING FOR THAT. YOU BECOME ALL ACARYA. I RETIRE COMPLETELY. BUT THE TRAINING MUST BE COMPLETE.

D: The process of purification must be there.

S.PRABHUPADA: Oh, yes, must be there. CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU WANTS THAT. AMARA AJNANA GURU HANA. YOU BECOME GURU." (Conversation, Bombay 4/22/77)

"Amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa. Suppose you are living in that village. Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, 'You become a guru here.' Here. You haven't got to go out. Ei desa, 'where you are living.' Just see how nice it is. Amara ajnaya: 'BY MY ORDER, YOU BECOME A GURU AND DELIVER THE PEOPLE OF THIS PLACE.' This is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's.... 'So I am not a guru. I do not know. How I shall become?' NO, YOU HAVEN'T GOT TO BOTHER. Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa: 'SIMPLY YOU REPEAT WHAT KRSNA HAS SAID.' YOU BECOME GURU. THAT'S ALL. Everyone can do that. Gita is there. You sit down in your place and preach Bhagavad-gita and try to induce them to take it. YOU BECOME GURU."

(Conversation, Bombay 4/23/77)

"OUR CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU'S MISSION IS THAT 'YOU BECOME GURU,' as I was telling, 'AND TEACH, DELIVER PERSONS WHERE YOU ARE.' If you say, 'How can I become guru?,' there is no difficulty. SIMPLY REPEAT THE WORDS OF BHAGAVAD-GITA. THAT'S ALL. YOU BECOME GURU. SO OUR MISSION IS TO CREATE REAL GURU, NOT THESE JUGGLERS. AND REAL GURU IS HE WHO SPEAKS ON BEHALF OF KRSNA. And that is wan... IT IS VERY SIMPLE.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

"...This is our mission. Everything is there. Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *yare dekha tare kaha krsna upade...* 'YOU SIMPLY MAKE YOUR LIFE SUCCESSFUL BY UNDERSTANDING BHAGAVAD-GITA AND PREACH THIS. YOU BECOME GURU.' So where is the difficulty? WHY DON'T YOU DO THAT?"

(Conversation, Bombay 4/24/77)

"That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission, that "You become guru, everyone." [break] You simply repeat. Don't misinterpret. Boliye. THIS IS CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU'S... EVERY ONE OF YOU BECOME A GURU, NOT A BLUFFER, BUT A GURU, REAL GURU. "

(Evening Darsana -- May 9, 1977, Hrishikesh)

"We repeat. We don't manufacture. What is the use of manufacturing? I am imperfect. Whatever I manufacture, that is imperfect. So better to repeat the words of the perfect. That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission. HE SAID, 'EVERY ONE OF YOU BECOME GURU AND DELIVER YOUR SURROUNDING PERSONS, EITHER YOU ARE IN FAMILY OR IN NEIGHBORHOOD OR IN SOCIETY OR IN NATION, AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.' *Amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa.* So whatever limited circle, YOU JUST BECOME GURU AND DELIVER THEM."

(Conversation, Hrisikesa 5/11/77)

"We simply repeat. That is our business. We are not learned scholars, but our mission is to repeat the words of Krsna. That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's order. He says, *amara ajnaya guru hana tara' ei desa* [Cc. Madhya 7.128]: " YOU BECOME GURU." [...] You, on My order, BECOME GURU simply..." *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa. Bas.* "You become guru. Whomever you meet, you simply try to convince him what Krsna has spoken. Then you become guru." SO WE REQUEST EVERYONE THE SAME THING. AND BECOME GURU. IT IS VERY URGENTLY NECESSARY. People are becoming godless, atheist, nonbelievers, and they are suffering. So every village, every home, every neighborhood, they require guru. But who will be guru? One who repeats the instruction of Krsna. *Yare dekha tare kaha.* IT IS VERY EASY."

(Evening Darsana -- May 12, 1977, Hrishikesh)

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Recapitulating, the directors of ISKCON **officially** approached Srila Prabhupada to ask how initiations would be conducted in the future, "particularly at that time when you're no longer with us." And Srila Prabhupada instantly replied, "I shall recommend some of you," and ended his categorical answer with, "I shall select some of you."

Thus the next obvious question is, "What about *that selection*? Did it ever happen?"

The answer is yes.

This official meeting was on May 28, 1977. It was the last meeting of its kind with His Divine Grace. Counting from this day on to that of his departure, there is only one record of his making a selection from the GBCs. It was on July 7.

Although strictly speaking that selection was not stated by him to be the one he had spoken of at the meeting of May 28, it was, *coincidentally*, about initiations. On July 7, due to his health condition, Srila Prabhupada is recorded as appointing nine GBC members who would give initiations *on his behalf*.

"Tamala Krsna: ...Srila Prabhupada? We're receiving a number of letters now, and these are people who want to get initiated. So up until now, since your becoming ill, we asked them to wait.

Prabhupada: The local, mean, senior sannyasis can do that.

[...]Prabhupada: You can give me a list of sannyasis. I will mark who will...

Tamala Krsna: Okay.

[...]Tamala Krsna: These men, they can also do second initiation. So there's no need for devotees to write to you for first and second initiation. They can write to the man nearest them. But all these persons are still your disciples. Anybody who gives initiation is doing so on your behalf.

Prabhupada: Yes.

Tamala Krsna: You know that book I'm maintaining of all of your disciples' names? Should I continue that?

Prabhupada: Hm.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

[...]Prabhupada: You can note down these names.

Tamala Krsna: Yes, I have them.

Prabhupada: Who are they?

Tamala Krsna: Kirtanananda Maharaja, Satsvarupa Maharaja, Jayatirtha Prabhu, Bhagavan Prabhu, Harikesa Maharaja, Jayapataka Maharaja and Tamala Krsna Maharaja.

Prabhupada: That's nice. Now you distribute.

Tamala Krsna: Seven. There's seven names.

Prabhupada: For the time being, seven names, sufficient. You can make Ramesvara.

Tamala Krsna: Ramesvara Maharaja.

Prabhupada: And Hridayananda.

Tamala Krsna: Oh, yeah. South America.

Prabhupada: So without waiting for me, wherever you consider it is right... That will depend on discretion.

Tamala Krsna: On discretion.

Prabhupada: Yes.

Tamala Krsna: That's for first and second initiations.

Between this date and July 9, two other GBC men were added by Srila Prabhupada, unrecorded. On July 9, his approved list was officially circulated worldwide and consisted of eleven members.

As mentioned above, this selection of eleven GBC men was not directly and expressly stated by Srila Prabhupada to be *that selection*, the one that on May 28 he said he would make. Now, what else could it be?

On May 28, talking to the GBCs, he said, "I shall select some of you," a selection which was intended for the purpose *to initiate on his behalf*.

"That is formality. Because in my presence one should not become guru, so ON MY BEHALF...."

Then, five weeks later, on July 7, he selected eleven GBC members *to initiate on his behalf*--an unquestionable match.

The reason for him to be mentioning a formality is that, in his official reply, he had indicated that he would recommend some of the GBCs to be initiating spiritual masters. He was then clarifying that, as a matter of formality, they could only be in that role *after his departure*. This was a

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required clarification because he had stated that he would be selecting them precisely to act in that capacity--as regular gurus. Once again, here is *that* summary of what he said at that time:

WHEN I ORDER, 'You become guru,' he becomes regular guru. That's all. **HE BECOMES DISCIPLE OF MY DISCIPLE**. That's it.

And Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *amara ajnaya guru hana*. One who can understand **THE ORDER OF CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU**, he can become guru. Or one who understands **HIS GURU'S ORDER**, the same *parampara*, he can become guru. And therefore I **SHALL SELECT SOME OF YOU**."

There is no record of Srila Prabhupada ever changing his mind about what he had officially responded on May 28. The procedure for future initiations that he established in that official meeting was exactly the very well-known scriptural and traditional system that he had *always* represented in his teachings and instructions. He had *never* even so much as hinted at anything different, and now he was also not making any change.

"Sastra is never changed. And the sadhu... Sadhu means who follows the sastras. He is sadhu. He also does not change. Sadhu, sastra. And guru? Guru means who follows the sastra and sadhu. So there are three, the same. A GURU WILL NOT CHANGE, that "It was spoken five thousand years ago. That is not applicable now. **NOW I AM GIVING YOU SOMETHING NEW, JUGGLERY**." He is useless. Sadhu sastra guru-vakya tinete kariya aikya."

(Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.6.8 Vrndavana, November 30, 1976)

"So the same thing, it is chalked out by Krsna, and by *parampara* system we have understood this philosophy. *Evam parampara praptam imam rajarsayo viduh* [Bg. 4.2]. **SO KEEP THIS PARAMPARA SYSTEM**. This Vyasa-puja is *parampara* system. Vyasa-puja means to accept this *parampara* system. Vyasa. **GURU IS THE REPRESENTATIVE OF VYASADEVA BECAUSE HE DOES NOT CHANGE ANYTHING**. What Vyasa-puja... What Vyasadeva said, your guru will also say the same thing. Not that "So many hundreds of thousands of years have passed away. Therefore I will give you a new formula." No. **THERE IS NO NEW FORMULA. THE SAME VYASA-PUJA**,

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THE SAME PHILOSOPHY. SIMPLY WE HAVE TO ACCEPT IT. THEN OUR LIFE WILL BE SUCCESSFUL. Thank you very much."

(Srla Bhaktisiddhanta Disappearance Day, Lecture -- Hyderabad, December 10, 1976)

"Krsna, the original father, Supreme Personality of Godhead, He spoke the Vedic knowledge to Brahma, Lord Brahma. He spoke to Narada. Narada spoke to Vyasa. Vyasa spoke to Madhvacharya. So in this disciplic succession, Lord Caitanya, from Lord Caitanya, the six Gosvamis, and similarly, coming down, down, Bhaktivinoda Thakura, then Gaurakisora Dasa Babaji Maharaja, then my spiritual master, then WE ARE NEXT GENERATION, MY DISCIPLES. SO THERE IS A DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION." (Lecture, London 9/23/69)

"Regarding your question about the disciplic succession coming down from Arjuna, it is just like I HAVE GOT MY DISCIPLES, SO IN THE FUTURE THESE MANY DISCIPLES MAY HAVE MANY BRANCHES OF DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION."

(Letter to Kirtanananda, 1/25/69)

"So we have got this message from Krsna, from Caitanya Mahaprabhu, from the six Gosvamis, later on, Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Bhaktisiddhanta Thakura. And we are trying our bit also to distribute this knowledge. NOW, TENTH, ELEVENTH, TWELFTH... MY GURU MAHARAJA IS TENTH FROM CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU, I AM ELEVENTH, YOU ARE THE TWELFTH. So distribute this knowledge. People are suffering."

(Arrival Lecture -- Los Angeles, May 18, 1972)

"WHEN I ORDER, 'You become guru,' he becomes regular guru. That's all. HE BECOMES DISCIPLE OF MY DISCIPLE. That's it.

[...]"And Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, amara ajnaya guru hana. One who can understand THE ORDER OF CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU, he can become guru. Or one who understands HIS GURU'S ORDER, the same parampara, he can become guru. And therefore I SHALL SELECT SOME OF YOU."

(Meeting with GBCs, Vrndavana 5/28/77)

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Srila Prabhupada did actually fulfill what he officially said he would do for the purpose of initiations in the future --as documented above, on July 7 he selected some GBC members who would perform that function. On May 28 he had explained that while he was still present they would initiate on his behalf and *after his departure* --and on his order-- they would initiate their own disciples. This he stressed by saying that these disciples would be his *granddisciples*.

On October 18, three weeks before his departure, he refers back to that sole and only selection of GBCs he had made in the matter of initiations:

"Prabhupada: Hare Krsna. One Bengali gentleman has come from New York?

Tamala Krsna: Yes. Mr. Sukamal Roy Chowdury.

Prabhupada: So I HAVE DEPUTED SOME OF YOU TO INITIATE. Hm?

Tamala Krsna: Yes. Actually... Yes, Srila Prabhupada.

Prabhupada: So I think Jayapataka can do that if he likes. I HAVE ALREADY DEPUTED. Tell him.

Tamala Krsna: Yes.

Prabhupada: So, DEPUTIES, Jayapataka's name was there?

Bhagavan: It is already on there, Srila Prabhupada. His name was on that list.

Prabhupada: So I DEPUTE HIM to do this at Mayapura, and you may go with him. I stop for the time being. Is that all right?

Tamala Krsna: Stopped doing what, Srila Prabhupada?

Prabhupada: This initiation. I HAVE DEPUTED THE, MY DISCIPLES. IS IT CLEAR OR NOT?

Giriraja: It's clear.

Prabhupada: You have got the list of the names?

Tamala Krsna: Yes, Srila Prabhupada.

Prabhupada: And if by Krsna's grace I recover from this condition, then I shall begin again, or I may not be pressed in this condition to initiate. It is not good." (Room Conversation – October 18, 1977, Vrndavana)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

Three months after the selection, the emphasis he makes on that appointment should be a clear indication of the importance it had for him. It also serves as a strong validation of the responsibility he had assigned to these GBC members on May 28 in their two capacities in the matter of initiations.

Srila Prabhupada left this world on November 14, 1977. Thirty-four years later, we can attest with full conviction to the truth contained in his words of dedication to his spiritual master:

*He lives forever by his divine instructions
and
the follower lives with him.*

This book is a compendium of Srila Prabhupada's profuse instructions to his disciples and followers on the subject of the spiritual master within his society, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Again, that voluminous set of instructions was summarized by Srila Prabhupada himself in his final instructions to the leaders of his movement, which he condensed in an order:

*"WHEN I ORDER, 'You become guru,' he becomes regular guru.
"And Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, amara ajnaya guru hana. One who can understand THE ORDER OF CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU, he can become guru. Or one who understands HIS GURU'S ORDER, the same parampara, he can become guru."*

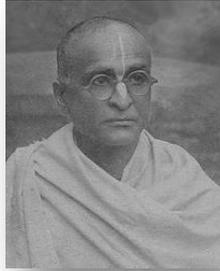
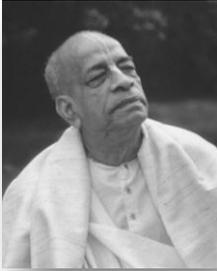
Srila Prabhupada's spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupada, stated how to respond to the order of one's guru. May it please Srila Prabhupada, I will conclude with this thunderbolt of words from his Guru Maharaja:

"If to carry out the command of the Vaisnava guru I have to be arrogant or brutish, or suffer eternal perdition, I am prepared to welcome such eternal damnation and even sign a contract to that effect. I will not listen to the words of malicious persons in lieu of the command of Sri Gurudeva. I will dissipate with indomitable courage and conviction the currents of thought of the rest of the world, relying on the strength derived from the lotus feet of Sri Gurudeva. I confess to this arrogance."⁵

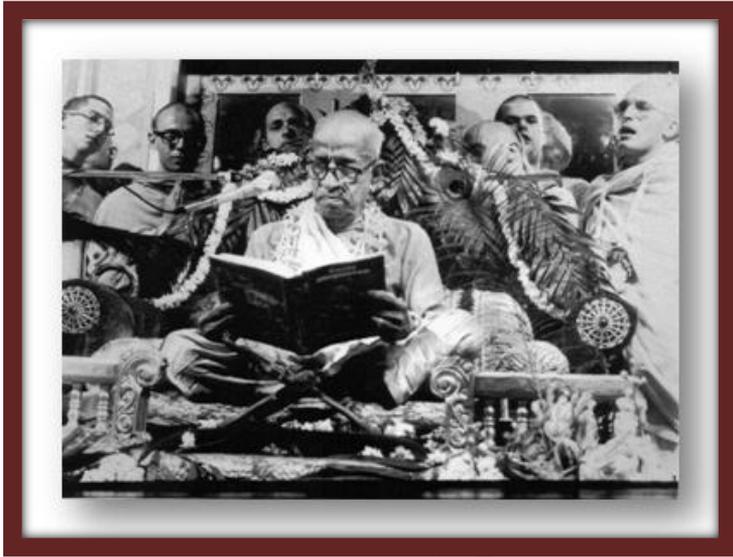
⁵ From «Sri Bhaktisiddhanta Vaibhava» by Bhakti Vikasa Swami, (2010-07-27). Bhakti Vikas
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Sri-Sri Gaura-Nitai Ashirvad Mandir
ISKCON of Guyana



The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)



The 1988 Introduction *to the First Edition* **(A Historical Record)**

“In my books the philosophy of Krishna Consciousness is explained fully, so if there is anything which you do not understand, then you simply have to read again and again. By reading daily the knowledge will be revealed to you, and by this process your spiritual life will develop.”

–Srila Prabhupada in a Letter to Bahurupa Das, 11/22/74

SRILA PRABHUPADA ALWAYS SAID that he had said it all. “I’ve said everything in my books” is one of our favorite quotes. Therefore it is astonishing for some of us to see how ten years after his disappearance ⁶ there is so much confusion about the most basic and fundamental concept and institution in our philosophy: the spiritual master.

⁶ The main body of the book was written in 1987.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

In some of our ISKCON communities the number of “schools of thought” that have appeared is unbelievable, and most of the devotees have heard so many versions about the “guru issue” that many do not know exactly what to believe, much the less what to preach. The result is that today in many of our temples there is a very thick atmosphere of doubt surrounding the process of initiation, and there are many people wondering whether it is worthwhile or even bona fide to take initiation from a disciple of Srila Prabhupada. A few of the new “philosophies” are herewith listed.

* Some devotees are preaching that it is not necessary to take initiation at all, that it is enough to follow Srila Prabhupada’s teachings as found in his books, tapes, letters, etc. In this way you can call him your spiritual master and be taken by him back home, back to Godhead. Generally, propounders and followers of this philosophy do not live in a temple and therefore do not feel the need for newcomers to have a spiritual name or admittance into the direct worship of the Deity.

* Others are advising newcomers to search for a disciple of Srila Prabhupada who will agree to give them a “Prabhupada initiation,” i.e. who will make them direct disciples of Srila Prabhupada. They believe that all initiations should be done on behalf of Srila Prabhupada, who is the actual guru.

* Another idea, which is like a corollary of the previous one, is that if you have been initiated by a disciple of Srila Prabhupada who later on fell down, then you are now automatically a disciple of Srila Prabhupada by, what they call, “taking full shelter of him.”

* Others say that only an *uttama-adhikari* is a bona fide spiritual master, and therefore aspirants should wait until such a person manifests himself (the followers of this theory usually add that there is no one at present with this qualification, therefore “Wait. Don’t worry. Didn’t Prabhupada wait for eleven years!!”).

* A well known pandit of our movement was explaining to me how there are four kinds of gurus, the three we all know [the *vartma-pradarsaka*, the *siksa* and the *diksa* gurus] and also the Supreme Personality of Godhead as *caitya-guru*, and that if someone could not find any guru whom would awaken his faith, he could just accept *caitya-guru* as the spiritual master and read the *sastras* guided by Him from within, which would be enough to attain perfection. [Srila Prabhupada always refers to three kinds of gurus because

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he considers the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the category of siksa, or instructing, spiritual master (vide C.c. Adi 1.47 & 1.57, purport)].

* Of those who think initiations should continue, some have suggested that a written contract be drawn between guru and disciple (!) whereby the first one admits very frankly to the latter of being a conditioned soul (!!) barely capable of doing much for him beyond the establishing of the connection or link to the *parampara*.

* Some prabhhus have taken upon themselves the duty of “demystifying” guruship and training new disciples to view their guru as just another fellow companion in the struggle for self-realization, who somehow or other (God only knows!) is in the position of giving initiations.

And so on and so forth.

Evidently the situation is pathetic. The movement that for years was proudly, boldly and successfully preaching about having all the answers to all the questions, now, just as it once happened to Lord Brahma, seems to have come under the spell of its own mystic power, not being able to answer to even basic questions about such fundamental concepts as the spiritual master and initiations.

This book is, therefore, a humble attempt to shed some light on the present situation in an effort to help ISKCON pull out of this embarrassing quagmire. It is very painful to see Srila Prabhupada’s creation in danger of extinction or, at best, of becoming an *apasampradaya* (a deviated *sampradaya*), by the misguidance and distrust created by the speculative conclusions of some people who do not know well Prabhupada’s words nor the Vaisnava ways and tradition by which the disciplic succession has descended since time immemorial.

And, of course, because Srila Prabhupada is the only authority commonly accepted by all parties involved in this issue, his direct words are the main instrument we will use in trying to solve a seemingly perplexing quandary. For this we have prepared the book in such a way so that his statements remain self-evident. In the main portion of the book (Part Two), our sole contribution are the questions that we are fictitiously posing to Srila Prabhupada at the beginning of every numbered section, and that represent

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the different doubts that at present most of the devotees have about the issues at hand, a system we are borrowing from a paper we presented in October of 1984, entitled “The First Thousand,” of which this book is an expansion. Our own understanding can be concluded from the “answers” by Srila Prabhupada that we have selected from his books, lectures, conversations and letters.

But some of my Godbrothers have considered it very important that I also present my own understanding more explicitly, and others even feel it would be irresponsible on my part not to do so and, especially, not to give my own conclusion on the matter. Following their advice I will express myself by means of an introductory part (Part One) and an Epilogue that I hope will be of an additional help to the kind reader.

May Srila Prabhupada and, through him, all the predecessor acaryas, specially our *parama-guru*, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, shower their blessings on this humble attempt to preserve the solid Vaisnava siddhanta within our young ISKCON society (Appendix One consists of two articles by His Divine Grace on the topic of Guru and Initiation).

namas te gaura-vani-sri-murtaye dina-tarine

rupanuga-viruddhapisiddhanta-dhvanta-harine

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Prabhupada, who is the personified teachings of Lord Caitanya. He is the deliverer of the fallen souls, and does not tolerate any statement which is against the teachings of devotional service enunciated by Srila Rupa Gosvami.”

Completed at my home in New Dvaraka,
ISKCON of Los Angeles, on February 8, 1988
The Most Auspicious Appearance Day of
Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura Prabhupada,
The Colossal Protector of Vaisnava Siddhanta.

Introduction to the First Edition

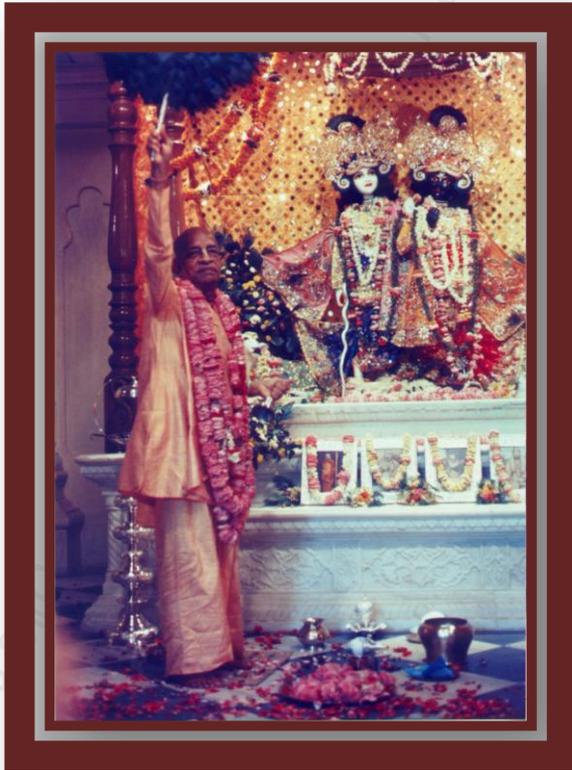


**Our Revered Grand-Spiritual Master, His Divine Grace
BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASWATI GOSWAMI PRABHUPADA**

The Colossal Protector of Vaishnava Siddhanta in the Recent Age

Part One

*The Guru that Prabhupada Spoke of
Is the Servant that Prabhupada Spoke of*



The Guru and What Parbhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)



Chapter One

Disciplic Succession: Unbroken, Still?

“[O]ur request is that if you want to decrease or completely finish all the problems of life, take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the process of disciplic succession and you’ll be all happy. Thank you very much.”

–Srila Prabhupada in a Lecture in London, 9/23/69

KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS in disciplic succession. This is the key to solving all the problems of life. All the problems..., including the ones facing our movement at present. Indeed, the reason we are having problems is that

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we have lost the understanding of what is the disciplic succession. Note that I am saying lost, implying, obviously, that we had it. Collectively we had the correct understanding when the perfect representative was personally present within our society making the disciplic succession a solid fact. We lost it when offenses and deviations polluted the system and turned the concept into almost a fantasy, something of the past that, to many, ended with Srila Prabhupada.

Disciplic succession (lit.: a succession of disciples) necessitates that there be a worthy disciple to represent amongst the people the previous acaryas and their teachings. This worthiness is described by Srila Prabhupada in the following words:

“[...]n all Vedic literatures it is mentioned about the disciplic succession. You have read in Srimad Bhagawatam, first canto, first chapter, where it is said that Brahma was inspired from within the heart by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Similarly, in the Katha Upanishad it is said that “in order to learn the transcendental science, one has to approach the Spiritual Master.” THIS SPIRITUAL MASTER MEANS ONE WHO HAS HEARD CORRECTLY FROM HIS SPIRITUAL MASTER. In this way, ultimately it goes to Krishna, the Supreme Spiritual Master. There is no possibility of understanding the Vedic knowledge without this descending process.”

(Letter to Janaki, 2/28/69)

“YOU HAVE RIGHTLY OBSERVED THAT I AM SIMPLY TRYING TO EXECUTE THE ORDER OF MY SPIRITUAL MASTER. [...]I am simply an instrument in the hands of my Spiritual Master. [...] THIS IS PARAMPARA SYSTEM. IF A STUDENT TRIES TO SATISFY HIS IMMEDIATE ACARYA OR THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, that is the only qualification for advancing in Krsna consciousness.” (Letter to Paramananda, 6/17/70)

“One has to hear the message of Godhead from the lips of the pure devotee of the Lord or Acarya. The religion is originally spoken by Krsna Himself and THAT MESSAGE OR SCIENCE IS COMING DOWN DIRECTLY THROUGH THE CHAIN OF DISCIPIC SUCCESSION AND ONE WHO IS IN THAT CHAIN IS CALLED

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ACARYA OR ONE WHO TEACHES BY HIS LIFE. Religion is practically presented by the bonafide spiritual master or acarya.”

(Letter to Krsna das, 10/6/70)

“I beg to thank you for your nice appreciation of our disciplic succession of Vaisnava Acaryas. THIS IS THE RIGHT UNDERSTANDING OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTERS, THAT THEY ARE GLORIOUS BY SIMPLY DELIVERING THE TRANSCENDENTAL MESSAGE OF KRSNA AS IT IS.”

(Letter to Jaya Pataka, 4/30/70)

“Srla Vyasdeva therefore summarized the whole Vedic knowledge in the shape of *Srimad Bhagavatam* which is known as the ripened fruit of the desire tree known as Vedic knowledge. THE RIPENED FRUIT IS RECEIVED HAND TO HAND THROUGH DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION AND ANYONE WHO DOES THIS WORK IN DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION FROM SRILA VYASDEVA IS CONSIDERED AS REPRESENTATIVE OF VYASDEVA...”

(Letter to Bali Mardan, 8/25/70)

“Regarding our books, [...the] words are ambrosial because they are not my personal words, they are instructions of my predecessors and I am just trying to administer them to my best knowledge. THAT IS THE WAY OF PARAMPARA SYSTEM. WE HAVE NOTHING TO MANUFACTURE, BUT SIMPLY CARRY THE MESSAGE AS A FAITHFUL PEON. That will be effective. One should be very sincere to his Spiritual Master and Krsna simultaneously. Then everything comes out successful. That is the verdict of the Vedas and Lord Caitanya.”

(Letter to Jayapataka, 4/17/70)

“Yes, as I have taken this work as my life and soul on the order of my Spiritual Master, similarly if you take my desires as life and soul, then the whole thing is immediately connected with Krsna. THAT IS THE MEANING OF PARAMPARA SYSTEM. NONE OF THE ACTIVITIES ARE PERSONAL AFFAIRS.”

(Letter to Bali Mardan, 7/15/70)

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In the presence of that worthy representative, all the different philosophical concepts, no matter how unbelievable or difficult, become feasible and clear to everyone as things under the sunlight. But when the people lose faith in their spiritual leaders the simplest concepts become obscured, and such disenchanted people begin concocting philosophies and jumping to conclusions, not caring to see whether their understanding is in accord with tradition and *sastra*. The result: Authority crisis. Anarchy.

Our main *sastra* is *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. The glory of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* rests in it having originally emanated directly from the Lord in the beginning of creation, and always remaining as the authority after millions of years. That authority will always remain intact as long as we accept the process of *parampara*, the descending process of disciplic succession. We have to accept the book and THE DEVOTEE Bhagavata.

As Srila Prabhupada always explained, quoting from the Sixth Canto of the book (SB 6.3.19) –*dharmam tu saksad bhagavat-pranitam*–, the principles of this Krsna consciousness movement, its philosophy, rules and regulations, are enacted by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore our opinion has to be in line with *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, the opinion of Krsna, specially if one claims to be in the disciplic succession that is coming from Krsna.

“In the *parampara* system, the instructions taken from the bona fide spiritual master must also be based on revealed Vedic scriptures. ONE WHO IS IN THE LINE OF DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION CANNOT MANUFACTURE HIS OWN WAY OF BEHAVIOR. There are many so-called followers of the Vaisnava cult in the line of Caitanya Mahaprabhu who do not scrupulously follow the conclusions of the *sastras*, and therefore they are considered to be *apa-sampradaya*, which means ‘outside of the *sampradaya*.’

[...]“Srila Narottama dasa Thakura advises, *sadhu-sastra-guru-vakya, hrdaye kariya aikya*. The meaning of this instruction is that one must consider the instructions of the *sadhu*, the revealed scriptures and the spiritual master in order to understand the real purpose of spiritual life. Neither a *sadhu* (saintly person or Vaisnava) nor a bona fide spiritual master says anything that is beyond the scope of the sanction of the revealed scriptures. Thus the statements of the revealed

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scriptures correspond to those of the bona fide spiritual master and saintly persons. ONE MUST THEREFORE ACT WITH REFERENCE TO THESE THREE IMPORTANT SOURCES OF UNDERSTANDING.” (Cc Adi 7.48)

But one cannot force oneself into the understanding of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* or any other scripture. We have to be admitted into it ushered by a devotee who has already been admitted himself. Otherwise, as Krsna says in *Bhagavad-gita* (9.2), this knowledge is *raja guhyam*, a very well-kept secret.

“The Krsna-katha is not a subject matter for debating club. It is meant for the devotees. WITHOUT DEVOTEES NOBODY CAN UNDERSTAND. The others who are not devotees, they simply waste their time in reading *Bhagavad-gita* or *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, such literature. They simply waste their time, because these subject matters are for the devotees. ...My Guru Maharaja used to say, ‘It is just licking the bottle of honey.’ Now you want honey, I give you one bottle; but you do not know how to taste it –you begin to lick up the bottle. What you will taste? If you think, ‘Here is the bottle of honey, let me lick.’ You will not get any taste. It must be opened. But THE OPENING KEY IS WITH THE DEVOTEE. You do not know how to open it. Therefore it is said, *satam prasangan mama virya-samvido bhavanti hrt-karna-rasayanah*. THE DEVOTEES KNOW HOW TO OPEN IT, the bottle. And then they can taste.

[...]

“Therefore to understand *Bhagavad-gita* means one has to become first of all a bhakta. The so-called nondevotee atheist class, scholar and politician, they cannot understand. It is not possible. THEY CANNOT ENTER INTO IT. The same thing: licking the honey bottle, that’s all. What you will taste? It is not possible. Therefore Krsna says, *Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya, upadeksyantitad jnanam jnaninah tattva-darsinah*. The same example can be... YOU CAN GO TO A PERSON WHO KNOWS HOW TO OPEN THE BOTTLE OF HONEY. Then you can taste. Otherwise, if you simply lick up the book, *Bhagavad-gita*, becoming a very big scholar, you will never taste it. You will never taste it. You can satisfy yourself, ‘Now I am licking up daily *Bhagavad-gita*, thrice,’

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but what you will understand unless you are a devotee? You will not understand. The bottle is packed up.” (Lecture, Bombay 12/4/74)

"So Suta Gosvami is offering respect to the spiritual master, Sukadeva Gosvami. When we offer respect to the spiritual master or anyone, we glorify his transcendental qualities. That is glorification. Just like we offer respect to Krsna, glorify Him. So this is very important process, glorify the spiritual master by his activities, what he is actually doing. That is glorification.

"So what Sukadeva did? *Svanubhavam*. He first of all heard from his father, Vyasadeva, *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, and realized it. Not a professional Bhagavata reciter. Just like in India now there are a class of men, especially in Vrndavana, the gosvamis. They make a business. Therefore there are many, many very artistic Bhagavata reciters, but they could not turn even one man to Krsna consciousness. Because they are not self-realized, *svanubhavam*. Of course, we have tried our best; so in few years there are so many Krsna conscious persons come out. This is the secret. Unless one is *svanubhavam*, self-realized, life is *bhagavata*, he cannot preach Bhagavata. That is not... That will not be effective. A gramophone will not help. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu's secretary, Svarupa Damodara, recommended, *bhagavata pora giya bhagavata-sthane*, that "IF YOU WANT TO READ SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM, YOU MUST APPROACH A PERSON WHO IS LIFE LIVING BHAGAVATA." *Bhagavata pora giya bhagavata-sthane*. Otherwise, there is no question of Bhagavata realization."

(Lecture, *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.2.3 -- Rome, May 27, 1974)

"One *bhagavata* is this book Bhagavata, another *bhagavata*, the person *bhagavata*. Who lives on the book Bhagavata, he is person *bhagavata*. Two kinds of *bhagavata*. So WE HAVE TO LEARN BHAGAVATAM FROM THE LIVING BHAGAVATA. Caitanya Mahaprabhu's secretary, Svarupa Damodara, he advised one *brahmana*. One *brahmana* wrote something about Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. There were many poets and writers used to come and

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visit Caitanya Mahaprabhu when He was at Jagannatha Puri, and they would present some writings, but these writings would not be presented before Caitanya Mahaprabhu unless it was sanctioned by His secretary Svarupa Damodara. That was the system. So one *brahmana*, he wrote one poetry that... The purport of the poetry was that "Jagannatha is Krsna. But He cannot move. He's wooden Krsna. And Caitanya Mahaprabhu is also Krsna, but He is moving Krsna." That means he distinguished between Jagannatha and Caitanya Mahaprabhu. So this is not *siddhanta*.

"This is not conclusion of the *sastra*. *Sastra* conclusion is: the Deity and Krsna, the same. There is no difference. We have many times explained this. Deity, the worshipful Deity in the temple, is not different from Krsna. So Svarupa Damodara did not approve of the poetry to be presented to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. At that time, he chastised him that "You do not know the conclusion, and you dare to write some poetry. Don't do this." And he said, *bhagavata para giya bhagavata-sthane*: "IF YOU WANT TO UNDERSTAND SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM, THEN YOU GO AND STUDY SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM FROM THE PURE DEVOTEE. THEN YOU'LL UNDERSTAND. Otherwise, you'll write all these nonsense." *Bhagavata para giya bhagavata-sthane*. So one *bhagavata*... The two *bhagavatas*. YOU STUDY SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM FROM LIVING BHAGAVATA. SO IF ONE DOES NOT TAKE OR DOES NOT SURRENDER UNTO THE LIVING BHAGAVATA, HE CANNOT UNDERSTAND SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM."

(*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 2.3.23, Los Angeles, June 20, 1972)

In the very first purport of his *Bhagavad-gita*, Srila Prabhupada establishes this concept citing the *Gita-mahatmya*:

"There it says that one should read *Bhagavad-gita* very scrutinizingly WITH THE HELP OF A PERSON WHO IS A DEVOTEE OF SRI KRSNA and try to understand it without personally motivated interpretations. The example of clear understanding is there in the

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Bhagavad-gita itself, in the way the teaching is understood by Arjuna, who heard the Gita directly from the Lord. If someone is fortunate enough to understand *Bhagavad-gita* in that line of DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, without motivated interpretation, then he surpasses all studies of Vedic wisdom, and all scriptures of the world.”

And in the *Bhagavatam* itself, PRABHUPADA SAID:

“A third-class devotee, therefore, has to receive the instructions of devotional service from the authoritative sources of *Bhagavata*. THE NUMBER ONE BHAGAVATA IS THE ESTABLISHED PERSONALITY OF DEVOTEE, and the other *Bhagavatam* is the message of Godhead. THE THIRD-CLASS DEVOTEE THEREFORE HAS TO GO TO THE PERSONALITY OF DEVOTEE IN ORDER TO LEARN THE INSTRUCTIONS OF DEVOTIONAL SERVICE. Such a personality of devotee is not a professional man who earns his livelihood by the business of *Bhagavatam*. Such a devotee must be a representative of Sukadeva Gosvami, like Suta Gosvami, and must preach the cult of devotional service for the all-around benefit of all people.” (S.B. 1.2.12)

“The DEVOTEE BHAGAVATA is a direct representative of Bhagavan, the Personality of Godhead. So by pleasing the devotee *Bhagavata* one can receive the benefit of the book *Bhagavata*.

[...]“THE MESSAGES OF THE BOOK BHAGAVATA, THEREFORE, HAVE TO BE RECEIVED FROM THE DEVOTEE BHAGAVATA, and the combination of these two *Bhagavatas* will help the neophyte devotee to make progress on and on.” (S.B. 1.2.18)

“...[I]n order to receive the real message of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* one should approach the CURRENT LINK or spiritual master, in the chain of disciplic succession.” (S.B. 2.9.7)

The scriptures cannot be studied by one’s own concoctions. They have to be studied with the help of a devotee, “devotee” meaning that he has to be a representative of the *parampara*, that he is descending in the disciplic succession coming from Krsna.

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“One who directly hears Krsna can understand this confidential knowledge. IF ONE DOES NOT COME TO THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, HE CANNOT HEAR KRSNA; therefore his knowledge is always imperfect, at least as far as understanding *Bhagavad-gita* is concerned.

[...]“Actually there is no difference between hearing directly from Krsna and hearing directly from Krsna via a bona fide spiritual master like Vyasa. The spiritual master is the representative of Vyasadeva also.” (Bg 18.75)

“*Evam parampara-praptam, sa kaleneha mahata yogo nastah parantapa. Yogo nastah.* AS SOON AS THE PARAMPARA SYSTEM IS NOT ACCEPTED, THE SO-CALLED COMMENTARY ON BHAGAVAD-GITA IS LOST OR ROTTEN.”

(Lecture, Bhubaneswara 1/24/77)

“WE HAVE TO UNDERSTAND VEDIC KNOWLEDGE ON THE AUTHORITY OF THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION not from mental speculators who are simply rascals and have no entrance into the Vedic knowledge.” (Letter to Brian Marvin, 3/15/74)

“So far as your question about the disciplic succession, in all Vedic literatures it is mentioned about the disciplic succession. You have read in *Srimad Bhagawatam*, first canto, first chapter, where it is said that Brahma was inspired from within the heart by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Similarly, in the *Katha Upanishad* it is said that “in order to learn the transcendental science, one has to approach the Spiritual Master.” This spiritual master means one who has heard correctly from his Spiritual Master. In this way, ultimately it goes to Krishna, the Supreme Spiritual Master. THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF UNDERSTANDING THE VEDIC KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT THIS DESCENDING PROCESS. The modern world is puffed up with personal research knowledge, but the person who is engaging in this research work does not know that he is imperfect on account of his aptitude for becoming illusioned, for committing mistakes, for his cheating propensity and for his possessing imperfect senses. Therefore THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY

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OF RECEIVING PERFECT KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT APPROACHING A SELF-REALIZED SPIRITUAL MASTER COMING DOWN IN DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION. The mental speculator, no matter how advanced he may be, cannot deliver us the right knowledge.” (Letter to Janaki, 2/28/69)

“All transcendental messages are received properly in the chain of disciplic succession. This disciplic succession is called *parampara*. Unless therefore *Bhagavatam* or any other Vedic literatures are received through the *parampara* system, the reception of knowledge is not bona fide. Vyasadeva delivered the message to Sukadeva Gosvami, and from Sukadeva Gosvami, Suta Gosvami received the message. ONE SHOULD THEREFORE RECEIVE THE MESSAGE OF BHAGAVATAM FROM SUTA GOSVAMI OR FROM HIS REPRESENTATIVE AND NOT FROM ANY IRRELEVANT INTERPRETER.” (SB 1.3.42)

At this point I can think of a number of questions that may be raised.

--How does someone become such a representative with whom others should study the scriptures?

--Is that representative also an initiating guru? In other words, are there different kinds of representatives, i.e. some that can link you to the succession and some that cannot? (Some that are guru and some that are not?)

--Does a representative have to be alive to connect you?

--Is the succession considered broken if there is no live representative?

These things should become clear in the course of this writing.

Generally speaking, by definition, disciplic succession means that the disciples of a spiritual master become the spiritual masters of the next disciples. Srila Prabhupada confirms this:

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“ONE WHO IS NOW THE DISCIPLE IS THE NEXT SPIRITUAL MASTER. And one cannot be a bona fide and authorized spiritual master unless one has been strictly obedient to his spiritual master.”

(SB 2.9.43)

“EVERY STUDENT IS EXPECTED TO BECOME ACARYA. Acarya means one who knows the scriptural injunctions and follows them practically in life, and teaches them to his disciples... But as a matter of etiquette it is the custom that during the lifetime of your Spiritual Master you bring the prospective disciples to him, and IN HIS ABSENCE OR DISSAPEARANCE YOU CAN ACCEPT DISCIPLES WITHOUT ANY LIMITATION. THIS IS THE LAW OF DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION.”

(Letter to Tusta Krishna, 12/2/75)

The question is whether this is an automatic process that occurs immediately after the demise of a spiritual master. Do all of his disciples become instantaneously gurus? Are they all now the representatives of the *parampara*?

The answer to this is very simple and can be understood from the above quotes from Srila Prabhupada and other quotes that will follow. The disciple does not become a link to the disciplic chain only when his spiritual master passes away. He was always a link since he became a disciple! Technically speaking, AS SOON AS ONE IS INITIATED into the disciplic succession he becomes a representative of the *parampara* and a guru to others that know less than him, as long as “one has been strictly obedient to his spiritual master.” The following quotes from Srila Prabhupada will illustrate this.

“Yes, whoever you tell the chant to, it is effective. You have heard it from me and my disciples, similarly I have heard it from my Guru Maharaj, and so on, and on. Because you have heard it from a pure devotee of the Lord, therefore it is transmitted from you to another. Just as an aerial message is transmitted from one place to another, similarly, this Guru *parampara* system is working. MY DISCIPLES ARE MY AGENTS, MY REPRESENTATIVES, SO BY HEARING IT FROM THEM, YOU ARE RECEIVING IT FROM ME. And because you are a sincere soul, those who are hearing the Mantra

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from you are receiving it in DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, FROM LORD CAITANYA AND FROM LORD KRISHNA.”

(Letter to Andrea Temple, 3/6/68)

“So I thank you very much because I see you are doing very good. Now you are doing something. So you should continue in this way. Do practical solid work. This is required. YOU ARE AN OLD EXPERIENCED DEVOTEE AND I HAVE PERSONALLY TRAINED YOU IN SO MANY THINGS, SO NOW IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO TRAIN OTHERS OTHERWISE WHAT IS THE MEANING OF MY TRAINING YOU? So do it with sincerity and know that Caitanya Mahaprabhu, He will give you all facility and you will be a success.”

(Letter to Gurudasa Swami, 11/12/75)

“The life of a sincere devotee of the Lord is thus explained in a nutshell by Narada Muni by his personal example. SUCH A DEVOTEE, AFTER HIS INITIATION BY THE LORD OR HIS BONA FIDE REPRESENTATIVE, TAKES VERY SERIOUSLY CHANTING OF THE GLORIES OF THE LORD AND TRAVELING ALL OVER THE WORLD SO THAT OTHERS MAY ALSO HEAR THE GLORIES OF THE LORD. Such devotees have no desire for material gain. They are conducted by one single desire: to go back to Godhead. This awaits them in due course on quitting the material body. Because they have the highest aim of life, going back to Godhead, they are never envious of anyone, nor are they proud of being eligible to go back to Godhead. Their only business is to chant and remember the holy name, fame and pastimes of the Lord and, according to personal capacity, to distribute the message for others’ welfare without motive of material gain.”

(SB 1.6.26 ppt)

“When the Lord appeared on this earth 5,000 years ago, He instructed *Bhagavad-gita* to Arjuna, and this purely transcendental message of Krishna has been passed down for the past 5,000 years BY THE MEDIA OF SINCERE DISCIPLES giving submissive aural reception to the words of Krishna via the medium of the bona fide Spiritual Master. THIS ACTS LIKE ELECTRICITY, and if you

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touch a wire anywhere which is connected to the powerhouse, then you will be in contact with the electric current. But IF THE WIRE IS BROKEN OR SEPARATED FROM THE POWERHOUSE, THEN THERE WILL BE NO ELECTRIC CURRENT.”

(Letter to Yamunacharya, 10/21/69)

“Vidhi means Brahma, the first created living being. He is the original student as well as professor of the Vedas. He learned it from Sri Krsna and taught Narada first. So Narada is the second acarya in the line of spiritual disciplic succession. He is the representative of Brahma, and therefore he is respected exactly like Brahma, the father of all vidhis (regulations); similarly ALL OTHER SUCCESSIVE DISCIPLES IN THE CHAIN ARE ALSO EQUALLY RESPECTED AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ORIGINAL SPIRITUAL MASTER.”

(SB 1.4.33)

Then, Q.: Why was no disciple of Prabhupada accepted as guru while Prabhupada was present? A.: They could have been taken as instructing gurus, but, AS A MATTER OF ETIQUETTE, not as initiating gurus.

“...ONE WHO TEACHES CAN BE TREATED AS SPIRITUAL MASTER. It is not that after we become initiated we become perfect. No. It requires teaching. So IF WE TAKE INSTRUCTION FROM THEM, ALL SENIOR GODBROTHERS MAY BE TREATED AS GURU, THERE IS NO HARM. Actually you have only one spiritual master who initiates you, just as you have only one father. But every Vaisnava should be treated as prabhu, master, higher than me, and in this sense, IF I LEARN FROM HIM, HE MAY BE REGARDED AS GURU. It is not that I disobey my real Spiritual Master and call someone else Spiritual Master. That is wrong. It is only that I can call Spiritual Master someone who is teaching me purely what my initiating Spiritual Master has taught. Do you get the sense?”

(Letter to Galim, 11/20/71)

“Yes, A SHIKSA GURU IS ANYONE WHO CAN GIVE SPIRITUAL ADVANCEMENT. You take instruction from my books, and if you are unable to understand any portion of the books, then you can get it explained by any senior devotee, whether

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Madhukanta or anyone else. ANY SENIOR DEVOTEE CAN BE AN INSTRUCTOR IN SPIRITUAL SUBJECT MATTERS.”

(Letter to Satadari, 7/7/74)

“IF KIRTANANANDA MAHARAJA SPEAKS WHAT I SPEAK, THEN HE CAN BE TAKEN AS SIKSHA GURU. Guru shastra *sadhu*. The spiritual master is one, that is a fact. Kirtanananda Swami may be taken as *sadhu* not spiritual master, or as instructor guru. I don't think he is saying anything against our principles, so what is the wrong?”

(Letter to Satyabhama and Paramananda, 7/20/74)

“THE GBC SHOULD ALL BE THE INSTRUCTOR GURUS. I am in the initiator guru, and you should be the instructor guru by teaching what I am teaching and doing what I am doing.”

(Letter to Madhudvisa, 8/4/75)

“...[T]HE ETIQUETTE IS that so long the Spiritual Master is present, all prospective disciples should be brought to him.”

(Letter to Achyutananda and Jaya Govinda, 8/21/68)

“So far as your taking initiation from Brahmananda Maharaja, I HAVE NO OBJECTION, but IT IS THE ETIQUETTE that in the presence of one's Spiritual Master one does not accept disciples.”

(Letter to John Milner 3/24/71)

“But AS A MATTER OF ETIQUETTE it is the custom that during the lifetime of your Spiritual Master you bring the prospective disciples to him, and in his absence or disappearance you can accept disciples without any limitation. THIS IS THE LAW OF DISCIPULIC SUCCESSION.”

(Letter to Tusta Krishna, 12/2/75)

“[W]e are interested in preparing acarya, but THE ETIQUETTE IS, at least for the period the guru is present, one should not become acarya. EVEN IF HE IS COMPLETE he should not, BECAUSE THE ETIQUETTE IS, IF SOMEBODY COMES FOR BECOMING INITIATED, IT IS THE DUTY OF SUCH PERSON TO BRING THAT PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATE TO HIS ACARYA. Not

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that “Now people are coming to me, so I can become acarya.” That is *avamanya*. *Navamanyeta karhicit*. Don’t transgress this etiquette. *Navamanyeta*. That will be falldown. Just like during the lifetime of our Guru Maharaja, all our Godbrothers now who are acting as acarya, they did not do so. THAT IS NOT ETIQUETTE.”

(Lecture, Adi-lila 1.13 – Mayapur, April 6, 1975)

In a late conversation, Srila Prabhupada hints that it was up to his discretion to allow his disciples to become guru even in his presence, despite what he had always said –that generally it is not the etiquette. And then there was also the question of qualification.

“Yes. I shall choose some guru. I shall say, ‘Now you become acarya. You become authorized.’ I am waiting for that. You become all acarya. I retire completely. But the training must be complete.”

(Conversation, Bombay 4/22/77)

Even long before that, in the beginning of the movement, Srila Prabhupada spoke of his disciples becoming initiating gurus in his presence.

“MAYBE BY 1975 ALL OF MY DISCIPLES WILL BE ALLOWED TO INITIATE AND INCREASE THE NUMBERS OF THE GENERATIONS. THAT IS MY PROGRAM.”

(Letter to Hansadutta, 12/3/68)

“BY 1975, ALL OF THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED ALL OF THE ABOVE EXAMINATIONS WILL BE SPECIFICALLY EMPOWERED TO INITIATE AND INCREASE THE NUMBER OF THE KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS POPULATION.”

(Letter to Kirtanananda, 1/12/69)

This is not a new concept, unheard of in our *sampradaya*. For example, in his renowned book –a transcendental novel– *Jaiva Dharma* (Ch.I), Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura presents a passage in which a guru takes his disciple to meet his own guru, his disciple’s parama-guru. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura initiated disciples while his father, Bhaktivinoda Thakura, and his own initiating guru were still present. And in the time of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu –the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself–,

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Pundarika Vidyanidhi initiated Gadadhara Pandita. Other associates of Lord Caitanya also initiated disciples in His presence.

What we have not heard of up to now is of someone taking initiation into the *parampara* from a departed acarya. Rather, in this connection there is the example of the story of Srinivasa Acarya. When seeking out someone to teach him the *Bhagavatam*, he was faced a few times with the departure of the guru he had chosen –including Gadadhara Pandita and Rupa Goswami. Still, he never thought of linking directly with the departed guru but sought initiation and instruction from another acarya present at the moment. The Bhakti-ratnakara records that he was finally initiated by Gopal Bhatta Goswami.

Now, we sympathize very much with all who have suffered any kind of pain, disappointment, bewilderment and loss of faith under the so-called “Zonal Acarya” system, by which a guru was assigned a geographical zone where all newcomers were expected to take initiation from him. Srila Prabhupada had warned about such a system:

“It is imperative that a serious person accept a bona fide spiritual master in terms of the sastraic injunctions. SRI JIVA GOSVAMI ADVISES THAT ONE NOT ACCEPT A SPIRITUAL MASTER IN TERMS OF HEREDITARY OR CUSTOMARY SOCIAL AND ECCLESIASTICAL CONVENTIONS. One should simply try to find a genuinely qualified spiritual master for actual advancement in spiritual understanding.” (C.c. Adi 1.35 ppt.)

But frustration does not justify the concoction of a new philosophy. After all failures, disappointments and deceptions, the process for spiritual understanding and self-realization remains the same: one must go to a guru.

“One cannot become a perfect devotee of the Lord without having touched the lotus feet of a great devotee. [...]THE PROCESS OF SELF-REALIZATION AND THE PATH HOME, BACK TO GODHEAD, MEANS SURRENDERING TO THE BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND TAKING THE DUST OF HIS LOTUS FEET ON ONE’S HEAD. Thus one advances on the path of transcendental realization.” (SB 4.31.28)

Chapter One: Disciplic Succession- Unbroken, Still?

“I am very much encouraged that you are all chanting Hare Krishna and trying to become Krishna Conscious. But I do not advise that you approach the matter of perfecting your life in this independent way. UNLESS THERE IS CONNECTION WITH A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, COMING IN THE LINE OF DISCIPIC SUCCESSION, THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF MAKING PROGRESS IN SPIRITUAL LIFE. So I have established ISKCON centers for the purpose of catching up the Lotus Feet of Krishna by intimate connection with the spiritual master. These are my authorized centers for that purpose. You say that whatever I instruct you you will carry out, so again my instruction is that you abandon this independent scheme and join your good god- brothers and sisters at some one of our ISKCON centers.”

(Letter to Friends, 5/23/72)

“In the Bhagavad Gita it is said that one should ‘prostrate oneself at the feet of the wise, rendering him all forms of service & question him with a guileless heart again & again’, [and THIS] IS THE ONLY MEANS TO ATTAIN SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE. THE PROCESS OF SPECULATION WITHOUT APPROACHING THE BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS SIMPLY A WASTE OF TIME. In the Chaitanya Charitamrita, Lord Chaitanya affirms this principle, when he says that a fortunate living being while wandering in different species of life gets the chance of meeting a bona fide spiritual master by the causeless mercy of Krishna.”

(Letter to Aatie, 10/28/67)

“[...]IF A DISCIPLE GETS A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, simply by satisfying him, he can attain a similar opportunity to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” (SB 4.28.43)

“[...]ONE CANNOT AROUSE KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS SIMPLY BY HIS OWN MENTAL SPECULATION. ONE MUST SURRENDER TO A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER. ONLY THIS PROCESS WILL HELP ONE.” (SB 4.26.20)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

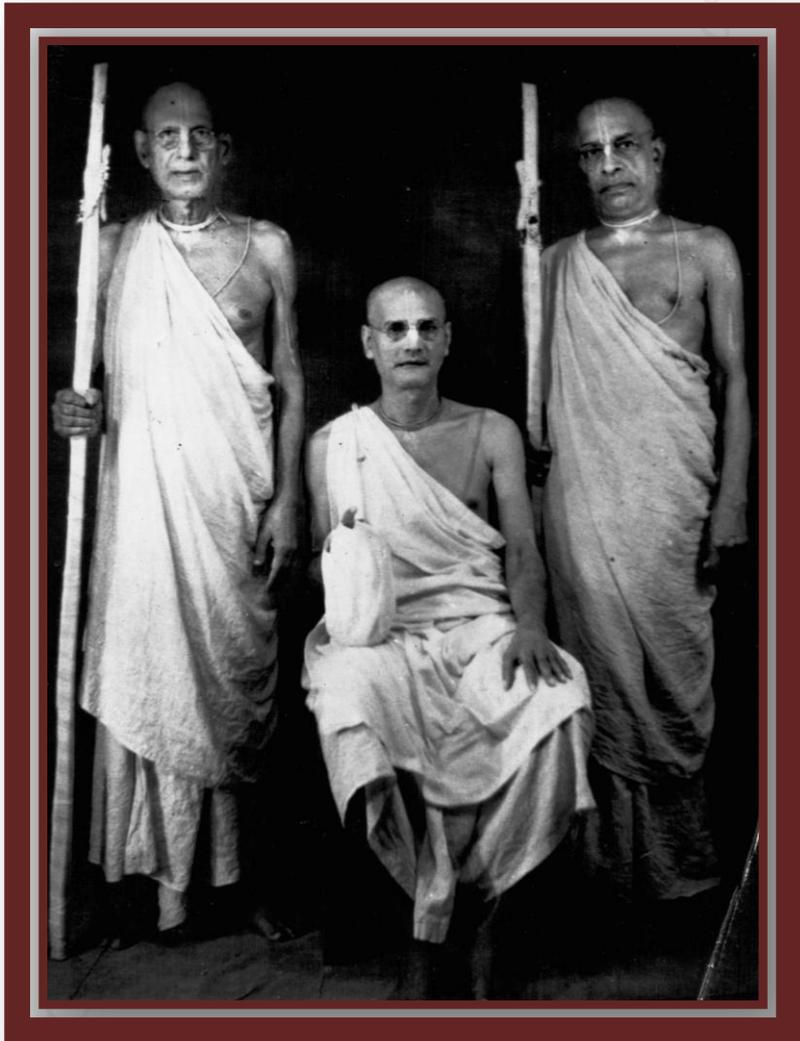
“WE CANNOT MANUFACTURE OUR OWN PROCESS, therefore mental speculation does not at all help us in spiritual life. ONE SIMPLY HAS TO SURRENDER HIMSELF TO HIS GURU and everything will be revealed to him.”

(Letter to Sriji devi dasi, 11/7/74)

The question to many is whether today there is anyone in ISKCON qualified to be guru. In analyzing this I will apply the procedure known in philosophy and mathematics as *reductio ad absurdum* [reduction to absurdity].

The Guru and What Prabhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said



Chapter Two

"There Are Many Societies..."

"So far as your question about controversy amongst the disciples of Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Maharaj, that is a fact. But this controversy is not material. Just like in a national program, different political parties are sometimes in conflict and make propaganda against each other, but their central point is always service to the country. Similarly, amongst the disciples of Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati there may be some controversy, but the central point is how to preach the mission of His Divine Grace. If the central point is fixed up then there is no harm in such controversy. Every individual being must have his opinion; that is the significance of individuality, but all such different opinions must coincide in Krishna. [...]So you do not be disturbed by such controversial points. Better you engage your mind very seriously in the matter of the service entrusted upon you. That will make you progressive in Krishna Consciousness."

(Letter to Mandali Bhadra, 7/28/69)

FIRST OF ALL, if there is no bona fide spiritual master in ISKCON, then we are saying that in our movement there is no current representative of the *parampara*. In other words, it would mean that ISKCON is, for the time being, disconnected from the *parampara*. Why? Because "no spiritual master" means, according to Prabhupada, that ISKCON would be unable to provide to the people "the actual connection with Krsna consciousness."

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“From the date of initiation by the spiritual master, the connection between Krsna and a person cultivating Krsna consciousness is established. WITHOUT INITIATION BY A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, THE ACTUAL CONNECTION WITH KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS IS NEVER PERFORMED.”

(NOD Introduction, Second Edition, pg. XXII)

“I thank you very much for your acceptance of my guidance. My guidance means Krishna’s guidance. I am very poor and therefore I can pray only to Krishna for your guidance. Krishna is Absolute and we are all under His guidance but the bona fide Spiritual Master is accepted as guidance because he is transparent via media between Krishna and the devotee. THE DEVOTEE HAS NO ACCESS TO KRISHNA WITHOUT THE VIA MEDIA.”

(Letter to: Umapati – Los Angeles 14 January, 1968)

“Your next question is, should we love Krishna or love the spiritual master: YOU CANNOT GO TO KRISHNA DIRECTLY, LOVING HIM. It is common sense that if Krishna is the object of your love, His pet dog is also the object of your love. Friends meet friends and if the friend is with his dog the gentleman pats his dog first, is it not? So the man becomes automatically pleased, his dog being patted. I have seen it in your country. The conclusion is this: Without pleasing the spiritual master he cannot please Krishna. IF ANYONE TRIES TO PLEASE KRISHNA DIRECTLY, HE’S FOOL NUMBER ONE.”

(Letter to: Tusta Krsna – Ahmedabad 14 December, 1972)

“As already stated, Brahma is the original spiritual master for the universe, and since he was initiated by the Lord Himself, the message of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is coming down by disciplic succession, and IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE REAL MESSAGE OF SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM ONE SHOULD APPROACH THE CURRENT LINK, OR SPIRITUAL MASTER, IN THE CHAIN OF

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DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION. After being initiated by the proper spiritual master in that chain of succession, one should engage himself in the discharge of tapasya in the execution of devotional service.” (S.B. 2.9.7)

“...WE MUST KNOW THAT THE VEDIC SOUNDS RECORDED IN SYMBOLIC EXPRESSIONS CANNOT BE UNDERSTOOD BY ANYONE WITHIN THE UNIVERSE UNLESS AND UNTIL ONE IS INSPIRED BY THE VIBRATION OF SUPERNATURAL (APRAKRTA) SOUND, WHICH DESCENDS IN THE CHAIN OF DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION from the Lord to Brahma, from Brahma to Narada, from Narada to Vyasa and so on.

“NO MUNDANE SCHOLAR CAN TRANSLATE OR REVEAL THE TRUE IMPORT OF THE VEDIC MANTRAS (HYMNS). THEY CANNOT BE UNDERSTOOD UNLESS ONE IS INSPIRED OR INITIATED BY THE AUTHORIZED SPIRITUAL MASTER. The original spiritual master is the Lord Himself, and the succession comes down through the sources of *parampara*, as clearly stated in the Fourth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gita*. So UNLESS ONE RECEIVES THE TRANSCENDENTAL KNOWLEDGE FROM THE AUTHORIZED PARAMPARA, ONE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED USELESS....” (SB 2.4.22)

“...[A] mantra should be received from the disciplic succession. The Vedic injunction is *sampradaya-vihina ye mantras te nisphala matah*. IF YOUR MANTRA DOES NOT COME THROUGH THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, IT WILL NOT BE EFFECTIVE. *Mantras te nisphala*. *Nisphala* means that it will not produce the desired result. So the mantra must be received through the proper channel, or it will not act. A mantra cannot be manufactured. It must come from the original Supreme Absolute, coming down through the channel of disciplic succession. It has to be received in that way, and only then will it act.”

(Search for Liberation, pgs. 17-18)

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“Your sentiments expressed in this letter are transcendently relished. Certainly you are mine and I am Krishna’s, therefore you are also Krishna’s. In the Krishna Consciousness activities that is the process. BY FOLLOWING THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, BEGINNING FROM KRISHNA, EVERYTHING BECOMES ULTIMATELY CONNECTED WITH KRISHNA. And Krishna being absolute, anything connected with Him becomes absolute, without any duality of concept like in the material world. In the material world, it is called illusion because everyone thinks I or my. But in the spiritual world, everything is Krishna. We being part and parcel of Krishna, WHEN WE SURRENDER FULLY UNTO KRISHNA WITH SINCERITY OF PURPOSE, THROUGH THE TRANSPARENT VIA MEDIA OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. One who thinks himself as Krishna’s, he is non-different from Krishna.
(Letter to Gargamuni, 6/18/68)

“In the *Bhagavad-gita*, therefore, it is recommended, acaryopasanam. Acarya-upasana. Not only worshiping the Lord, but also the acarya. Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, guru-krsna-krpaya paya bhakti-lata-bija. GURU –ACARYA– AND KRSNA. ONE SHOULD SEEK FAVOR OF BOTH OF THEM. Not that ‘I am now seeking favor of Krsna. What is the use of guru or acarya?’ No. YOU CANNOT OVERLAP ACARYA AND GO TO KRSNA. THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE. KRSNA WILL NOT ACCEPT YOU. Just like if you want to see a big man you should go through his secretary, through his orderly, doorkeeper, similarly, OUR PROCESS IS ACARYOPASANAM, GO THROUGH THE ACARYA. That is the injunction of the Vedas.”
(Lecture, London 9/23/69)

“We sing in our daily prayers, *yasya prasada bhagavat- prasado yasyaprasadan na gatih kuto ‘pi*. By the pleasure of the spiritual master, one can get extraordinary power, especially in spiritual advancement. THE BLESSINGS OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER ARE MORE POWERFUL THAN ONE’S PERSONAL ENDEAVOR FOR SUCH ADVANCEMENT. Narottama dasa Thakura therefore says:

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guru-mukha-padma-vakya, cittete kariya aikya,
ara na kariha mane asa

“Especially for spiritual advancement, one should carry out the bona fide order of the spiritual master. BY THE PARAMPARA SYSTEM, ONE CAN THUS BE ENDOWED WITH THE ORIGINAL SPIRITUAL POWER COMING FROM THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD (*evam parampara-praptam imam rajarsayo viduh*). (SB 8.15.28)

“If you have got connection with the original power house then there is electricity. Otherwise it is simply wire. What is the value? Simply wiring will not help you. THE CONNECTION MUST BE THERE. And if you lose the connection then it is of no value. Therefore KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT MEANS YOU HAVE TO KEEP YOURSELF ALWAYS CONNECTED WITH THE ORIGINAL POWERHOUSE. Then wherever you’ll go there will be light. There’ll be light. IF YOU’RE DISCONNECTED THERE WILL BE NO LIGHT. The bulb is there. The wiring is there. The switch is there. Everything is there. That’s how Arjuna is feeling. That I am the same Arjuna. I am the same Arjuna who fought in the Battlefield of Kuruksetra. I was known as so great a warrior and my bow is the same bow and my arrow is the same arrow. But now it is useless. I could not defend myself because... disconnected with Krsna. Krsna is no longer.” (Lecture, Los Angeles 12/6/73)

“Just like electrification. Touching electricity by one wire, another joining another, another wire; IF THE TOUCH IS THERE FACTUAL, then the electricity is everywhere. [...]AS SOON AS IT IS TOUCHED WITH THE DIRECT CONNECTION... THAT IS CALLED DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION. Because the connection is coming down ONE AFTER ANOTHER, so if we touch here, THE SPIRITUAL MASTER WHO IS CONNECTED BY THE SAME WAY, then the electric connection is there. [...]Evam parampara praptam imam rajarsayo viduh. SIMPLY WE HAVE TO SEE

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WHETHER THE CONNECTION IS DISCONNECTED. If the connection is there, tight, then the electricity [will] come without fail.”
(Lecture, Los Angeles 11/29/68)

“*Evam parampara-praptam, sa kaleneha mahata yogo nastah parantapa. Yogo nastah.* AS SOON AS THE PARAMPARA SYSTEM IS NOT ACCEPTED, THE SO-CALLED COMMENTARY ON BHAGAVAD-GITA IS LOST OR ROTTEN.”

(Lecture, Bhubaneswara 1/24/77)

“[For example:] Electricity. The copper is not electricity, but when it is charged with electricity, if it is touched, that is electricity. And, similarly, this *parampara* system, the electricity is going. IF YOU CUT THE PARAMPARA SYSTEM, THEN THERE IS NO ELECTRICITY. THEREFORE IT IS STRESSED SO MUCH. *Sa kaleneha mahata yogo nastah parantapa* [Bg. 4.2: ‘In course of time the succession was broken, and therefore the science as it appears to be lost’]. The electricity is lost.” (Morning Walk, Bombay 1/4/77)

Did Srila Prabhupada leave his movement crippled or disconnected? After being in the world a most worthy –and in many places and times, the only–representative of Vaishnavism, ISKCON, the movement which we had always understood as being most dear to Krsna, was dealt by Krsna a deathblow, taking away Srila Prabhupada untimely, when there was yet no one qualified to keep the connection with the disciplic succession. It makes perfect sense (!). In God we trust!

Anyway, continuing our analysis based on logic, and even assuming that in ISKCON there is no one qualified to be guru, the next question (specially for a newcomer) is whether there is anyone qualified *outside of ISKCON*.

Some answer “no” without any doubts, based on certain statements by Srila Prabhupada found in some of his purports, letters and conversations. For example, undeniably, there are statements in which Srila Prabhupada forbade his disciples from associating with his Godbrothers. Some of them had been very critical of Prabhupada’s activities and had opposed him; others

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had a different vision of how to serve their spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura. But, frankly, can we safely conclude that Prabhupada actually thought he was the only bona fide guru in the world? Was he expecting all of the disciples of his Godbrothers to reject their gurus and become his disciples? Was he expecting all of his Godbrothers to come under his authority? Did Srila Prabhupada think his was the only genuine society of devotees?

Although nowadays some proponents are very readily answering “yes” to most of these questions, I will not dare to speculate about the mind of my spiritual master. But many of his statements in his books and other letters and conversations answer these questions with a sound “no!”. The fact is that either Srila Prabhupada contradicted himself, which would be our conclusion if we accepted those proponents’ conclusions, or they are misunderstanding some of Srila Prabhupada’s statements. Our evidence makes us believe the latter.

“Among Vaisnavas there may be some difference of opinion due to everyone’s personal identity, but despite all personal differences, the cult of Krsna consciousness must go on. We can see that under the instructions of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Maharaja began preaching the Krsna consciousness movement in an organized way within the past hundred years. THE DISCIPLES OF SRILA BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASVATI GOSVAMI MAHARAJA are all Godbrothers, and although there are some differences of opinion, and although we are not acting conjointly, EVERYONE OF US IS SPREADING THIS KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT ACCORDING TO HIS OWN CAPACITY AND PRODUCING MANY DISCIPLES TO SPREAD IT ALL OVER THE WORLD. As far as we are concerned, we have already started the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, and many thousands of Europeans and Americans have joined this movement. Indeed, it is spreading like wildfire. The cult of Krsna consciousness, based on the nine principles of devotional service (*sravanam kirtanam visnoh smaranam pada-sevanam/ arcanam vandanam dasyam sakhyam atmanivedanam*),

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will never be stopped. It will go on without distinction of caste, creed, color or country. No one can check it.

“The word *bhoksyate* is very important in this verse. Just as a king gives protection to his citizens, THESE DEVOTEES, FOLLOWING THE PRINCIPLES OF DEVOTIONAL SERVICE, WILL GIVE PROTECTION TO ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD. The people of the world are very much harassed by so-called religious-principled *svamis*, *yogis*, *karmis* and *jnanis*, but none of these can show the right way to become elevated to the spiritual platform. There are primarily four parties spreading devotional service all over the universe. These are the Ramanuja-*sampradaya*, the Madhva-*sampradaya*, the Visnusvami-*sampradaya* and the Nimbarka-*sampradaya*. The Madhva-Gaudiya-*sampradaya* in particular comes from Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. ALL THESE DEVOTEES ARE SPREADING THIS KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT VERY WIDELY AND GIVING PROTECTION TO INNOCENT PEOPLE WHO ARE BEING SO MUCH EMBARRASSED BY PSEUDO-AVATARAS, -SVAMIS, -YOGIS AND OTHERS.” (SB 4.28.31)

“In the same order as Kardama Muni, about one hundred years ago, Thakura Bhaktivinoda also wanted to beget a child who could preach the philosophy and teachings of Lord Caitanya to the fullest extent. By his prayers to the Lord he had as his child BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASVATI GOSVAMI MAHARAJA, WHO AT THE PRESENT MOMENT IS PREACHING THE PHILOSOPHY OF LORD CAITANYA THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE WORLD THROUGH HIS BONA FIDE DISCIPLES.” (SB 3.22.19)

“THERE ARE MANY VAISNAVA FAMILIES IN BENGAL whose members, although not actually born *brahmanas*, act as acaryas by initiating disciples and offering the sacred thread as enjoined in the Vaisnava tantras. For example, in the families of Thakura Raghunanda, Acarya Thakura Krsnadasa, Navani Hoda and

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Rasikananda-deva (a disciple of Syamananda Prabhu), the sacred thread ceremony is performed, as it is for the caste Gosvamis, and this system has continued for the past three to four hundred years. Accepting disciples born in *brahmana* families, THEY ARE BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTERS who have the facility to worship the salagrama-sila which is worshiped with the Deity.” (Cc Adi 7.45)

“Birth in a family of yogis or transcendentalists—those with great wisdom—is praised herein because the child born in such a family receives a spiritual impetus from the very beginning of his life. It is especially the case in the acarya or gosvami families. Such families are very learned and devoted by tradition and training, and thus they become spiritual masters. In India there are many such acarya families, but they have now degenerated due to insufficient education and training. BY THE GRACE OF THE LORD, THERE ARE STILL FAMILIES THAT FOSTER TRANSCENDENTALISTS GENERATION AFTER GENERATION. It is certainly very fortunate to take birth in such families. Fortunately, both our spiritual master, Om Visnupada Sri Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Maharaja, and our humble self had the opportunity to take birth in such families, by the grace of the Lord, and both of us were trained in the devotional service of the Lord from the very beginning of our lives. Later on we met by the order of the transcendental system.” (BG 6.42)

“THERE ARE MANY SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS OF PURE DEVOTEES, and if someone with just a little faith begins to associate with such societies, his advancement to pure devotional service is rapid.” (NOD, 2nd. Ed., Ch 19, pg.146)

Srila Prabhupada gave the absolute understanding of the disagreements that may appear in the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

“Disunity between individual souls is so strong within this material world that even in a society of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, members sometimes appear disunited due to their having different opinions and leaning toward material things. Actually, in Kṛṣṇa consciousness

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there cannot be two opinions. There is only one goal: to serve Kṛṣṇa to one's best ability. IF THERE IS SOME DISAGREEMENT OVER SERVICE, SUCH DISAGREEMENT IS TO BE TAKEN AS SPIRITUAL. THOSE WHO ARE ACTUALLY ENGAGED IN THE SERVICE OF THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD CANNOT BE DISUNITED IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCE. This makes the Supreme Personality of Godhead very happy and willing to award all kinds of benediction to His devotees, as indicated in this verse." (SB 4.30.8)

"THERE IS NO REASON WHY ACHARYAS CANNOT DIFFER ON CERTAIN POINTS." (Letter to Upendra, 2/19/72)

"According to Sripada Sridhara Svami, the original commentator on the *Bhagavatam*, there is not always a devastation after the change of every Manu. And yet this inundation after the period of Caksusa Manu took place in order to show some wonders to Satyavrata. But Sri Jiva Gosvami has given definite proofs from authoritative scriptures (like Visnu-dharmottara, Markandeya Purana, Harivamsa, etc.) that there is always a devastation after the end of each and every Manu. Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti has also supported Srila Jiva Gosvami, and he (Sri Cakravarti) has also quoted from *Bhagavatamṛta* about this inundation after each Manu."

(SB 1.3.15 ppt)

"[...]]f one is following the instruction of his spiritual master and that instruction is different from the instructions of another spiritual master, this is called detailed information. But the basic principle of acceptance of a spiritual master is good everywhere, although the details may be different." (NOD, Ch 6, 2nd Ed, Pg. 53)

"Every acarya has a specific means of propagating his spiritual movement with the aim of bringing men to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore, the method of one acarya may be different from that of another, but the ultimate goal is never neglected." (Adi 7.37 ppt)

"Ballabacharya's teachings are bonafide. THIS DIFFERENCE OF OPINION IS THERE ALWAYS. Just like you differ with your

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husband, but that doesn't mean that you and your husband are not devotees...” (Letter to Ekayani, 8/31/71)

This is exactly the same notion he applied in a previous quote (and in several others below) when he explained the position of his Godbrothers:

“Among Vaisnavas there may be some difference of opinion due to everyone's personal identity, but despite all personal differences, the cult of Krsna consciousness must go on. [...] THE DISCIPLES OF SRILA BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASVATI GOSVAMI MAHARAJA are all Godbrothers, and although there are some differences of opinion, and although we are not acting conjointly, EVERYONE OF US IS SPREADING THIS KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT ACCORDING TO HIS OWN CAPACITY AND PRODUCING MANY DISCIPLES TO SPREAD IT ALL OVER THE WORLD.” (SB 4.28.31)

Hardly the way to disapprove of them...! And there are also letters and talks in which he acknowledges directly or indirectly the validity of the programs of his Godbrothers (two of the letters quoted are also in connection with a “Goduncle”) as well as their position as spiritual masters, or expresses his affection or submission to some of them. For example, in one such letter Srila Prabhupada even speaks of a possible “merger” of ISKCON and the Gaudiya Mission (different from Gaudiya Math) in spite of disagreeing with some of its statutes (specifically, those concerning the acarya naming a successor!):

“So practically there is no difference of opinion in our missionary activities, especially because we are deriving inspiration from His Divine Grace Prabhupad Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Maharaj. I THINK ALL OF OUR GODBROTHERS ARE DOING THE SAME MISSIONARY ACTIVITIES WITHOUT A DOUBT, but still the regrettable fact is we are doing all separately, not in conjunction. I have also read specifically your articles on the matter of acharyas, wherein on the 14th Paragraph I see the acharya shall be entitled to nominate in writing his successive acharya. But WE DO NOT FIND ANY RECORD WHERE OUR SRILA PRABHUPAD NOMINATED ANY ACHARYA AFTER HIM. DIFFERENT PERSONS HAVE INTERPRETED ON THIS POINT, AND

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EVERY ONE OF OUR GODBROTHERS ARE ACTING AS ACHARYA, SO THIS IS A CONTROVERSIAL POINT WHICH I DO NOT WISH TO ENTER WHILE WE ARE PROPOSING FOR COOPERATION. I THINK NOW WE SHOULD COOPERATE FULLY FOR PREACHING THE MISSION OF SRILA PRABHUPAD. [...] I WISH THAT GAUDIYA MISSION SHOULD SEND THEIR PREACHERS AND ESTABLISH DIFFERENT CENTERS IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE WORLD. THAT WILL FULFILL THE MISSION OF SRILA BHAKTISIDDHANTA GOSWAMI MAHARAJA.

“...We can also cooperate in selling your books in our different centers, and similarly you can cooperate by selling our books in your different centers. SO THERE IS AMPLE OPPORTUNITY OF COOPERATION IN GOOD WILL, AND IF WE CONTINUE LIKE THAT, IN THE NEAR FUTURE IT MAY BE POSSIBLE THAT WE COMPLETELY AMALGAMATE BOTH OUR INSTITUTIONS. I hope you will give your due consideration to my proposals and shall be glad to hear from you at your earliest convenience. ALSO PLEASE LET ME KNOW IF PERSONALLY I CAN BECOME A MEMBER OF YOUR SOCIETY under clause 3 on page 19 of the memorandum.

[...]

“Please offer my humble obeisances to HIS DIVINE GRACE Sripad B.K. Audulomi Maharaj and other Vaishnavas of the Math.”

(Letter to H.H. Swami B.S. Bhagabat Maharaj, 8/21/69)

“There is immense potency of preaching the philosophy of Krishna Consciousness under the guidance of Lord Caitanya, and I WISH THAT ALL MY GODBROTHERS SHOULD GO TO DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE WORLD AND PREACH THIS SUBLIME MESSAGE EVERYWHERE, because that is the desire of Lord Caitanya. Of course, as far as possible I am trying to spread this movement all over the world, and at the present moment my activities are prominent from Hamburg to Tokyo, a distance of 14,000 miles. I think the circumference of the whole earth is 25,000 miles.

Chapter Two: “There Are Many Societies....”

So this should be covered by some of our Godbrothers so that Lord Chaitanya’s message may be properly executed. I do not know why none of our Godbrothers attempt to this important side of our propaganda. Just now I am in correspondence with the Gaudiya Mission secretary, and I have promised also to help them if they will take up this work.” (Letter to Dr. Nagendra Babu, 8/28/69)

“I AM PREPARED TO COOPERATE WITH THE GAUDIYA MISSION WHOLEHEARTEDLY. I AM PREPARED ALSO TO BE AMALGAMATED, and they have invited me to go to India to talk frankly, face to face. [...] I am sure if Gaudiya Mission and I combine together, it will be very nice thing to preach the cult of Lord Caitanya all over the world. I can organize all the branches of the Gaudiya Math in India, and if there is any financial question, it will be not difficult for our society to help in that way also. SO IF YOU CAN NEGOTIATE ABOUT OUR AMALGAMATION ON A COOPERATIVE BASIS, IT WILL BE GREAT SERVICE TO SRILA PRABHUPAD.”

(Letter to Dr. Shyam Sundardas *Brahmacari*, 9/5/69)

“I am very glad to know that His Grace Sadananda Swami has written that he plans to visit the temple this Fall. When he visits kindly give him good reception and obeisances. He is my old friend and Godbrother. CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU WAS VERY MUCH RESPECTFUL TO THE GODBROTHER OF HIS SPIRITUAL MASTER.” (Letter to Krsna das, 6/22/70)

“ 20th February, 1970

My Dear Jagannatham Prabhu,

Please accept my humble obeisances. I am so glad to receive your letter dated 10 February, 1970, redirected from my New York center.

Perhaps you are the eldest amongst us now living as disciples of Srila Prabhupada. You are now eighty-one years old, and I am only seventy-four. Therefore I am your younger brother and I shall always expect blessings from you.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

[...]You are so kind upon me, and as your younger brother I shall always be ready for your service. So please treat me as your humble servant. Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours affectionately,

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami”

“Even amongst our Godbrothers we have misunderstanding but NONE OF US IS ASTRAY FROM THE SERVICE OF KRISHNA. My Guru Maharaj ordered us to execute his mission combinedly. Unfortunately we are now separated. BUT NONE OF US HAVE STOPPED PREACHING KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS. Even if there was misunderstanding amongst the Godbrothers of my Guru Maharaj NONE OF THEM DEVIATED FROM THE TRANSCENDENTAL LOVING SERVICE OF KRISHNA. The idea is that provocation and misunderstanding may remain between one man and another. But our staunch faith in Krishna Consciousness may not allow any material disruption. PLEASE THEREFORE TRY TO BE SYMPATHETIC WITH ANY PERSON EVEN IF THEY DIFFER. THE ONLY QUALIFICATION WE HAVE TO SCRUTINIZE IS IF ONE IS ACTING IN KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS AS FAR AS ONE IS ABLE TO DO IT.”

(Letter to Brahmananda, 11/18/67)

“So far as your question about controversy amongst the disciples of Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Maharaj, that is a fact. But THIS CONTROVERSY IS NOT MATERIAL. Just like in a national program, different political parties are sometimes in conflict and make propaganda against each other, but their central point is always service to the country. Similarly, AMONGST THE DISCIPLES OF BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASWATI THERE MAY BE SOME CONTROVERSY, BUT THE CENTRAL POINT IS HOW TO PREACH THE MISSION OF HIS DIVINE GRACE. If the central point is fixed up then there is no harm in such controversy. EVERY INDIVIDUAL BEING MUST HAVE HIS OPINION; THAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIVIDUALITY,

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BUT ALL SUCH DIFFERENT OPINIONS MUST COINCIDE IN KRISHNA. In the battlefield of Kurukshetra were Arjuna and Bhishma who were fighting with one another, and because Krishna was on the side of Arjuna, sometimes Bhishma pierced the body of Krishna also with arrows. But still they remained the greatest devotees of the Lord, and Krishna accepted the friendship of Arjuna just as He accepted the inimical arrows of Bhishma in the same loving spirit. SO YOU DO NOT BE DISTURBED BY SUCH CONTROVERSIAL POINTS. Better you engage your mind very seriously in the matter of the service entrusted upon you. That will make you progressive in Krishna Consciousness.”

(Letter to Mandali Bhadra, 7/28/69)

“Whenever our men go to visit Lalit Prasad Thakur they must take some presentation, cash or kind, worth not less than Rs.50/- at least. Some nice presentation should be always given. Not that you go empty handed. It is customary to make a presentation to the Deity and Spiritual Master. LALIT PRASAD THAKUR IS SON OF BHAKTIVINODE THAKUR AND YOUNGER BROTHER OF BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASWATI SO HE IS CONSIDERED MY SPIRITUAL MASTER.”

(Letter to Jayapataka, 9/2/71)

“Calcutta

4th March, 1972

His Divine Grace Lalita Prasad Thakur,

Bhaktivinode Institute

Ulla-Birnagar, Nadia dist., W. Bengal,

My dear Uncle Prabhupad Lalita Prasad Thakur,

Kindly accept my humble obeisances at your Lotus Feet. The whole day spent at your Temple on Thursday was so pleasant, and happy that all my disciples felt celestial blessings in your association. Personally, I am so much encouraged by you, that I appreciate this as

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the blessings of Bhaktivinode Thakur through his living representative.

Now you can expedite the lease agreement immediately so that before returning to U.S.A. in about three weeks' time I may advise my assistants to take up the work seriously and begin construction and other things.

Next time when I go to you I shall stay not less than one week.

Hoping this will meet you in the very best health and happy mood.

Yours affectionately,

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami”

“SO I AM FEELING NOW VERY MUCH OBLIGED TO MY, THIS GODBROTHER, THAT HE CARRIED OUT THE WISH OF MY SPIRITUAL MASTER AND ENFORCED ME TO ACCEPT THIS SANNYASA ORDER. So this Godbrother, His Holiness Kesava Maharaja, is no more. HE HAS ENTERED KRSNA'S ABODE. So I wish to pass a resolution of bereavement and send them. So... And I have composed one verse also in this connection in Sanskrit. So you all present, you sign this. I shall send it tomorrow.

[...]

“So anyway, ...I did not want to accept this *sannyasa* order, but this Godbrother forced me. ‘You must.’ Apayayan mam, he forcefully made me to drink this medicine. [...] [T]he Vaisnavas, the spiritual master, they forcefully [say], ‘You drink this medicine.’ You see. Apayayan mam anabhitsu andham sri-kesava-bhakti-prajana-nama.

“So this my Godbrother, his name is Kesava, Bhaktiprajnan Kesava. Krpambudhi. So he did this favor upon me because he was an ocean of mercy. [...] So I am offering my respectful obeisances unto this His Holiness, because he forcefully made me adopt this *sannyasa* order. So he is no more in this world. He has entered Krsna's abode. So I am offering my respectful obeisances along with my disciples.

Chapter Two: “There Are Many Societies....”

[...]“We are writing like this, ‘Resolved that we, the undersigned members and devotees of International Society for Krishna Consciousness Incorporated, in a condolence meeting under the presidency of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, today the 21st of October, 1968, at our Seattle branch, express our profound bereavement on hearing the passing of HIS DIVINE GRACE OM VISNUPADA SRI SRIMAD BHAKTIPRAJNAN KESAVA GOSVAMI MAHARAJA, THE SANNYASA GURU, PRECEPTOR, OF OUR SPIRITUAL MASTER, on October 6th, 1968, at his headquarters residence in Nabadwip, West Bengal. We offer our respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of Sri Srimad B.P. Kesava Gosvami Maharaja with the following verse composed on this occasion by our spiritual master.’ This verse I have already explained to you. So I wish that you all sign this and I’ll send it tomorrow by air mail.”

(Condolence Lecture, Seattle 10/21/68)

The Guru and What Prabhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)



Chapter Three

"You Cannot Jump Over!"

"Suppose I have heard something from my spiritual master. So I speak to you the same thing. So this is parampara system. You cannot imagine what my spiritual master said. Or even if you read some books you cannot understand unless you understand it from me. This is called parampara system. You cannot jump over to the superior guru, neglecting the next acarya, immediate next acarya."

(Lecture, Los Angeles 12/8/73)

ANALYZING THAT LAST QUOTE from the previous chapter: Was Srila Prabhupada expecting that the disciples of his departed sannyasa guru turn

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in their temples to ISKCON and from then on make disciples for him (Prabhupada)?... Therefore, accepting that there are other bona fide societies and spiritual masters outside of ISKCON and no qualified guru within, why would any newcomer want to remain in our society waiting for a “Vaisnava messiah” to someday appear and initiate him? Specially when all of Srila Prabhupada’s teachings stress constantly the absolute necessity of going to a spiritual master and taking initiation from him. What would be of our society if we could not provide that very thing that our own books and propaganda present as essential and supreme, i.e. the shelter of a spiritual master?

“SOMEBODY WAS ASKING WHETHER GURU IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. YES, ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. THAT IS THE VEDIC INJUNCTION. The Vedas say *tad-vijnanartham*. *Tad-vijnana* means spiritual knowledge. Spiritual knowledge—for acquiring spiritual knowledge. *Tad-vijnanartham*. *Sa*—one. *Gurum eva—eva* means must. *Gurum*—to a guru. MUST GO TO GURU. Not ‘a’ guru, ‘the’ guru. Guru is one.”

(Lecture, London 8/22/73)

“THE PRINCIPLE OF ACCEPTING A SPIRITUAL MASTER, AS MENTIONED IN THE EIGHTH VERSE, IS ESSENTIAL. Even for one who takes to devotional service, it is most important. TRANSCENDENTAL LIFE BEGINS WHEN ONE ACCEPTS A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna, clearly states here that this process of knowledge is the actual path. Anything speculated beyond this is nonsense.

[...]

“AS FOR ACCEPTANCE OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, THAT IS ESSENTIAL, BECAUSE WITHOUT THE INSTRUCTION OF A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER ONE CANNOT PROGRESS IN THE SPIRITUAL SCIENCE. One should approach the spiritual master with all humility and offer him all services so that he will be pleased to bestow his blessings upon the disciple. BECAUSE A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF KRSNA, IF HE BESTOWS ANY BLESSINGS UPON HIS DISCIPLE, THAT WILL MAKE THE DISCIPLE IMMEDIATELY ADVANCED WITHOUT THE

Chapter Three: “You Cannot Jump Over!”

DISCIPLE’S FOLLOWING THE REGULATIVE PRINCIPLES. Or, the regulative principles will be easier for one who has served the spiritual master without reservation.” (BG 13.8-12)

“UNLESS ONE GETS THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASSOCIATE WITH A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER BY THE GRACE OF THE LORD, THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF ONE’S LIBERATION FROM THE CYCLE OF BIRTH AND DEATH IN THE DIFFERENT SPECIES OF LIFE AND THROUGH THE DIFFERENT GRADES OF PLANETS.” (SB 3.31.43)

“One who has unflinching devotion for the Supreme Lord and is directed by the spiritual master can see the Supreme Personality of Godhead by revelation. FOR ONE WHO DOES NOT TAKE PERSONAL TRAINING UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO EVEN BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND KRSNA. The word *tu* is specifically used here to indicate that no other process can be used, can be recommended, or can be successful in understanding Krsna.”

(Bg. 11.54 ppt.)

“First of all, one must know in which subject matter he’s inquisitive, in material things, or in spiritual matters. If he’s actually interested in spiritual matter, then he should search out a proper, bona fide spiritual master. *Gurum eva abhigacchet*. MUST FIND OUT. IT IS NOT AN OPTION. IT IS A MUST. MUST –YOU CANNOT AVOID IT. WITHOUT BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, YOU CANNOT GO A STEP FORWARD.”

(NOD Lecture, Vrndavana 11/13/72)

“So we are interested in spiritual subject matter. Therefore the process is *adau gurv-asrayam*. One has to accept a bona fide spiritual master. That is our process. WITHOUT ACCEPTING A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER WE CANNOT MAKE ANY PROGRESS. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE.” (Lecture, London 9/23/69)

“*Tad-vijnanartham sa gurum eva abhigacchet*. This is Vedic instruction. If you at all interested in the understanding of spiritual subject matter, then you must approach a bona fide spiritual master.

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Tad vijnanartham sa gurum eva abhigacchet. Abhigacchet means must. IT IS NOT THAT IF YOU LIKE, YOU CAN GO; IF YOU DO NOT LIKE, YOU DO NOT. NO, YOU MUST. *Abhigacchet. Samit-pani srotriyam brahma. Tasmad gurum prapadyeta jijnasuh sreya-uttamam.* It is not a fashion to accept one guru. If you are actually interested in *sreya uttamam*, the highest perfection of life—*tasmad gurum prapadyeta*—then you have to accept a guru. This is called *acaryopasanam*. EVEN KRSNA, THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD, HE ACCEPTED SANDIPANI MUNI AS TEACHER, MASTER. CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU, HE IS ALSO INCARNATION OF KRSNA, BUT HE ACCEPTED ISVARA PURI AS HIS GURU. They do not require guru, but JUST TO KEEP PACE WITH THE OFFICIAL PROGRAM, EVEN GOD PERSONALLY, HE ACCEPTED SPIRITUAL MASTER. SO THIS IS ESSENTIAL. *Acaryopasanam.*” (Lecture, Bombay 10/2/73)

“A person who is fully Krsna conscious, he has no problem. Now how to become Krsna conscious? Lord Caitanya says, *sadhu-sastra-krpa*: ‘One can become Krsna conscious by the mercy of saintly devotees and by the mercy of the scriptures.’ These two things are recommended. Not that fools, as they are thinking, ‘I can, I can think myself. I don’t agree with the *sastra*. I don’t agree with the spiritual master. I don’t agree with scriptures. I have got my independent opinion.’ He is fool number one, rascal number one. One who says like that, you’ll at once take him that he’s fool, rascal, anything. YOU HAVE TO TAKE SHELTER OF SADHU, GURU AND SASTRA.” (Lecture, New York 11/24/66)

“We must connect with the current. Just like you have heated your room with electrical wires, but if you do not touch it with the current going on, then simply electrical (sic:) feeting will not help you. Similarly, INITIATION IS ESSENTIAL. *Adau gurvasrayam.* Srila Rupa Gosvami recommends in his *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* FOR EXECUTING PROPER SPIRITUAL LIFE, ONE MUST TAKE SHELTER OF THE BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER. *Tasmad gurum prapadyeta jijnasuh sreya uttamam.* [...] If we establish our bona

Chapter Three: “You Cannot Jump Over!”

fide relationship with the spiritual master, representative of Krsna, immediately our connection with Krsna becomes established. “

(NOD Lecture, Vrndavana 10/29/72)

“ONE SHOULD ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT A PERSON WHO IS RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT A SPIRITUAL MASTER AND BE INITIATED IS SURE TO BE BAFFLED IN HIS ENDEAVOR TO GO BACK TO GODHEAD. One who is not properly initiated may present himself as a great devotee, but in fact he is sure to encounter many stumbling blocks on his path of progress toward spiritual realization, with the result that he must continue his term of material existence without relief. Such a helpless person is compared to a ship without a rudder, for such a ship can never reach its destination. IT IS IMPERATIVE, THEREFORE, THAT ONE ACCEPT A SPIRITUAL MASTER IF HE AT ALL DESIRES TO GAIN THE FAVOR OF THE LORD. THE SERVICE OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS ESSENTIAL.

“[...]IF ONE THINKS THAT HE IS ABOVE CONSULTING ANYONE ELSE, INCLUDING A SPIRITUAL MASTER, HE IS AT ONCE AN OFFENDER AT THE LOTUS FEET OF THE LORD. Such an offender can never go back to Godhead. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT A SERIOUS PERSON ACCEPT A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER IN TERMS OF THE SASTRIC INJUNCTIONS.”

(C.c. Adi 1.35)

Of course, this does not mean that, just to be able to continue our mission, we have to artificially fabricate gurus if we don't have qualified ones. No. Neither that we have to manufacture a new philosophy by which the new members can still take initiation from Srila Prabhupada, or be considered to have a direct connection with him without having to go THROUGH a disciple of Srila Prabhupada. Are we saying that Srila Prabhupada was successful in everything, except in making even one Krsna conscious disciple who could represent the *parampara*?

“DI: Somebody put a question to Bhagavan Rajneesh that ‘you claim that you are God. Can you show us your universal form?’ He said, ‘Well, I can show you. First you come like an Arjuna. First you become Arjuna. Then I can show you a universal form.’

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S.PRABHUPADA: So he admits that much.

D2: That he cannot.

D1: No, he admits that he can, but he has put...

S.PRABHUPADA: 'So that's all right. Have you shown anyone your universal form amongst so many, your disciples? Have you shown?' The next question should be like that.

D1: He never asked. I was hearing a tape in one life member's house.

S.PRABHUPADA: No, no, no, if... You learn that, 'Have you shown ever your universal form to any one of your disciples?'

D1: There was not such intelligent person to ask this.

S.PRABHUPADA: That is the... Say.

D1: So we have to ask that. (laughter)

S.PRABHUPADA: If he says, 'No, none of my students are efficient,' 'Then why you are preaching? IF YOU CANNOT MAKE ANY ONE OF YOUR STUDENTS AS EFFICIENT, THEN WHY YOU ARE PREACHING, WASTING YOUR TIME?'"

(Morning Walk, Vrndavana 12/10/75)

"[...]IF EVEN ONE MAN BECOMES A PURE DEVOTEE OF THE LORD, we shall consider our attempt a success."

(BG, Preface, 2nd. Ed., pg. XX)

"SRILA BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASVATI THAKURA USED TO SAY, 'IF I COULD PERFECTLY DELIVER EVEN ONE SOUL back home, back to Godhead, I would think my mission –propagating Krsna consciousness– to be successful.'" (SB 4.12.33)

"According to revealed scriptures, IF A SPIRITUAL MASTER CAN CONVERT EVEN ONE SOUL INTO A PERFECTLY PURE DEVOTEE, his mission in life is fulfilled." (Cc Adi 7.91)

Didn't Srila Prabhupada fulfill his mission? From the very beginning of the movement, he was planning for his absence. From the very beginning he spoke of the continuation of the discipic succession by his disciples. It was his wish. It was his duty.

Chapter Three: “You Cannot Jump Over!”

“[...]I HAVE A GREAT HOPE TO TRAIN SOME OF MY DISCIPLES FOR PREACHING WORK, EVEN IN MY ABSENCE. I am now old man, and attacked with serious disease; I may be overcome by death at any moment. Therefore **I WISH TO LEAVE SOME TRAINED PREACHERS** so that they can do the work of Krishna Consciousness in the western world. **THAT IS MY AMBITION. I HOPE YOU ALL PRAY TO KRISHNA SO I MAY BE ABLE TO EXECUTE MY DUTY PROPERLY.**”

(Letter to Janardan et al, 6/28/67)

“When I return to India my ambition is to construct an American House at Vrndaban and get some of you boys and girls there to train for our preaching work in this part of the world. After all, I am an old man. There is no certainty of my life, and at any moment I can collapse and it will not be surprising. **BUT I WISH TO LEAVE SOME OF MY SPIRITUAL CHILDREN** who have so kindly joined me in faith and respect so that they may work, and this philosophy of Krishna Consciousness may be broadcast all over the world.”

(Letter to Jadurany, Book of Letters, #67-7-9)

“[...]I am getting more and more enthused that my spiritual children are growing to Krishna consciousness, and **I CAN HOPE EACH ONE OF YOU IN FUTURE WILL BE ABLE TO PROPAGATE THIS TRANSCENDENTAL MESSAGE.**”

(Letter to Rupanuga, 7/3/68)

“I AM TRAINING YOU ALL TO BECOME FUTURE SPIRITUAL MASTERS...”

(Letter to Achyutananda and Jaya Govinda, 8/21/68)

“So on this occasion of my spiritual master’s departure, as I am trying to execute his will, similarly, **I SHALL ALSO REQUEST YOU TO EXECUTE THE SAME ORDER THROUGH MY WILL. I AM AN OLD MAN, I CAN ALSO PASS AWAY AT ANY MOMENT. THAT IS NATURE’S LAW.** Nobody can check it. So that is not very astonishing, but my appeal to you on this auspicious day of the departure of my Guru Maharaja, that at least to some extent you have

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understood the essence of Krsna consciousness movement. You should try to push it on. People are suffering for want of this consciousness.

[...]“NOW, YOU AMERICAN BOYS AND GIRLS WHO HAVE TAKEN TO THIS MOVEMENT, PLEASE TAKE IT MORE SERIOUSLY [...] You have come forward to help me. I SHALL REQUEST YOU ALL THAT I SHALL GO AWAY, BUT YOU SHALL LIVE. Don’t give up pushing on this movement, and you’ll be blessed by Lord Caitanya and His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Goswami Prabhupada. Thank you very much.”

(Lecture, Los Angeles 12/9/68)

“So you GBC men are my selected few for insuring that what I am doing will be carried on very nicely for the pleasure of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. [...]So now you are doing my work and YOU SHALL BE LIKE ME AND BE YOURSELVES THE WORTHY REPRESENTATIVES OF OUR DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION.”

(Letter to Madhudvisa, 6/16/72)

“Some time ago you asked my permission for accepting some disciples, NOW THE TIME IS APPROACHING VERY SOON WHEN YOU WILL HAVE MANY DISCIPLES BY YOUR STRONG PREACHING WORK.”

(Letter to Achyutananda, 5/16/72)

[...]PRACTICALLY SPEAKING THE FUTURE OF OUR KRISHNA CONSCIOUS SOCIETY RESTS IN THE HANDS OF MY OLDER DISCIPLES.”

(Letter to Karandhar, 12/3/71)

“So my advice to you, I am old man. So EVEN I MAY NOT RETURN, YOU SHALL CONTINUE THIS KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT.”

(Departure Address, Los Angeles 8/2/70)

“Lord Chaitanya wanted that everyone should be a spiritual master, provided he follows the order of Lord Chaitanya. The Lord’s mission was to defeat the *Mayavada* philosophy and establish the philosophy of Krishna consciousness, because Krishna is the Supreme Lord the

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Personality of Godhead. Anyone following the order of Lord Chaitanya under the guidance of His bonafide representative can become a spiritual master and I WISH THAT IN MY ABSENCE ALL MY DISCIPLES BECOME THE BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER TO SPREAD KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE WORLD. I WANT IT...”

(Letter to Madhusudan, 11/2/67)

“I WANT TO SEE MY DISCIPLES BECOME BONAFIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND SPREAD KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS VERY WIDELY; THAT WILL MAKE ME AND KRISHNA VERY HAPPY.” (Letter to Tusta Krishna, 12/2/75)

Wasn't his attempt in this regard a success? If not, it would mean that he failed in ensuring the immediate, and normal, continuation of the disciplic succession within his own society.

“[...]I explained how service and prayers are accepted by Krishna through the medium of the disciplic succession. It is something like electricity: if ONE is in touch with HIS Spiritual Master, and HIS Spiritual Master is in touch with HIS bona fide Spiritual Master, then in this way an offering is automatically transferred to Krishna. Just as the Mercy of Krishna is coming down through the disciplic succession, so the service of the devotee is offered up to Krishna THROUGH the disciplic succession.”

(Letter to Brahmananda, 9/5/69)

“To follow in the footsteps of the *Mahatmas* means to give submissive aural reception to the words and instructions of the bona fide Spiritual Master in the line of disciplic succession from the Lord Himself. When the Lord appeared on this earth 5,000 years ago, He instructed *Bhagavad-gita* to Arjuna, and this purely transcendental message of Krishna has been passed down for the past 5,000 years BY THE MEDIA OF SINCERE DISCIPLES giving submissive aural reception to the words of Krishna via the medium of the bona fide Spiritual Master. THIS ACTS LIKE ELECTRICITY, and if you touch a wire anywhere which is connected to the powerhouse, then you will be in contact with the electric current. But IF THE WIRE IS BROKEN OR SEPARATED FROM THE POWERHOUSE,

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THEN THERE WILL BE NO ELECTRIC CURRENT. Similarly, if we hear the unadulterated message of Lord Krishna from the authorized source, we will immediately be in contact with the transcendental atmosphere; but if we listen to someone who is presenting a broken, concocted version of *Bhagavad-gita*, that will be useless.”
(Letter to Yamunacharya, 10/21/69)

“[...T]he thing is we should be Krsna conscious. Just like electrification. Touching electricity by one wire, another joining another, another wire; IF THE TOUCH IS THERE FACTUAL, then the electricity is everywhere. Similarly if our Krsna consciousness is rightly connected, then there is no question of direct or indirect [service]. Because [in the] absolute world there is no difference. AS SOON AS IT IS TOUCHED WITH THE DIRECT CONNECTION... THAT IS CALLED DISCIPULIC SUCCESSION. Because the connection is coming down ONE AFTER ANOTHER, so if we touch here, THE SPIRITUAL MASTER WHO IS CONNECTED BY THE SAME WAY, then the electric connection is there. There is no question of direct or indirect [service]. *Evam parampara praptam imam rajarsayo viduh.* SIMPLY WE HAVE TO SEE WHETHER THE CONNECTION IS DISCONNECTED. If the connection is there, tight, then the electricity [will] come without fail.”

(Lecture, Los Angeles 11/29/68)

“Understanding means when we are uncontaminated, we can understand. So long we are contaminated *daivi hy esa gunamayi mama maya duratyaya* [Bg. 7.14] then you cannot. But you can get out of the clutches of this *maya*. Then you can understand. How? *Mam eva ye prapadyante mayam etam taranti te* [Bg. 7.14]. Just surrender. Surrender means to surrender... *Mayy asakta manah partha yogam yunjan mad-asrayah.* This is surrender. *Mad-asrayah.* Take shelter of Krsna. Krsna, WE CANNOT TAKE SHELTER DIRECTLY, *mad-asrayah.* But YOU CAN TAKE SHELTER OF A PERSON WHO HAS TAKEN SHELTER OF KRSNA. If one is surcharged with electricity, if you touch him, then you will be also electrified. *Evam parampara praptam imam rajarsayo* [Bg. 4.2].”

(Lecture, SB 5.6.7, Vrindavana, 11/29/76)

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“In regard to praying to Lord Nityananda Prabhu I have written to you in my last letter that such a prayer is quite appropriate. Our only prayer should be in the matter of desiring further development of devotional service and SUCH SINCERE PRAYER SHOULD BE SUBMITTED NOT DIRECTLY TO THE LORD BUT THROUGH THE VIA-MEDIA OF HIS BONA FIDE SERVITOR OR REPRESENTATIVE.” (Letter to Madhudvisa, 2/14/70)

“My blessings are always with you as you have requested. You are a very good devotee and servant of Krsna. So far your questions are concerned. Nityananda is the principle of the Guru. So, the Gurudev is the incarnation of Nityananda. Anyone strictly following the instruction of the Guru is following Nityananda. THE PRICE ONE HAS TO PAY IF HE WANTS TO BECOME KRSNA CONSCIOUS IS THAT HE MUST DEDICATE HIMSELF TO FOLLOWING THE ORDER OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, MAHAT SEVA. If the Spiritual Master is pleased with [the] disciple then the blessings of Guru will be there. That is the best way to become Krsna conscious, and Krsna is non-different from Nityananda. You may pray to Lord Nityananda to help you become dedicated in the service of your Guru. Krsna consciousness cannot be achieved artificially. YOU SHOULD APPROACH NITYANANDA PRABHU THROUGH YOUR SPIRITUAL MASTER.” (Letter to Makhanlal, 10/24/76)

The best way to establish our relation in transcendental sweetness is to approach Him through His recognized devotees. ONE SHOULD NOT TRY TO ESTABLISH THE RELATION DIRECTLY; THERE MUST BE A VIA MEDIUM WHICH IS TRANSPARENT AND COMPETENT TO LEAD US TO THE RIGHT PATH.

(SB 1.9.22, purport)

“The pure devotee never attempts to reach the Supreme Lord directly. THE MOST IMPORTANT WAY TO WORSHIP THE LORD IS TO GO THROUGH THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION OF DEVOTEES.” (SB 4.30.3)

“A VAISNAVA NEVER THINKS THAT HE HAS A DIRECT RELATIONSHIP WITH KRSNA. Lord Caitanya says, ‘I am the servant of the the servant of the servant of the servant –a hundred

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times the servant of the servant— of Krsna.’ We have to agree to become the servant of the servant of the servant. THIS IS THE PROCESS OF DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, and if one wants real transcendental love of God, then he has to adopt this process. Because people do not accept this process, they do not develop real love of God. They speak of God, but actually they do not love God; because there is no cultivation of pure devotional service, they love dog.”

(SSR, Ch.VIII, Approaching Krsna With Love, 1st. Prtng., pg.286)
“In the *Bhagavad-gita*, therefore, it is recommended, *acaryopasanam*. *Acarya-upasana*. Not only worshiping the Lord, but also the acarya. Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, *guru-krsna- krpaya paya bhakti-lata-bija*. GURU –ACARYA– AND KRSNA. ONE SHOULD SEEK FAVOR OF BOTH OF THEM. Not that ‘I am now seeking favor of Krsna. What is the use of guru or acarya?’ No. YOU CANNOT OVERLAP ACARYA AND GO TO KRSNA. THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE. KRSNA WILL NOT ACCEPT YOU. Just like if you want to see a big man you should go through his secretary, through his orderly, doorkeeper, similarly, OUR PROCESS IS ACARYOPASANAM, GO THROUGH THE ACARYA. That is the injunction of the Vedas.”

[...]

“Just like you are working in office. IF YOUR IMMEDIATE OFFICER, BOSS, IS PLEASED, THAT MEANS THE PROPRIETOR OF THE FIRM, HE’S ALSO PLEASED. Although you do not see him. This is fact. YOUR IMMEDIATE BOSS, if he’s pleased. So similarly, we, our business, THIS SPIRITUAL LINE IS GURU- KRSNA-KRPA. WE HAVE TO FIRST RECEIVE THE MERCIFUL BENEDICTION FROM THE ACARYA, AND THEN KRSNA WILL BE PLEASED AND HE’LL ALSO GIVE HIS BLESSINGS.”
(Lecture, London 9/23/69)

“You have rightly observed that I am simply trying to execute the order of my Spiritual Master. Whatever is being done it is not on account of my intelligence or endeavor because I am simply an instrument in the hands of my Spiritual Master. I do not know how

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far I have got the capacity to carry His order, but I may say that I have a sincere desire to do it. THIS IS PARAMPARA SYSTEM. IF A STUDENT TRIES TO SATISFY HIS IMMEDIATE ACARYA OR THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, THAT IS THE ONLY QUALIFICATION FOR ADVANCING IN KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS. This is explained in the “Guruvastakam” –yasya prasadah bhagavat prasado.” (Letter to Paramananda, 6/17/70)

“...THROUGH Caitanya Mahaprabhu you will understand what is the position of Krsna, what is your relationship with Krsna, what is the ultimate goal of life. These things will be clearly exhibited. And Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta is written for this purpose, so that a person who is serious about Krsna consciousness may understand Krsna THROUGH the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. This is wanted. YOU CANNOT JUMP OVER Krsna consciousness without going THROUGH the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. And to go THROUGH Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu means to go THROUGH the six Gosvamis. THIS IS PARAMPARA SYSTEM.

“Therefore Narottama Dasa Thakura says, ei chay gosai jar – tar mui das, ta-sabara pada-renu mora panca-gras. THIS IS PARAMPARA SYSTEM. YOU CANNOT JUMP OVER. YOU MUST GO THROUGH THE PARAMPARA SYSTEM. YOU HAVE TO APPROACH THROUGH YOUR SPIRITUAL MASTER to the Gosvamis, and THROUGH the Gosvamis you will have to approach Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and THROUGH Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu you have to approach Krsna. THAT IS THE WAY.”

(Lecture, Cc Adi 1.4, Mayapur 3/28/75)

This is definitely a vital concept for the continuation of the disciplic succession: one cannot jump over the generation of disciples of the departed acarya and connect directly with him.

“This is called *parampara* system. The person who heard *Bhagavad-gita* directly from Krsna, whatever he says, that is to be accepted. You cannot interpret. This is the *parampara* system. So if you want to understand *Bhagavad-gita* then we must understand in the same way as the person who directly heard from. This is called

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parampara system. Suppose I have heard something from my spiritual master. So I speak to you the same thing. So this is *parampara* system. You cannot imagine what my spiritual master said. Or EVEN IF YOU READ SOME BOOKS YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND UNLESS YOU UNDERSTAND IT FROM ME. THIS IS CALLED PARAMPARA SYSTEM. YOU CANNOT JUMP OVER TO THE SUPERIOR GURU, NEGLECTING THE NEXT ACARYA, IMMEDIATE NEXT ACARYA.” (Lecture, Los Angeles 12/8/73)

In this regard I remember an incident which was narrated to me in 1974 by one of Prabhupada’s personal servants, who lived in our temple for a few months that year. The story impressed me very much and therefore it has always come back to memory from time to time.

He told me that once he and other devotees were accompanying Prabhupada to his room, and on the way there they all saw another devotee that was chanting japa very ardently in front of a picture of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta. Srila Prabhupada immediately asked him what was he doing, to which the devotee replied that because it is said that the grandfather is more merciful than the father, he was praying to Srila Bhaktisiddhanta, his spiritual grandfather, seeking his mercy.

The analogy “father–grandfather vs. guru–parama-guru” was one used by Srila Prabhupada, but was the devotee applying it properly? Here is one instance of how Prabhupada used it:

“You have got a nice temple by the grace of my Spiritual Master. It is very encouraging to me. You should always pray to His Divine Grace because naturally He will be more affectionate TO YOU THAN TO ME. Generally one is more affectionate TO THE GRANDCHILDREN THAN TO THE CHILDREN directly. So I am sure that my Guru Maharaj will be [more] easily inclined TO YOUR PRAYERS THAN THAT OF MINE. You will do good always by offering your prayers to His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Goswami Maharaj.” (Letter to Brahmananda, 12/19/68)

At least here, Srila Prabhupada is not saying that the grandfather is more merciful than the father, but that he is more merciful to the grandchildren

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than to their father. In other words, the grandchildren can more easily convince the grandfather of something than their father is able to. At any rate, this is not in any way an open invitation to despise, ignore or override the father. And, continuing our story, the fact is that on hearing the devotee’s reply Srila Prabhupada became very angry and chastised him, telling him that he had no connection whatsoever with his (Srila Prabhupada’s) spiritual master except through him (Prabhupada). This is a point that has always been explicit in Srila Prabhupada’s teachings:

“You are all helping me in the execution of my mission so please do not try to do anything beyond the jurisdiction of my instructions. My will I have already disclosed to you all.... I can assure you that if you follow my instruction as above mentioned there is no doubt about it that THROUGH ME MY SPIRITUAL MASTER SRILA BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASVATI THAKUR WILL BE PLEASED, and through His mercy Lord Nityananda will be pleased. In this way Lord Caitanya and ultimately Radha Krsna will be pleased, and thus your life will be successful.”

(Letter to Makhanlal, 6/3/70)

Although the “jumping over” story is one long known to many devotees, still I would not have referred to it here had I not recently found the following excerpt of a conversation of Srila Prabhupada with two of his *sannyasis*. It took place two years after the same story was told to me:

“D1: I remember one time Karttikeya Maharaja was chanting to a picture of Bhaktisiddhanta. You chastised him and said, ‘What is your connection with Bhaktisiddhanta? Your connection is with me.’

S.PRABHUPADA: Who said?

D1: You did.

D2: You did. I remember.

D1: When Karttikeya Maharaja was chanting to your Guru Maharaja’s picture, you said, ‘How you can connect with him? Your connection is with me.’”

(Conversation, Mayapur 2/3/76)

So, again, one cannot jump over, said Srila Prabhupada:

“THIS IS PARAMPARA SYSTEM. YOU CANNOT JUMP OVER. YOU MUST GO THROUGH THE PARAMPARA

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SYSTEM. YOU HAVE TO APPROACH THROUGH YOUR SPIRITUAL MASTER to the Gosvamis, and THROUGH the Gosvamis you will have to approach Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and THROUGH Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu you have to approach Krsna. THAT IS THE WAY.” (Lecture, Cc Adi 1.4, Mayapur 3/28/75)

“So this is *parampara* system. You cannot imagine what my spiritual master said. Or even if you read some books you cannot understand unless you understand it from me. This is called *parampara* system. YOU CANNOT JUMP OVER TO THE SUPERIOR GURU, NEGLECTING THE NEXT ACARYA, IMMEDIATE NEXT ACARYA.” (Lecture, Los Angeles 12/8/73)

“THIS IS PARAMPARA SYSTEM. IF A STUDENT TRIES TO SATISFY HIS IMMEDIATE ACARYA OR THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, THAT IS THE ONLY QUALIFICATION FOR ADVANCING IN KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS. This is explained in the “Guruvastakam” –*yasya prasadah bhagavat prasado.*”

(Letter to Paramananda, 6/17/70)

“Just like you are working in office. IF YOUR IMMEDIATE OFFICER, BOSS, IS PLEASED, THAT MEANS THE PROPRIETOR OF THE FIRM, HE’S ALSO PLEASED. Although you do not see him. This is fact. YOUR IMMEDIATE BOSS, if he’s pleased. So similarly, we, our business, THIS SPIRITUAL LINE IS GURU- KRSNA-KRPA. WE HAVE TO FIRST RECEIVE THE MERCIFUL BENEDICTION FROM THE ACARYA, AND THEN KRSNA WILL BE PLEASED AND HE’LL ALSO GIVE HIS BLESSINGS.” (Lecture, London 9/23/69)

“So, Sri Rupa Gosvami is first offering his respect, obeisances to Sanatana Gosvami who is his elder brother, at the same time, guru. So we offer our respect in that way, vande rupa-sanatanau raghu-yugau sri-jiva-gopalakau. That is the way. WE CANNOT JUMP OVER THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY DIRECTLY. That is not possible. That is not the etiquette or rules, regulations we have to go. Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *gopi-bhartuh pada-kamalayor dasa-dasanudasah* [Cc. Madhya 13.80]. So He presents Himself as the servant of the servant of the servant of the servant of Krsna. So in order to become

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Krsna's servant, we have to become the servant of the servant of Krsna. So, my Guru Maharaja is servant of Krsna, his guru, his guru is servant of Krsna, his guru is servant of Krsna. I AM ALSO SERVANT OF KRSNA, BUT I HAVE TO APPROACH THROUGH THE OTHER SERVANTS, NOT DIRECTLY. THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE. KRSNA WILL NOT ACCEPT THAT SERVICE. IF ONE DISRESPECT THE PARAMPARA SYSTEM, THEN HE'LL NOT BE ACCEPTED BY KRSNA.

(NOD Lecture – Bombay, January 8, 1973)

Sensitive issue here; we will qualify the statement further. Needless to say, anyone and everyone will benefit tremendously from approaching Srila Prabhupada's words in any way. But that approach does not constitute an initiation, and that benefit is never the same as if one had been regularly initiated.

"In answer to your question about the importance of initiation, it is to be understood that initiation means that power is coming from the Supreme by the bona fide disciplic succession. This is required. OF COURSE, FOR ANYONE TO HEAR THE MESSAGE OF SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM WILL PRODUCE A FAVORABLE RESULT, BUT FORMALLY ONE SHOULD RECEIVE THIS KNOWLEDGE FROM THE DISCIPIC SUCCESSION. FOR EXAMPLE, ARJUNA AND KRISHNA WERE FRIENDS BUT STILL ARJUNA SUBMITTED HIMSELF FORMALLY AS KRISHNA'S DISCIPLE. THIS IS ESSENTIAL. We should take example from these great Personalities. Arjuna was hearing Krishna speaking Bhagavad-Gita but still he submitted as Krishna's disciple. 'Now I submit unto You, please teach me.' So THIS IS THE PROCESS. I hope this will clear up your question sufficiently."

(Letter to John Darsinos, 11/23/68)

"I: How does one contact the spiritual master? Through a book can you contact the spiritual master?"

S.PRABHUPADA: NO, YOU HAVE TO ASSOCIATE.

S: 'Can you associate through a book?' she asked.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes, through books, and also personal. Because when you make a spiritual master you have got personal touch.

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NOT THAT IN AIR YOU MAKE A SPIRITUAL MASTER. YOU MAKE A SPIRITUAL MASTER CONCRETE. So as soon as you make a spiritual master, you should be inquisitive.”

(Lecture [Q&A], London 9/23/69)

It is just like the chanting of Hare Krsna –anyone may chant, but the effect will vary depending, amongst other things, on whether or not the chanter is initiated. Srila Prabhupada explained this in no uncertain terms in the following conversation from 1977, up to the point of saying that some who are uttering “Hare Krsna”... may not be uttering the holy name! In this same conversation he also points out that it is *sahajiya* to be satisfied with the little advancement one gets by the “free-lance” approach –i.e. without accepting the regular process. It is a very important conversation, as Prabhupada explains the matter minutely and extensively. Here is the whole portion in which he deals with it.

D1: What about the idea that you do not have to move into a temple, give up your family and everything, but you can actually chant Hare Krsna in your own home. That idea –that it is available to you?

S.PRABHUPADA: No, that chanting of Hare Krsna does not mean whimsical.

D1: No.

S.PRABHUPADA: OFFENSELESS –HE MUST BE PROPERLY INITIATED. IT DOES NOT MEAN THAT HE SHOULD NOT BE INITIATED AND CHANT. THAT IS NOT THE IDEA. You can –you must be initiated, either you are a *grhastha* or *sannyasi* or *brahmacari*. NOT THAT WITHOUT BEING INITIATED YOU’LL WHIMSICALLY CHANT AND THE EFFECT WILL BE THE SAME. NO, YOU MUST BE INITIATED. ADAU GURV-ASRAYAM. YOU MUST ACCEPT A GURU.

D1: If you want to sell some product you may make so many claims and then the public will buy. So sometimes we quote [in BTG] these psychologists who have done studies that ‘If you chant Hare Krsna, there are some good effects.’

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S.PRABHUPADA: Good there is undoubtedly. If you eat something there will be some effect of eating, but if it is properly eaten, properly made, it will have better effect. That is the idea.

D1: We were thinking that something is better than nothing.

S.PRABHUPADA: No.

D2: If you advertise, ‘The maha-mantra gives some material benefit,’ isn’t that an offense?

S.PRABHUPADA: Then that is *aparadha*.

D2: Yes.

S.PRABHUPADA: That is *aparadha*.

D2: One of the ten offenses.

D1: ‘Cause sometimes when we interview these people who are chanting, they speak from their own realization and it is not exactly the version of Sukadeva Gosvami, it is not..., but it is their own realization. Whatever little bit they have realized.

S.PRABHUPADA: No, no. They may chant, but they must understand that the chanting process, that will be more effective. That they must know. Chanting is open; anyone can chant. BUT THEY MUST KNOW IT THAT ‘IF I CHANT IN THE PROPER PROCESS, THEN IT WILL BE EFFECTIVE.’

D1: It must be clear to them that the goal is love of God. Not something material.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. *Prema pumartho mahan*. That is wanted. There is one work by Bhaktivinoda Thakura, *nama-ksara bahir haya, nama nahi haya*: ‘Simply the alphabets are coming, but that is not the *nama*.’ *Namaksara*. Hare Krsna –SIMPLY THE ALPHABETS ARE COMING, BUT IT IS NOT THE HOLY NAME.

D1: Suppose someone says that Caitanya Mahaprabhu has given freely this holy name with no rules and regulations.

D3: [In the old days] you wanted to make a distinction that a nondevotee chanting is different from when a pure devotee chants.

D1: So that distinction should be there.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes.

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D1: We were thinking that somehow this magazine...

S.PRABHUPADA: No. Another thing is, it is *aparadha*. *Namna balad yasya hi papa-buddhih*. Unless he is in the process he'll think, 'I am chanting Hare Krsna mantra, so whatever sinful activities I am doing it will be controlled.'

D3: That's the worst offense.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. That is very bad offense.

D2: So we're actually advertising the process of devotional service. Not just simply haphazard chanting.

S.PRABHUPADA: First of all we are chanting just to make him little attracted. *Adau sraddha*.

D1: Just to popularize it.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes, that's it. Then if the heart is little cleansed, then they will understand. It will be effective, but WHEN IT IS DONE PROPERLY IT WILL GIVE REAL EFFECT. Outsider, those who are chanting, we don't discourage him.

D1: We want them to chant more.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. But THEY MUST KNOW THE SCIENCE ALSO.

D1: Just like this Alice Coltrane. She has done her small part. She made this record album with Govinda Jaya Jaya and Hare Krsna.

S.PRABHUPADA: That is... That will be a good thing. But when he [she] does it properly it will be more effective because there is... IF ONE DOES NOT CHANT IN THE PROCESS, THEN GRADUALLY IT DEGRADES. The offense will increase. There is chance.

D1: In the past, in the magazine we have only shown people chanting if they were initiated devotees, shaven-headed living in temple. And recently they have adopted to show people who have jobs outside the movement and they are not *brahmacari* or *sannyasi*. They're also chanting, to give the public the idea that...

S.PRABHUPADA: So, that we are giving, the facility to chant and take *prasadam*, but at the same time, gradually, IF CHANTING IS

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EFFECTIVE, THEN, NEXT, WE HAVE TO MAKE IT IN THE PROCESS.

D3: We want to bring them to the process.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes, that is the ultimate. That is stated by Rupa Gosvami, *yena tena prakarena manah krsne nivesayet, sarve vidhi-nisedha syur etayor eva kinkarah*, that ‘Somehow or other, bring him to chant Krsna or to become little Krsna conscious. Then, when he’s little purified, then the *vidhi-nisedha...*’ He’s not rejecting the *vidhi-nisedha*. *Vidhi-nisedha* means regulative principles. It is not rejected, that... But when he’s a little purified, this *vidhi-nisedha syur etayor eva kinkarah*. Just like one... First of all let him become rich, get some money. And then, when he has got money, he can keep some servant, some assistant, some secretaries, like that. First of all earn money.

D1: So one step at a time.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. But organized business means there must be so many men, secretary, manager. That is regulated. So in the beginning, ‘All right, bring some money somehow. Then I shall...’ So YOU CANNOT REJECT THIS ORGANIZATION BECAUSE HE’S CHANTING. THEN WHAT IS THE USE OF WRITING SO MANY BOOKS, THE NAMA-APARADHA AND OTHER DISCUSSIONS, IF ANYONE CAN CHANT?

D1: So it definitely has to lead them to that.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. So we must come to that point. In the beginning you may be very liberal. ‘All right, chant.’ We do like that, and I have done it. There is no regulation. But that does not [mean] that it should be neglected. He should be given, AFFIRMED, ‘By simply whimsically chanting this...’ No, that is not.

D2: Niyamagraha.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. DON’T MAKE IT CHEAP. IT HAS GOT A SCIENCE. IT HAS GOT A FORM.

D1: I’ve seen in some articles they have written to defend our society from the attack of deprogrammers, sometimes one argument they give

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is that meditation and chanting are being studied by scientists and they are finding the effects to be good. Now...

S.PRABHUPADA: Effect will be good. And if we do it properly it will be first-class.

D1: Now, these scientists, they are studying Hare Krsna meditation, but they're also studying some other processes which are not authorized. And they are...

S.PRABHUPADA: That is the defect.

D1: And they're stating that in general, to meditate, to chant mantra, this is good. This is healthy for the mind.

S.PRABHUPADA: That's all right. The thing is that some way or other, if you are near the fire you'll get some heat, BUT THERE IS A PROCESS HOW TO TAKE HEAT.

D1: Oh, yes.

S.PRABHUPADA: That you cannot reject. 'Because I am getting little heat, it is sufficient.' THAT IS SAHAJIYA.

D1: So we are trying to use their endorsements and then make it very specific that 'Therefore to meditate using the Hare Krsna, this is healthy.' So why are you attacking us?

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes.

D1: We're trying like that. They are endorsing something else.

S.PRABHUPADA: This is a better meditation. Meditation... One is performing meditation silently. But if we chant 'Hare Krsna' it is forced meditation. He has to meditate. So, it is better meditation. Just like they're chanting [kirtana in the background]. I am engaged in different business. Still I am hearing. This is the... And one [who] is silently meditating, he's getting, maybe he's getting the benefit, but here anyone who is hearing [is] getting benefit. Therefore chanting is better than... Yes. And it is recommended by Haridasa Thakura that... This is discussed in Caitanya-caritamrta, that 'Chanting, even the trees, even the insects and the animals, they will hear and they get the benefit.' So it is better meditation. Even the trees, plants,

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animals, birds, beasts, they can take benefit. And if it is done by pure Vaisnava, then they get the full benefit.”

(Conversation with the Editors of BTG, Mayapur 2/25/77)

For those still thinking that “all is one” and, therefore, still doubtful of whether “to be or not to be”, there is plenty of evidence to advise them “You’d better BE!”

“YES, THERE IS DEFINITELY A VAST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INITIATED AND NON-INITIATED. ONE WHO IS INITIATED IS AUTHORIZED, AND ONE WHO IS NOT INITIATED IS NOT AUTHORIZED. Just like, for example, Pradyumna is attending class in Sanskrit in a college; he is given chance to learn Sanskrit, but HE IS NOT EQUAL WITH THE REGULAR STUDENTS. One who becomes initiated is channelized to the authorities in the disciplic succession. One who isn’t initiated may chant Hare Krishna (and should certainly be encouraged to do so) and serve in his own way, AND GRADUALLY BY DOING SO HE MAY WANT TO BE INITIATED. But OTHERWISE HE MAY FALL AWAY from following the rules and regulations.” (Letter to Satsvarupa, 11/14/68)

“I am very much encouraged that YOU ARE ALL CHANTING HARE KRISHNA and trying to become Krishna Conscious. But I DO NOT ADVISE THAT YOU APPROACH THE MATTER OF PERFECTING YOUR LIFE IN THIS INDEPENDENT WAY. Unless there is connection with a bona-fide spiritual master, coming in the line of disciplic succession, there is no possibility of making progress in spiritual life. So I have established Iskcon centers for the purpose of catching up the Lotus Feet of Krishna by intimate connection with the spiritual master. These are my authorized centers for that purpose. You say that whatever I instruct you you will carry out, so again my instruction is that you abandon this independent scheme and join your good god- brothers and sisters at some one of our ISKCON centers.” (Letter to Friends, 5/23/72)

“D1: Is there any way for a Christian to, without the help of a spiritual master, to reach the spiritual sky through believing in the words of Jesus Christ and trying to follow his teachings?”

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S.PRABHUPADA: I don't follow.

D2: Can a Christian in this age, without a spiritual master, but by reading the Bible and following Jesus' words, reach the...

S.PRABHUPADA: When you read Bible, you follow spiritual master. How can you say without? As soon as you read Bible, that means you are following the instruction of Lord Jesus Christ, that means you are following spiritual master. So where is the opportunity of being without spiritual master?

D1: I was referring to a living spiritual master.

S.PRABHUPADA: Spiritual master is not the question of... Spiritual master is eternal. Spiritual master is eternal. So your question is without spiritual master. WITHOUT SPIRITUAL MASTER YOU CANNOT BE, AT ANY STAGE OF YOUR LIFE. You may accept this spiritual master or that spiritual master. That is a different thing. But you have to accept. As you say that "by reading Bible," WHEN YOU READ BIBLE THAT MEANS YOU ARE FOLLOWING THE SPIRITUAL MASTER REPRESENTED BY SOME PRIEST OR SOME CLERGYMAN IN THE LINE OF LORD JESUS CHRIST. So in any case, you have to follow a spiritual master. There cannot be the question without spiritual master. Is that clear?

D1: I mean, like we couldn't understand the teachings of the *Bhagavad-gita* without your help, without your presentation.

S.PRABHUPADA: SIMILARLY YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND BIBLE WITH THE HELP OF THE PRIEST IN THE CHURCH."

(Lecture [Q &A], Seattle 10/2/68)

"WE SHOULD NOT JUMP OVER [TO] KRSNA WITHOUT THE HELP OF GURU. That is not possible. You must go through. Because Krsna says, *acaryam mam vijani... Tasmad gurum prapadyeta jijnasuh sreya uttamam*: [SB 11.3.21] "Actually one who is serious to understand higher transcendental subject matter, he must approach guru." *Tasmad gurum, prapadyeta*. These are Vedic injunctions."

(Lecture, Adi-lila 1.13 – Mayapur, April 6, 1975)

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“We have to receive mercy both from the spiritual master and Krsna. WE CANNOT JUMP OVER TO KRSNA. THAT IS ANOTHER NONSENSE. WE MUST APPROACH KRSNA THROUGH GURU. THAT IS PARAMPARA SYSTEM. KRSNA IS NOT SO CHEAP THING THAT YOU CAN JUMP OVER. Somebody says, “Oh, why shall I accept guru? I can approach Krsna directly.” No. Krsna does not accept such... *Mad-bhaktah pujabhyadhikah*. Krsna says that “First of all you become devotee of My devotee.” Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *gopi bhartuh pada kamalayor dasa dasa dasanudasah*: “I am the servant of the servant of the servant of Krsna [Cc. Madhya 13.80].” This is called *parampara* system. You have to learn how to become servant of the servant of Krsna. The more you become in the lower position –servant, servant, servant, servant, servant, hundreds times servant, servant– then more you are advanced. Here in this material world everyone is trying to be master of the master. Just opposite. And the spiritual world, the endeavor is to become servant’s servant. This is the secret.”

(Lecture, *Bhagavad-gita* 2.2 – London, August 3, 1973)

“It requires Krsna’s grace to understand Him. So try to receive Krsna’s grace through the disciplic succession, Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Then you will understand everything. *Yasya deve para bhaktir yatha deve tatha gurau*. This is the process, Vedic process. One should have unflinching faith in God and spiritual master. DON’T JUMP OVER [TO] GOD, CROSSING THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. THEN IT WILL BE FAILURE. YOU MUST GO THROUGH.

“We are observing Vyasa Puja ceremony, the birth anniversary of our Guru Maharaja. Why? We cannot understand Krsna without spiritual master. That is bogus. IF ANYONE WANTS TO UNDERSTAND KRSNA, JUMPING OVER THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, THEN IMMEDIATELY HE BECOMES A BOGUS. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *guru krsna krpaya paya bhakti-lata bija*. That is Vedic injunction. *Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya*. Nobody can understand Krsna without going through His most confidential servant.

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“This is the meaning of this Vyasa Puja. YOU CANNOT SURPASS. IF YOU THINK THAT YOU HAVE BECOME VERY LEARNED AND VERY ADVANCED, NOW YOU CAN AVOID THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND YOU UNDERSTAND KRSNA, THAT IS THE BOGUS. That is the meaning of this Vyasa Puja ceremony. We should always pray, yasya prasada bhagavat-prasada. Yasya prasada, only by the grace of spiritual master we can achieve the grace or mercy of Krsna. This is the meaning of this Vyasa Puja, offering obeisances by *parampara* system.”

(S.Bhaktisiddhanta’s App. Day, 3/2/75)

So, in conclusion, what is then our connection with the previous acaryas? Don’t we have any access to them? There is a simple answer to the “jumping over” problem: as soon as one is initiated by a spiritual master, one becomes the disciple of all the spiritual masters in the succession, all the way up to Krsna.

"I am so glad to note that you have accepted the importance of the spiritual master for making advancement in spiritual life. NOW THAT YOU HAVE BEEN FORMALLY INITIATED, YOU ARE LINKED UP WITH ALL THE GREAT VAISHNAVA ACHARYAS VIA THE PARAMPARA SYSTEM AND SO THE EFFECT WILL BE THERE FULLY. By the mercy of the acharyas the path for going back home, back to Godhead has been made very easy. Simply we must rigidly follow the regulative principles of devotional life, regularly chant 16 rounds of beads daily, read all our literatures and engage in Krishna's business 24 hours. Then we will be happy and our lives will be a success."

(Letter to Srimati Manjari Devi Dasi (Maile), 5/28/71)

Which is another fundamental precept of our philosophy. Srila Prabhupada calls it “the mystery of the disciplic succession”. Although we are going (and must go) through our spiritual master, the experience –and therefore the connection– is *direct*.

“Vyasa was the spiritual master of Sanjaya, and Sanjaya admits that it was by Vyasa’s mercy that he could understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This means that one has to understand Krsna not directly but through the medium of the spiritual master.

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The spiritual master is the transparent medium, although it is true that THE EXPERIENCE IS STILL DIRECT. THIS IS THE MYSTERY OF THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION. When the spiritual master is bona fide, then one can hear *Bhagavad-gita* DIRECTLY, as Arjuna heard it.” (Bg. 18.75)

By accepting a spiritual master one should not fear getting less than what was available before. Through the disciplic succession, the experience –and the benefit– is always the same.

“This is the way of the *parampara* system. IF WE FOLLOW THE ACARYAS, WE ATTAIN THE SAME BENEFIT AS OUR PREDECESSORS. IF ONE FOLLOWS THE DECISIONS OF ARJUNA, HE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED TO BE DIRECTLY HEARING BHAGAVAD-GITA FROM THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD. There is no difference between hearing *Bhagavad-gita* directly from the Supreme Lord and following a personality like Arjuna, who formerly heard *Bhagavad-gita* directly from the Lord.” (SB 4.30.10)

Prabhupada’s “directly”, as in the two previous quotes, means **directly**. There is nothing more direct. When we try to make it any “more” direct, it becomes *jumping over*. We actually become disconnected; trying to get the electricity without the plug. Therefore, as previous quotes indicated, specifically by repeating the example of electricity, *there is a way to be directly* linked to any and all previous acaryas –**through your own guru**.

“Just like electrification. Touching electricity by one wire, another joining another, another wire; IF THE TOUCH IS THERE FACTUAL, then the electricity is everywhere. Similarly if our Krsna consciousness is rightly connected, then there is no question of direct or indirect [service]. Because [in the] absolute world there is no difference. AS SOON AS IT IS TOUCHED WITH THE DIRECT CONNECTION... THAT IS CALLED DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION. Because the connection is coming down ONE AFTER ANOTHER, so if we touch here, THE SPIRITUAL MASTER WHO IS CONNECTED BY THE SAME WAY, then the electric connection is there. There is no question of direct or

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indirect [service]. Evam *parampara* praptam imam rajarsayo viduh. SIMPLY WE HAVE TO SEE WHETHER THE CONNECTION IS DISCONNECTED. If the connection is there, tight, then the electricity [will] come without fail.” (Lecture, Los Angeles 11/29/68)

Another current misconception, a variation of the “jumping-over” one, is the notion that someone can still initiate others as disciples of Srila Prabhupada—the “help-me-jump-over” theory. Although Srila Prabhupada clearly intended to be always the final authority of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, he never indicated that he would be its only initiating spiritual master for all time to come. Rather, as quoted hereinbefore, from the very beginning of the Movement he stated his idea that *in his absence* his disciples be themselves the bona fide spiritual masters, which he soon after specified as “*initiating spiritual masters.*”

[...] I WISH THAT IN MY ABSENCE ALL MY DISCIPLES BECOME THE BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER TO SPREAD KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE WORLD. I WANT IT...” (Letter to Madhusudan, 11/2/67)

“MAYBE BY 1975 ALL OF MY DISCIPLES WILL BE ALLOWED TO INITIATE AND INCREASE THE NUMBERS OF THE GENERATIONS. THAT IS MY PROGRAM.” (Letter to Hansadutta, 12/3/68)

“BY 1975, ALL OF THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED ALL OF THE ABOVE EXAMINATIONS WILL BE SPECIFICALLY EMPOWERED TO INITIATE AND INCREASE THE NUMBER OF THE KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS POPULATION.” (Letter to Kirtanananda, 1/12/69)

This definitive idea of his—that the time would come when he would not be accepting more disciples but that it would be done by others—is patent in the following letter from 1971 (my disciple pointed it out to me several years after I had published the first edition of this book and some time before she had taken initiation):

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“So far naming your child is concerned, you as her parents should give her a suitable name and you can add the prefix bhakta dasi, or servant of the devotee, as are we all. THEN WHEN SHE GROWS UP AND TAKES INITIATION FROM A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, SHE MAY BE GIVEN A NEW NAME AT THAT TIME.” (Letter to David R. Schomaker – London 9 August, 1971)

As Srila Prabhupada indicated then and there, when she did grow up, this child, the daughter of a dear Godbrother and Godsister, took initiation from me in 1993. And, following what Prabhupada said in that letter, “she may be given a new name at that time,” I gave her the name Kunjesvari Devi Dasi.

Therefore, Srila Prabhupada fully addressed what had to be done in what he himself called *his absence* –in so many words he told us, “Just follow the law!”

[A]s a matter of etiquette it is the custom that during the lifetime of your Spiritual Master you bring the prospective disciples to him, and IN HIS ABSENCE OR DISSAPEARANCE YOU CAN ACCEPT DISCIPLES WITHOUT ANY LIMITATION. THIS IS THE LAW OF DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION.” (Letter to Tusta Krishna, 12/2/75)

And at the end, when specifically and officially asked what to do at that time, in so many words he said, "It's an order!"

"WHEN I ORDER, 'You become guru,' he becomes REGULAR guru. THAT'S ALL. HE BECOMES DISCIPLE OF MY DISCIPLE. THAT'S IT.

"[...]And Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *amara ajnaya guru hana*. ONE WHO CAN UNDERSTAND THE ORDER OF CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU, HE CAN BECOME GURU. Or ONE WHO UNDERSTANDS HIS GURU'S ORDER, the same *parampara*, HE CAN BECOME GURU. And therefore I SHALL SELECT SOME OF YOU." (Meeting with GBCs, Vrindavana 5/28/77)

Additionally, we must also understand the serious implication of that other idea, the belief that Srila Prabhupada's disciples –and others in the generations after– can still initiate someone as a disciple of Srila

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Prabhupada. Such a proposal is, amongst other things, not only a new “philosophy,” but an indirect offense to Srila Prabhupada and the previous acaryas. If initiations on behalf of the departed acarya were a genuine procedure of our *sampradaya*, what was the need for Srila Prabhupada, or anyone else before him, to initiate people as their own disciples? Why didn’t the six Gosvamis initiate everyone as direct disciples of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu?

What we would be saying by this kind of logic is that they all thought themselves accomplished, liberated souls, *uttama-adhikaris*, fit to give initiations on their own, as opposed to those who might not be as advanced and would have to initiate on behalf of the previous acarya. It is as if all great acaryas had “graduated” from their relationship with their spiritual master. To think this of them is certainly misleading and offensive, because all acaryas always feel dependent on the mercy of their guru and would never have the slightest thought of occupying their position. If they could have still made disciples for their guru, they would have done so. This mood of submission, dependence, and of feeling inadequate, is conclusively explained by Srila Prabhupada in the following words:

“The author of *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu*, Srila Rupa Gosvami, very humbly submits that he is just trying to spread Krsna consciousness all over the world, although he humbly thinks himself unfit for this work. That should be the attitude of all preachers of the Krsna consciousness movement, following in the footsteps of Srila Rupa Gosvami. WE SHOULD NEVER THINK OF OURSELVES AS GREAT PREACHERS, BUT SHOULD ALWAYS CONSIDER THAT WE ARE SIMPLY INSTRUMENTAL TO THE PREVIOUS ACARYAS, and simply by following in their footsteps we may be able to do something for the benefit of suffering humanity.”

(NOD, Introduction, 2nd. Ed., pg. XX)

“LIBERATED SOUL NEVER SAYS THAT ‘I AM LIBERATED.’ AS SOON AS HE SAYS ‘LIBERATED’ HE’S A RASCAL. A liberated soul will never say that, ‘I am liberated.’ Caitanya Mahaprabhu, He is God [still, He said]—guru more murkha dekhi karila sasan. ‘My Guru Maharaja saw me a fool number one and he has chastised Me.’ He’s God. This is the example. IF ONE REMAINS ALWAYS A SERVANT EVERLASTINGLY OF

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GURU, THEN HE'S LIBERATED. And as soon as he thinks that he is liberated, he's a rascal. That is the teaching of Caitanya Mahaprabhu.” (Conversation, Bombay 8/16/76)

“I am so pleased to have your association and I always thank my Spiritual Master Om Visnupada Sri Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Maharaj for His favor by sending me some sincere representative of Him in missionary activities in this part of the world. I came here to execute His Will and by His Grace I have so many good souls like you, Brahmananda, Satsvarupa, Hayagriva, Rayrama, Haridas, Mukunda, etc. I CONSIDER YOU ALL AS REPRESENTATIVE OF MY GURU MAHARAJA TO HELP ME IN THIS HELPLESS CONDITION.”

(Letter to Kirtanananda, 4/7/67)

“So in front of Caitanya Mahaprabhu you are chanting Hare Krsna mantra, and you are taking part in it very seriously. So MY GURU MAHARAJA WILL BE VERY, VERY MUCH PLEASSED UPON YOU AND BLESS YOU WITH ALL BENEFITS. So he wanted this, and he is not... IT IS NOT THAT HE IS DEAD AND GONE. That is not spiritual understanding. Even ordinary living being, he does not die. *Na hanyate hanyamane sarire*. And what to speak of such exalted, authorized personality like Bhaktisiddhanta. HE IS SEEING. I NEVER FEEL THAT I AM ALONE. Of course, when I came to your country without any friend, without any means... Practically, just like a vagabond I came. But I HAD FULL FAITH THAT ‘MY GURU MAHARAJA IS WITH ME.’ I never lost this faith, and that is fact.” (S.Bhaktisiddhanta's App. Day, 3/2/75)

“You are all my children and I LOVE MY AMERICAN BOYS AND GIRLS WHO ARE SENT TO ME BY MY SPIRITUAL MASTER AND I HAVE ACCEPTED THEM AS MY DISCIPLES.”

(Letter to Satsvarupa and Uddhava, 7/27/70)

“PRACTICALLY, I DO NOT HAVE ANY DISCIPLES; I select so many masters to train them in the service of the Lord.”

(Letter to Jai Mazo, 1/18/68)

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“Although officially I am your Spiritual Master, I CONSIDER YOU ALL STUDENTS AS MY SPIRITUAL MASTER because your love for Krishna and service for Krishna teach me how to become a sincere Krishna Conscious person.”
(Letter to Jadurany, 12/16/67)

“[...T]he spiritual master does not think of himself as Hari. Although he’s offered the respect of Hari, he thinks himself as humble servant of Hari and all others. A SPIRITUAL MASTER TAKES HIS DISCIPLES AS HIS SPIRITUAL MASTER. That is the position. He thinks that ‘Krsna has sent me so many spiritual masters.’ He does not think himself as spiritual master. He thinks himself their servant. Because they have to be trained. Krsna has appointed him to train them. Therefore HE THINKS HIMSELF AS SERVANT OF THE DISCIPLES. This is the position.”

(NOD Lecture, Vrndavana 10/23/72)

“You say that before meeting me you could not read or write, so this is all Krishna’s grace. If He likes, he can make a crow into a peacock. That is His grace. Krishna consciousness is so valuable that it plays wonderful, and there are many instances within our society. Similarly I was a crow, and now they consider me a peacock. But, I was trying to be a peacock whenever there was the opportunity. I took the endeavor to publish the ‘Back to Godhead,’ but I wasted so much time. Ultimately Krishna saved me.”

(Letter to Hansadutta, 11/14/74)

“YOU HAVE RIGHTLY OBSERVED THAT I AM SIMPLY TRYING TO EXECUTE THE ORDER OF MY SPIRITUAL MASTER. WHATEVER IS BEING DONE IT IS NOT ON ACCOUNT OF MY INTELLIGENCE OR ENDEAVOR BECAUSE I AM SIMPLY AN INSTRUMENT IN THE HANDS OF MY SPIRITUAL MASTER. I do not know how far I have got the capacity to carry His order, but I may say that I have a sincere desire to do it.”
(Letter to Paramananda, 6/17/70)

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“I have not done anything personally, very wonderful. I AM SIMPLY SERVING MY SPIRITUAL MASTER, SRILA BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASWATI GOSWAMI MAHARAJ AND ALL THE ACARYAS IN THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION. If I have done anything of credit it is that I have not changed their teachings. I have not added anything of my own interpretation.”

(Letter to Bhimadas et al, 5/16/74)

“You must know what is your duty from guru. You are singing every day *guru-mukha-padma-vakya, cittete koriya aikya, ar na koriho mane asa*. [‘My only wish is to have my consciousness purified by the words emanating from the lotus mouth of my spiritual master.’] This is life. This is life. *Guru- mukha-pad...* You accept the bona fide guru, and what he orders you, carry out. Then your life is successful. [...] “This is the order. *Guru-mukha-padma-vakya, cittete koriya aikya*. Now *citta* means consciousness or heart. ‘I shall do this only, bas. My Guru Maharaja told me, I shall do this.’ *Cittete koriya aikya, ara na koriho mane asa*. So it is not my pride, but I can say, for your instruction, I did it. Therefore, whatever little success you see [I’ve had more] than all my Godbrothers, it is due to this. I HAVE NO CAPACITY, BUT I TOOK IT, THE WORDS OF MY GURU, AS LIFE AND SOUL. So this is fact. *Guru-mukha-padma-vakya, cittete koriya aikya*. Everyone should do that.”

(Lecture, Philadelphia 7/12/75)

“I also thank you very much for the photograph of the *sannyasis* taken in Mayapur. I have had it framed and it is hanging here in my room in Vrindaban, amongst the large paintings of the Disciplic succession. It is by their kindness, of the previous acaryas, that they let us sit between them just like a father calls for a child to sit down next to him. ACTUALLY WE ARE UNQUALIFIED BUT BY THEIR KINDNESS THEY LET US SIT NEXT TO THEM.”

(Letter to Visakha devi, 9/14/74)

“BOB: Do you personally feel disease and sickness?”

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes.

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BOB: Is this a result of your past karma?

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes.

BOB: So one in this material world never escapes his karma completely?

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes, he escapes. No more karma for a devotee. No more karmic reaction.

BOB: But you must be the best devotee.

S.PRABHUPADA: Hm-m... NO, I DON'T CONSIDER MYSELF THE BEST DEVOTEE. I AM THE LOWEST."

(PQPA, Ch.6, pgs.54-5)

"DR.BENFORD: Then you are not perfect.

S.PRABHUPADA: NO, I AM NOT PERFECT. None of us claims to be perfect; we have so many faults."

(Consciousness: The Missing Link, pg.14)

"Actually we are all conditioned souls so our demand from Krishna to accept us is unreasonable. From my personal point of view, I think that I am so sinful that I cannot even approach Krishna to show me any favor. But I HAVE ONLY ONE HOPE –MY SPIRITUAL MASTER– HE IS VERY KIND. SO SOME WAY OR OTHER HE IS DRAGGING ME TOWARDS KRISHNA. THAT IS THE ONLY HOPE. Sri Chaitanya Charitamrita says therefore: Guru Krishnae. By the mercy of the Spiritual Master, and by the mercy of Krishna, one gets into Krishna Consciousness. Narada Muni is our original Spiritual Master and he has dragged so many fallen souls towards Krishna, and we are also hoping to be dragged by Him through the disciplic succession. Otherwise, IF WE STUDY OUR OWN QUALIFICATIONS, THERE IS NONE –RATHER I HAVE GOT SO MANY DISQUALIFICATIONS."

(Letter to Brahmananda, 3/10/69)

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“Just like we are also following the instruction of our spiritual master. I DON’T CLAIM THAT I AM PURE DEVOTEE OR PERFECT, BUT MY ONLY QUALIFICATION IS THAT I AM TRYING TO FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTION OF THE PERFECT.”

(Lecture on Bg & Talk, Los Angeles 11/25/68)

“We are not liberated. I am not liberated....

“...I am just a disciple of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati. I DON’T SAY THAT I AM LIBERATED. I AM CONDITIONED.”

(Morning Walk, Bombay 1/4/77)

The obvious inference from this, going now to our next point, is that the consideration that one is an *uttama-adhikari* –a devotee on the topmost platform of devotional service– is not the reason by which someone becomes a spiritual master and gives initiations. Or, are we to think that Srila Prabhupada or any other bona fide spiritual master thought at one time: “Now I have become a *mahabhagavata* and therefore I can now give initiations”? Or perhaps we should conclude that someone elected them on that basis: “Now you have become a self-effulgent acarya –please start accepting disciples.” The actual fact is, as we will read soon in Prabhupada’s words, that he saw the process of becoming guru as much more natural –automatic.

The Guru and What Prabhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)



Chapter Four

"At all risk"

"So the sadhus, they take the risk of becoming friendly and merciful to the fallen conditioned souls, and they preach the message of Godhead. Therefore their mercy is required. They are merciful by nature. By nature, they are merciful. One who is sadhu, one who is devotee, by nature, he has developed that merciful quality, friendly quality. So their business is to enlighten those who are ignorant, those who are fully absorbed in this material concept of life. Therefore they preach."

(Lecture, New York 11/24/66)

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SHOULD THE CONTINUATION of the disciplic succession depend on someone deciding that he has become an *uttama-adhikari*?

“SOMETIMES the first-class devotee also comes down to the category of the second-class devotee for preaching work.”

(SB 2.3.21 ppt.)

“S.PRABHUPADA: The thing is that even the best devotee, when he preaches, comes to the second-class platform of a devotee.

BOB: What would the best devotee be doing?

S.PRABHUPADA: The best devotee does not preach.

BOB: What does he do?

S.PRABHUPADA: He sees that there is no need of preaching. For him, everyone is a devotee. [Bob laughs heartily] Yes, he sees no more nondevotees --all devotees. He is called an *uttama-adhikari*. BUT WHILE I AM PREACHING, HOW CAN I SAY I AM THE BEST DEVOTEE? Just like Radharani--She does not see anyone as a nondevotee. Therefore we try to approach Radharani.”

(PQPA, pg.55)

And to depend on someone being recognized by his peers as self-effulgent acarya may be very risky. In this connection, the story of the Gaudiya Math speaks for itself, as also does the story of Srila Prabhupada.

“He [Srila Bhaktisiddhanta] never asked anybody to become acarya. He asked that ‘you form a Governing Body of men and go on preaching...’ None, none of them were advised by Guru Maharaja to become acarya. His idea was ‘let them manage, then WHOEVER WILL BE ACTUALLY QUALIFIED FOR BECOMING ACARYA, THEY WILL ELECT. Why I enforce upon them?’ That was his plan. ‘Let them manage by strong governing body, as it is going on. Then ACARYA WILL COME BY HIS QUALIFICATIONS.’”

(Conversation, Bombay 9/21/73)

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“His [Srila Bhaktisiddhanta’s] idea was acarya was not to be nominated amongst the governing body. “[...A] SELF EFFULGENT acarya would AUTOMATICALLY be selected.”

(Letter to Rupanuga, 4/28/74)

“A VAISNAVA ACARYA IS SELF-EFFULGENT, and there is no need for any court judgment.” (C.c. M.1.220)

To teach us, Prabhupada spoke of his own case:

“A powerful Vaisnava who has converted others into Vaisnavas is to be worshiped, but because of material contamination, sometimes such an exalted Vaisnava is disrespected by other, minor Vaisnavas.

“...It has actually been seen that even an authorized devotee who is engaged in the service of the Lord by preaching the mission of Krsna Consciousness is sometimes criticized by neophyte devotees.”

(SB 7.14.39)

“...[N]eophytes, unable to appreciate the exalted service of the advanced devotee, try to bring the *maha-bhagavata* to their platform. We experience such difficulty in propagating this Krsna consciousness all over the world. Unfortunately we are surrounded by neophyte Godbrothers who do not appreciate the extraordinary activities of spreading Krsna consciousness all over the world. They simply try to bring us to their platform, and they try to criticize us in every respect. We very much regret their naive activities and poor fund of knowledge. An empowered person who is actually engaged in the confidential service of the Lord should not be treated as an ordinary human being, for it is stated that unless one is empowered by Krsna, one cannot spread the Krsna consciousness movement all over the world.”

(NOI Text 6, purport)

The reason anyone takes the position of spiritual master is entirely different, and it is very clearly understood and accepted in our Madhva-Gaudiya *sampradaya*. One becomes a spiritual master exclusively as a matter of duty in the service of the Lord and one’s own spiritual master.

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“Personally I am humble servant of Krishna as you are also, but I am deputed to accept your service just to transfer it to Krishna as via media. I SHALL TRY TO DO THIS SERVICE TO YOU AND KRISHNA THROUGHOUT MY LIFE, and I am so proud to have such assistants as you are to help me in my mission to push on the Krishna Consciousness Movement.” (Letter to Dayananda, 5/1/69)

“You are all my children and I LOVE MY AMERICAN BOYS AND GIRLS WHO ARE SENT TO ME BY MY SPIRITUAL MASTER AND I HAVE ACCEPTED THEM AS MY DISCIPLES.”

(Letter to Satsvarupa and Uddhava, 7/27/70)

“PRACTICALLY, I DO NOT HAVE ANY DISCIPLES; I select so many masters to train them in the service of the Lord.”

(Letter to Jai Mazo, 1/18/68)

“I have not done anything personally, very wonderful. I AM SIMPLY SERVING MY SPIRITUAL MASTER, SRILA BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASWATI GOSWAMI MAHARAJ, AND ALL THE ACARYAS IN THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION.”

(Letter to Bhimadas et al, 5/16/74)

“I may give initiation very easily, but what can I do? I AM PREPARED TO GO TO HELL FOR THE SERVICE OF LORD CHAITANYA.”

(Letter to Jadurani, 9/4/72)

This service is always considered a great risk undertaken to fulfill the order of one’s spiritual master and, finally, Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s --*yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa, amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa*. This risk is mentioned in *The Nectar of Devotion*, *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and in *Caitanya-caritamrta*:

“The one point is that without increasing the number of disciples, there is no propagation of the cult of Krsna consciousness. Therefore, sometimes EVEN AT A RISK, a *sannyasi* in the line of Caitanya Mahaprabhu may accept even a person who is not thoroughly fit to become a disciple. Later on, by the mercy of such a bona fide spiritual master, the disciple is gradually elevated. However, if one increases the number of disciples simply for some prestige or false honor, he will surely fall down in the matter of executing Krsna consciousness.”

(NOD, Ch.7, 2nd. Ed., pgs.65-66)

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“Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu therefore stated that the spiritual master who plays the part of Krsna’s representative has to consume all the sinful reactions of his disciple. **SOMETIMES A SPIRITUAL MASTER TAKES THE RISK OF BEING OVERWHELMED BY THE SINFUL REACTIONS OF THE DISCIPLES AND UNDERGOES A SORT OF TRIBULATION DUE TO THEIR ACCEPTANCE.** Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu therefore advised that one not accept many disciples.” (SB 4.21.31)

“Accepting an unlimited number of devotees or disciples **IS VERY RISKY** for one who is not a preacher. According to Srila Jiva Goswami, a preacher has to accept many disciples to expand the cult of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. **THIS IS RISKY** because when a spiritual master accepts a disciple, he naturally accepts the disciple’s sinful activities and their reactions. Unless he is very powerful, he cannot assimilate all the sinful reactions of his disciples. Thus if he is not powerful, he has to suffer the consequences, for one is forbidden to accept many disciples.” (Cc Madhya 22.118)

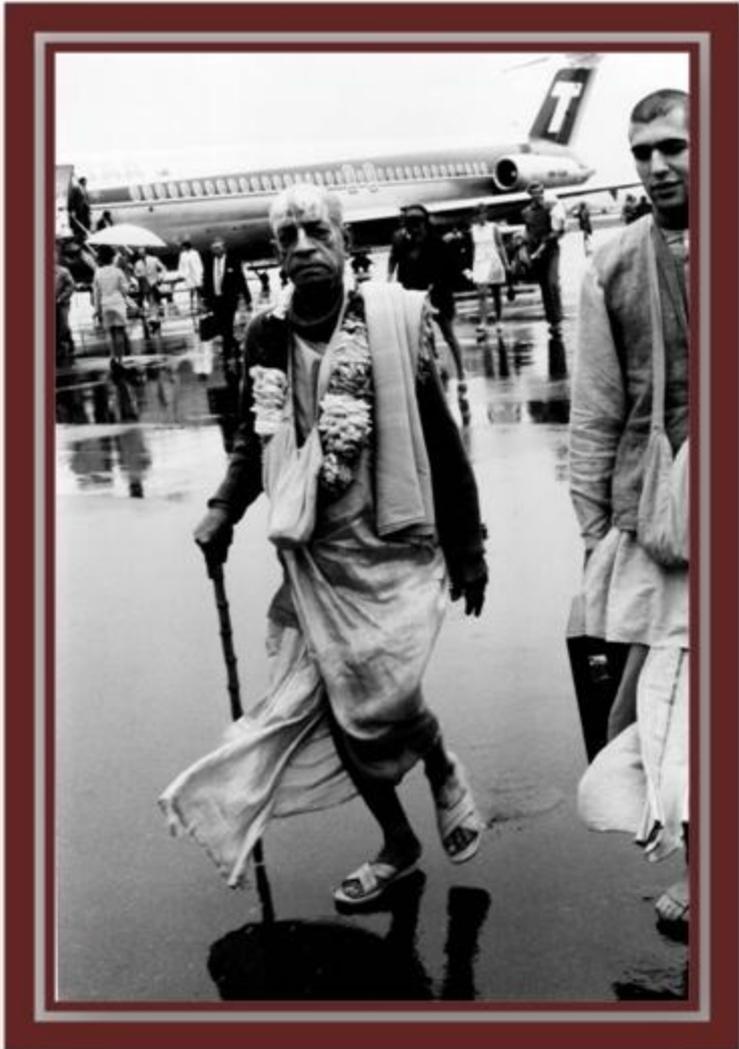
In a conversation in Chicago, Srila Prabhupada further comments on this:

“D: [The Nectar of Devotion] says that a *sannyasi* should not take, be anxious for disciples but should only take those who are qualified. But sometimes, when there’s no one qualified, he takes a risk.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. One who does not like to take the risk, **THEY DO NOT TAKE THE RISK OF PREACHING.** But one who takes the risk, he is recognized by Krsna immediately, ‘Oh, he is taking risk.’ But he must know where to take risk and where [it is] to act foolishly.” (Conversation, Chicago 7/8/75)

It is obvious from this quote and the following ones that this recognition by Krsna, which presupposes pleasing Krsna, was considered by Srila Prabhupada as a very important reason for someone to become a spiritual master. He strongly emphasized this point in the following Vyasa-puja lecture in which he urged his disciples to become spiritual masters:

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[...]I hope that all of you, men, women, boys and girls, become spiritual master and follow this principle. Spiritual master, simply, sincerely, follow the principles and speak to the general public. Then Krsna becomes your favorite. Krsna does not become your favorite; you become Krsna’s favorite. Krsna says in the *Bhagavad-gita*, *na ca tasmad manusyesu kascin me priya-krttamah*. “One who is doing this humble service of preaching work, Krsna consciousness, nobody is dearer than him to Me.” SO IF YOU WANT TO BECOME RECOGNIZED BY KRSNA VERY QUICKLY, YOU TAKE UP THIS PROCESS OF BECOMING SPIRITUAL MASTER, present the *Bhagavad-gita* as it is, your life is perfect. Thank you very much.”

(Vyasa-puja Address, London 8/22/73)

A few years later, in a conversation, he repeated the same thing:

“So preaching is our life. The more we preach, the more we are successful. *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa*. This is Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s preaching. *Amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa, yare dekha, tare kaha krsna-upadesa*. This is Caitanya Mahaprabhu. EVERYONE OF YOU BECOME GURU AND DELIVER THE RESIDENTS OF YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD. *EI DESA*. WHEREVER YOU ARE LIVING, JUST DELIVER THEM. BECOME THEIR GURU. How to become guru? It is not difficult. *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa*. What Krsna has said instruct them. You simply repeat it, that’s all. You become guru.

“So this should be preached all over the world. You learn from *Bhagavad-gita* and repeat. You simply say, ‘Krsna said four things: *man mana bhava mad bhakto mad yaji mam namaskuru*. ‘Just always think of Me.’ Krsna said. ‘And just become My devotee. Just worship Me and offer obeisances.’ Kindly do these things.’ So IF YOU CAN INDUCE ONE PERSON TO DO THESE FOUR THINGS, YOU BECOME GURU. Is there any difficulty? ‘Then you become a devotee of Krsna.’ How? ‘Always think of Krsna. Worship Krsna and offer obeisances. Here is our temple, please come, offer obeisances. Offer little flower if you can secure. Otherwise, obeisances sufficient. And chant Hare Krsna.’ You become guru.

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“To inform this message is difficult? Not at all. You may carry the message. If he’s fortunate, he’ll do it. EVEN HE DOES NOT DO IT, YOU ARE CARRYING THE MESSAGE, YOU BECOME RECOGNIZED BY KRSNA. NA CA TASMAN MANUSYESU KASCIN ME PRIYA- KRTTAMAH. YOU ARE DOING SINCERELY, THEN YOU ARE RECOGNIZED BY KRSNA. Just like a canvasser, salesman, goes to the market, tries his best to secure some business. The master sees the report how he has worked. Even though he has not secured a single paisa business, but he has tried to introduce the goods, then he’s bona fide. He’s bona fide. Similarly, we have to simply carry the message of Krsna and try to convince people. If one is convinced, it is good, if not, doesn’t matter. I am not going to... Then you are recognized by Krsna. RECOGNITION MEANS YOU BECOME THE DEAREST SERVANT OF KRSNA. THEN WHAT DO YOU WANT MORE? IF KRSNA RECOGNIZES THAT ‘YOU ARE MY MOST DEAR SERVANT,’ THEN WHAT DO YOU WANT MORE? *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa.*”

(Conversation, Paris 8/2/76)

In the following letter he consolidates both ideas --becoming dear to Krsna and taking the risk of preaching:

“To sit down in a corner without PREACHING RISK and to make a show of chanting Hare Krishna Mantra is condemned by my Spiritual Master and He has written a very nice song in this connection, which I am recording. THE SUBSTANCE IS THAT TO BECOME VERY DEAR TO KRISHNA OR BALARAMA OR IN OTHER WORDS TO LORD CHAITANYA AND NITYANANDA IS TO TAKE THE TASK OF PREACHING WORK VERY SERIOUSLY AT ALL RISK. Please always remember this and you will be successful.”

(Letter to Gajendra, 1/27/70)

Still, the argument is forwarded that Prabhupada is referring in all those quotes to devotees becoming *siksa gurus*. “It means to give instructions, not initiations.” But are *siksa* and *diksa* distant apart?

“There is no difference between the shelter-giving Supreme Lord and the initiating [*diksa*] and instructing [*siksa*] spiritual masters. IF ONE FOOLISHLY DISCRIMINATES BETWEEN THEM, HE

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COMMITTS AN OFFENSE IN THE DISCHARGE OF DEVOTIONAL SERVICE.” (C.c. Adi 1.47 ppt.)

“*Guru krsna krapaya paya bhakti lata bija*. We have to acquire this energy through the mercy of guru and Krsna. So Krsna is within as caitya-guru, and when we are serious He comes out as the spiritual master. *Siksa-guru, diksa-guru*. So THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SIKSA-GURU AND DIKSA-GURU AND KRSNA. Krsna manifests Himself externally as *siksa-guru* and *diksa-guru*.”

(NOD Lecture, Vrndavana 10/29/72)

“Cleansing oneself as well as teaching others to be clean; these two things must be there simultaneously. None of us have perfect desires but we are trying to be perfect and teach others to be perfect as far as possible. THEY CANNOT BE SEPARATED BUT MUST GO TOGETHER AS PARALLEL LINES. SIKSHA AND DIKSHA. Siksha means learning. Diksha, or initiation, means the beginning of spiritual realization. So every disciple must take his own spiritual progress positively and help others to do so.”

(Letter to Nayan Abhiram, 2/4/71)

“Bilvamangala Thakura actually entered into the transcendental pastimes of Lord Krsna. He has recorded his transcendental experiences and appreciation in the book known as *Krsna-karnamrta*. In the beginning of that book he has offered his obeisances to his different gurus, and IT IS TO BE NOTED THAT HE HAS ADORED THEM ALL EQUALLY. The first spiritual master mentioned is Cintamani, who was HIS INSTRUCTING SPIRITUAL MASTER because she first showed him the spiritual path. Cintamani was a prostitute with whom Bilvamangala was intimate earlier in his life. She gave him the inspiration to begin on the path of devotional service, and because she convinced him to give up material existence to try for perfection by loving Krsna, HE HAS FIRST OFFERED HIS RESPECTS TO HER. Next he offers his respects to his initiating spiritual master, Somagiri, and then to THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD, WHO WAS ALSO HIS INSTRUCTING SPIRITUAL MASTER.” (Cc Adi 1.57)

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“...SOMETIMES A CASTE GURU says that *ye krsna-tattva-vetta, sei guru haya* means that one who is not a *brahmana* may become a *siksa-guru* or a *vartha-pradarsaka-guru* but not an initiator guru. [...]THE WORD GURU IS EQUALLY APPLICABLE to the *vartha-pradarsaka-guru, siksa-guru* and *diksa-guru*. UNLESS WE ACCEPT THE PRINCIPLE ENUNCIATED BY SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU, THIS KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT CANNOT SPREAD ALL OVER THE WORLD. According to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s intentions: *prthivite ache yata nagaradi-grama sarvatra pracara haibe mora nama*. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s cult must be preached all over the world.

[...]“SRILA BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASVATI THAKURA ALSO STATES that although one is situated as a *brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, sudra, brahmacari, vanaprastha, grhastha* or *sannyasi*, IF HE IS CONVERSANT IN THE SCIENCE OF KRSNA HE CAN BECOME A SPIRITUAL MASTER AS VARTMA PRADARSAKA-GURU, DIKSA-GURU OR SIKSA-GURU.”

(C.c. M. 8.128 ppt.)

“ACCORDING TO SASTRIC INJUNCTIONS, THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SIKSA-GURU AND DIKSA-GURU, and generally the *siksa-guru* later on becomes the *diksa-guru*.”

(SB 4.12.32)

“GENERALLY A SPIRITUAL MASTER WHO CONSTANTLY INSTRUCTS A DISCIPLE IN SPIRITUAL SCIENCE BECOMES HIS INITIATING SPIRITUAL MASTER LATER ON.”

(C.c. Adi 1.35 ppt.)

Some see only personal ambition in a devotee giving initiations. Is there any pressing need for someone to become a *diksa guru*?

“THE ONE POINT IS THAT WITHOUT INCREASING THE NUMBER OF DISCIPLES, THERE IS NO PROPAGATION OF THE CULT OF KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS. [...]However, if one increases the number of disciples simply for some prestige or false honor, he will surely fall down in the matter of executing Krsna consciousness.”

(NOD, Ch.7, 2nd. Ed., pgs.65-66)

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"TRANSLATION

"From each branch of the tree have grown hundreds and thousands of subbranches of DISCIPLES AND GRANDDISCIPLES.

"PURPORT

"It was desire of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu that His cult be spread all over the world. Therefore THERE IS A GREAT NECESSITY FOR MANY, MANY DISCIPLES OF THE BRANCHES OF SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU'S DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION. His cult should be spread not only in a few villages, or in Bengal, or in India, but all over the world. It is very much regrettable that complacent so-called devotees criticize the members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness for accepting *sannyasa* and spreading the cult of Lord Caitanya all over the world. It is not our business to criticize anyone, but because they try to find fault with this movement, the real truth must be stated. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu wanted devotees all over the world, and Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura and Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura also confirmed this. It is in pursuit of their will that the ISKCON movement is spreading all over the world. GENUINE DEVOTEES OF LORD CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU MUST TAKE PRIDE IN THE SPREAD OF THE KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT instead of viciously criticizing its propaganda work."

(Cc Adi 10.160)

"ACCORDING TO SRILA JIVA GOSVAMI, A PREACHER HAS TO ACCEPT MANY DISCIPLES TO EXPAND THE CULT OF SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU. This is risky because when a spiritual master accepts a disciple, he naturally accepts the disciple's sinful activities and their reactions. Unless he is very powerful, he cannot assimilate all the sinful reactions of his disciples. Thus if he is not powerful, he has to suffer the consequences, for one is forbidden to accept many disciples."

(Cc Madhya 22.118)

"IF LOCAL PEOPLE COME AND JOIN AND TAKE INITIATION, THEN WE CAN CONSIDER DEVELOPING. SIMPLY LIP-SYMPATHY WILL NOT DO. THEY MUST BE

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REGULAR DISCIPLE, follow the regulative principles, and they will develop it themselves. Besides that book distribution and preaching is our most important activity. Opening temples is subordinate. We have to see how books are being distributed and how people are joining wholeheartedly. That is actual development.”

(Letter to Gopal Krishna, 7/11/76)

“Yes, I am very glad that temple arrangement in Boston is nicely being carried out and new devotees are joining --this is the success of preaching work. PREACHING WORK MEANS INCREASING THE NUMBER OF OUR FAMILY MEMBERS.

[...]“Krsna wants everyone of the living entities to go back to home, back to Godhead, so if we can induce even one person to understand that this material world is not meant for our living, our real home is in the spiritual world, and if we can convince this philosophy to even a single person, that is the success of our missionary activities.”

(Letter to Jadurany et al, 6/4/70)

“PREACHING MEANS TO INCREASE OUR FAMILY MEMBERS, so I can see that the preaching at ISKCON St. Louis is going on very sincerely, otherwise so many would not be interested in becoming devotees.”

(Letter to Makhanlal, 6/22/73)

“So far as recruiting men is concerned, we have to create men. PREACHING MEANS TO RECRUIT MORE AND MORE MEN. This process is called gasthananda which means pleasure by seeing increase of followers. So far I know, NOT A SINGLE JAPANESE HAS BEEN INITIATED. WHAT IS THE CAUSE OF IT?”

(Letter to Sudama, 1/22/71)

“AT THE PRESENT MOMENT, THOUSANDS OF SPIRITUAL MASTERS ARE NEEDED TO SPREAD THIS GREAT SCIENCE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.”

[...]“WE ARE ACTUALLY suffering due to our ignorance.... The whole world is lacking this knowledge, and therefore THOUSANDS OF TEACHERS OF THE SCIENCE OF KRSNA ARE NEEDED. There is a great necessity for this knowledge NOW.”

(Raja-vidya, pgs. 88, 92)

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“Because people are in darkness, WE REQUIRE MANY MILLIONS OF GURUS to enlighten them. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s mission is, He said, that ‘Every one of you become guru.’ *Amara ajnaya guru haya tara ei desa.* (Lecture, Honolulu 5/21/76)

[...]ur mission is to repeat the words of Krsna. That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s order. He says, *amara ajnaya guru haya tara ei desa:* ‘You become guru.’ ‘Now, how shall I become guru? I am neither learned nor Vedantist, neither *sannyasi*. How can I become guru?’ ‘NO, NO, YOU HAVE NO DIFFICULTY. YOU, ON MY ORDER, BECOME GURU SIMPLY...’ *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa.* Bas. ‘YOU BECOME GURU. WHOMEVER YOU MEET, YOU SIMPLY TRY TO CONVINCHE HIM WHAT KRSNA HAS SPOKEN. THEN YOU BECOME GURU.’ SO WE REQUEST EVERYONE THE SAME THING. AND BECOME GURU. **IT IS VERY URGENTLY NECESSARY.** People are becoming godless, atheist, nonbelievers, and they are suffering. So every village, every home, every neighborhood, they require guru. But who will be guru? One who repeats the instruction of Krsna. *Yare dekha tare kaha.* IT IS VERY EASY.” (Conversation, Hrishikesh 5/12/77)

And how someone actually becomes a spiritual master in the preaching field is succinctly explained by Srila Prabhupada in the following quotes:

“WHEN ONE IS ADVANCED IN DEVOTIONAL SERVICE, IT IS NATURAL THAT MANY PERSONS WILL COME TO THE DEVOTEE FOR BECOMING HIS DISCIPLES, and will offer him some material gains. So if a person becomes attracted by the increased number of disciples and the material conveniences offered by the disciples, and forgets his duty as a bona fide Spiritual Master, that is another disturbance in the growth of the plant of devotional service.” (TLC 1st. Ed., Ch. 1, pg. 28)

[...]GENERALLY THE SIKSA-GURU LATER ON BECOMES THE DIKSA-GURU.” (SB 4.12.32)

“GENERALLY A SPIRITUAL MASTER WHO CONSTANTLY INSTRUCTS A DISCIPLE IN SPIRITUAL SCIENCE BECOMES HIS INITIATING SPIRITUAL MASTER LATER ON.”

(C.c. Adi 1.35 ppt.)

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In a few of these quotes, I have included some of the context of the statements because of the warnings contained in them for the spiritual master, which makes it obvious that the spiritual master is not necessarily an *uttama-adhikari* above the attractions of “material conveniences” or above the risks of taking unfit, or too many, disciples, but still he may be advanced and therefore “it is natural” --says Prabhupada-- that people will request to become his disciples. If a spiritual master was expected to be an *uttama-adhikari* above all risks, why do the *sastras* and Srila Prabhupada issue so many warnings? Here are a few more:

“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 *visayis* (*karmis*), which indicates that they are very fond of sense gratification. Such *visayis* sometimes approach a famous guru and ask to become a disciple just as a matter of fashion. Sometimes *visayis* 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 VISAYI DISCIPLES, HE MAY FALL DOWN. One who accepts a *visayi* disciple is not a bona fide spiritual master. EVEN IF HE IS, his position may be damaged due to association with an unscrupulous *visayi*.” (Cc Madhya 24.330)

“The grass is specifically mentioned in this verse because everyone tramples upon it yet the grass never protests. THIS EXAMPLE INDICATES THAT A SPIRITUAL MASTER OR LEADER SHOULD NOT BE PROUD OF HIS POSITION; being always

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humbler than an ordinary common man, he should go on preaching the cult of Caitanya Mahaprabhu by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra.” (Cc Adi 17.31)

"TRANSLATION

"Advaita Acarya, My spiritual master, should never accept charity from rich men or kings because IF A SPIRITUAL MASTER ACCEPTS MONEY OR GRAINS FROM SUCH MATERIALISTS HIS MIND BECOMES POLLUTED."

"PURPORT

"It is very risky to accept money or foodstuffs from materialistic persons, for such acceptance pollutes the mind of the charity's recipient. According to the Vedic system, one should give charity to *sannyasis* and *brahmanas* because one who thus gives charity becomes free from sinful activities. Formerly, therefore, *brahmanas* would not accept charity from a person unless he were very pious. LORD CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU GAVE THIS INSTRUCTION FOR ALL SPIRITUAL MASTERS." (Cc Adi 12.50)

This indicates that the fact that a spiritual master has become a victim of any of the above-mentioned dangers (as has taken place in ISKCON and in other Gaudiya societies), does not mean that neither he nor anyone else should have become spiritual master. It only means that he was not cautious enough as a spiritual master or, in Prabhupada's words in a quote above (TLC, Ch.1), that he forgot his duty as a bona fide spiritual master. "There is always the chance that this will happen," says Srila Prabhupada, "and therefore one has to be very careful."

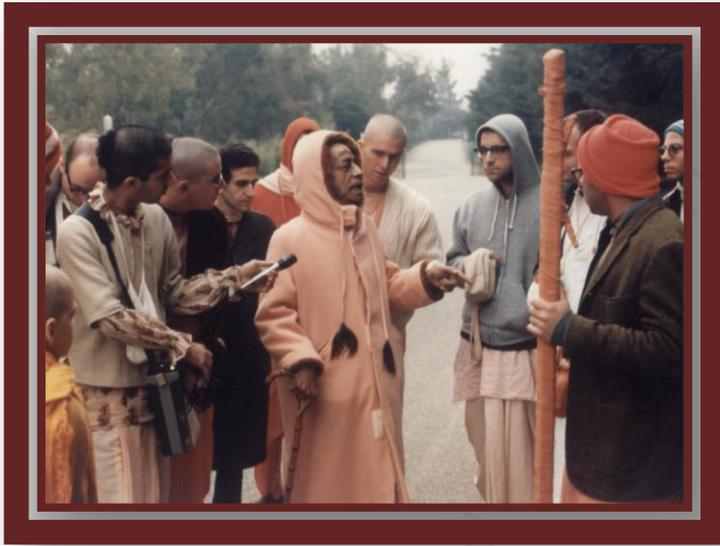
"[T]HERE ARE MANY INSTANCES IN WHICH SOMEONE ACTING IN KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS SUDDENLY CHANGES. In the Upanisads it is stated, therefore, that the path of spiritual realization is just like the sharp edge of a razor. The example is very appropriate. One shaves his cheeks with a sharp razor very nicely, but as soon as his attention is diverted from the activity, he immediately cuts his cheek because he mishandles the razor.

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“NOT ONLY MUST ONE COME TO THE STAGE OF PURE KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS, BUT ONE MUST ALSO BE VERY CAREFUL. ANY INATTENTIVENESS OR CARELESSNESS MAY CAUSE FALLDOWN. This falldown is due to false ego. From the status of pure consciousness, the false ego is born because of misuse of independence. WE CANNOT ARGUE ABOUT WHY FALSE EGO ARISES FROM PURE CONSCIOUSNESS. FACTUALLY, THERE IS ALWAYS THE CHANCE THAT THIS WILL HAPPEN, AND THEREFORE ONE HAS TO BE VERY CAREFUL.” (SB 3.26.23-24)

The Guru and What Parabhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)

The Guru and What Parabhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)



Chapter Five

“Become Guru!”

“How shall I become guru? I have no qualification.’ Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, ‘You don’t require any qualification. You simply require one qualification, that you repeat the instruction of Bhagavad-gita. That’s all.’ Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa. That’s all. You become a guru. Don’t adulterate krsna-upadesa like a rascal or nonsense. Present it as it is, Bhagavad-gita. Then you become a guru. You can become a guru in your family, you can become a guru in your society,

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your nation --wherever you are. And if it is possible, you go outside and preach this mission of Bhagavad-gita. Therefore our movement's name is Krsna consciousness. Whatever Krsna says, you accept and preach. You become guru. Thank you very much.

(Sannyasa Initiation, Mayapur 3/16/76)

ACCORDING TO OUR VAISNAVA PHILOSOPHY, the position of spiritual master is something natural that comes from Krsna, and not from some arrangement --or decision-- one makes in this material world. It is Krsna who chooses to manifest Himself through a particular devotee to a particular aspirant. This occurs when the aspirant is truly **serious, sincere, anxious!**, about spiritual life.

"In the Caitanya-caritamṛta, by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Lord Caitanya states that it is a fortunate person who comes in contact with a bona fide spiritual master by the grace of Kṛṣṇa. ONE WHO IS SERIOUS ABOUT SPIRITUAL LIFE IS GIVEN BY KṚSNA THE INTELLIGENCE TO COME IN CONTACT WITH A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, and then by the grace of the spiritual master one becomes advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In this way the whole jurisdiction of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is directly under the spiritual energy --Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master. This has nothing to do with the material world."

(NOD Introduction, Second Edition, pgs. XXII-XXIII)

"This knowledge cannot be imparted by anyone other than the Supreme Lord or His representative. In the *Caitanya-caritamṛta* Lord Caitanya instructs Rupa Gosvāmī that the living entities wander in life after life, undergoing the miserable conditions of material existence. But WHEN ONE IS VERY ANXIOUS TO GET FREE FROM THE MATERIAL ENTANGLEMENT, HE GETS ENLIGHTENMENT THROUGH A SPIRITUAL MASTER AND KṚSNA. This means that Kṛṣṇa as the Supersoul is seated within the heart of the living entity, and WHEN THE LIVING ENTITY IS SERIOUS, THE LORD DIRECTS HIM TO TAKE SHELTER OF HIS REPRESENTATIVE, A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER.

Chapter Five: “Become Guru!”

Directed from within and guided externally by the spiritual master, one attains the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which is the way out of the material clutches.

"Therefore there is no possibility of one's being situated in his own position unless he is blessed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Unless he is enlightened with the supreme knowledge, one has to undergo the severe penalties of the hard struggle for existence in the material nature. THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS THEREFORE THE MERCY MANIFESTATION OF THE SUPREME PERSON. The conditioned soul has to take direct instruction from the spiritual master, and thus he gradually becomes enlightened to the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The seed of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is sown within the heart of the conditioned soul, and when one hears instruction from the spiritual master, the seed fructifies, and one's life is blessed."
(SB 3.31.16)

“So to come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, it is meant for persons who are very, very fortunate, *kono bhagyavan*. *Guru kṛṣṇakṛpaya pāya bhakti lata bija*. When one is very much eager, **SERIOUS**, that ‘I want to see God...’ Nobody’s **SERIOUS**. But **IF ONE BECOMES SERIOUS, THEN KṚṢṆA GIVES HIM CHARGE. HE SENDS HIM TO THE PROPER GURU.**” (Conversation, Hṛisikesa 5/15/77)

“If someone is fortunate enough to find out a bona fide Spiritual Master, his life is successful. And **TO BE FORTUNATE, THERE MUST BE SINCERITY**, and Krishna will lead him to a bona fide Spiritual Master.” (Letter to Malati, 11/12/68)

“Your eagerness to spread the Krishna Consciousness movement in that part of the country is certainly dictated by Krishna, Who is situated within your heart. There are innumerable living entities wandering within the universe in different forms of life and conditions in different planetary systems. Out of many, many of such conditioned souls, only one will come into contact with a bona fide Spiritual Master by the Grace of Krishna. **KṚṢṆA CAN UNDERSTAND FROM WITHIN THE SINCERITY OF PURPOSE OF A PARTICULAR LIVING ENTITY**, and He gives direction to such sincere devotee to the path of realizing Krishna Consciousness.” (Letter to Larry Snyder et al, 2/1/69)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“So TO FIND OUT A BONA FIDE GURU IS NOT DIFFICULT, PROVIDED ONE IS BONA FIDE TO SEARCH OUT A GURU. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, *guru krsna krpaya paya bhakti lata bija*. By the mercy of guru and Krsna... Because BY THE MERCY OF KRSNA ONE GETS A BONA FIDE GURU AND BY THE MERCY OF BONA FIDE GURU, ONE GETS KRSNA. THIS IS THE PROCESS. When I am actually **SERIOUS** to have connection with Krsna, Krsna is sitting in everyone’s heart. *Isvarah sarva-bhutanam hrd-dese ‘rjuna tisthati*. So Krsna can understand. We cannot hide anything from Krsna. That is not possible. Because Krsna is sitting side by side, just like two birds, sitting side by side. one bird is eating the fruit of the tree. Another bird is the witness. That is the Vedic version.

“So as soon as I become serious to know about Krsna, KRSNA CAN UNDERSTAND, ‘NOW MY FRIEND IS VERY **SERIOUS**.’ So He will find out a bona fide guru for him. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu says that *guru krsna krpaya paya bhakti lata bija*. By the, by the double mercy... Krsna’s mercy, and guru’s mercy. If one is **SERIOUS**, Krsna is satisfied. ‘Now he’s **SERIOUS** about finding out, about knowing Me.’ Then KRSNA GIVES HIM DIRECTION THAT ‘HERE IS GURU, MY REPRESENTATIVE. YOU TAKE SHELTER OF HIM AND YOU WILL GET ME.’ This is the way. That is explained in this., that by the grace of Krsna, that it is a fortunate person. Fortunate person means he must be **SINCERE, SERIOUS** to know about Krsna. THAT IS FORTUNATE.”

(NOD Lecture, Vrndavana 10/31/72)

“As for your nice sentiments about our first meeting on Houston Street, it was all arranged by Krishna. That was practically a favor shown to me by Krishna because I came in your country by superior order. I had been feeling lonely although I had the mission of starting this Krishna Consciousness movement. So KRISHNA SENT YOU TO ME, AND THEREFORE OUR MEETING WAS ALSO THE DESIRE OF KRISHNA. Therefore, both of us, or for that matter, all of the boys and girls who are working with me, have met by the desire of Krishna. As such, everyone should always feel the responsibility

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that Krishna wants us to do something for Him, and we must invest all of our energies to fulfill this mission of Krishna Consciousness."

(Letter to Hayagriva, 1/31/69)

"In the Shastras it is said that Spiritual advance of life is achieved thru the combined mercy of the Spiritual Master and Krishna. THOSE WHO ARE **SINCERE** SOULS, KRISHNA HELPS THEM TO HAVE A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, and the bona fide Spiritual Master helps the disciple approach Krishna. THIS IS THE PROCESS." (Letter to Jadurany, Book of Letters #67-7-9)

"SO WHEN KRSNA SEES THAT A LIVING ENTITY IS VERY **ANXIOUS** TO UNDERSTAND HIM OR TO REVIVE HIS KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS, THEN KRSNA GIVES HIM ALL OPPORTUNITY, ESPECIALLY BY MANIFESTING HIMSELF AS THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. *Antar bahih*. The spiritual master is therefore Krsna's manifestation. Krsna's mercy manifestation to help a person to develop His Krsna consciousness. From within He's helping, therefore He's called caitya-guru, and from without He sends His representative to help how to become advanced in Krsna consciousness. Therefore to advance in Krsna consciousness we require two kinds of help--one from Krsna and another from the spiritual master." (Vyasa Puja Lecture, London 8/21/73)

"[...]]F YOU ARE **SINCERE**, Krishna will help you in all respects. It is said that **ACCORDING TO ONE'S SINCERE DESIRE TO HAVE KRISHNA, KRISHNA LEADS ONE TO A BONA FIDE PURE DEVOTEE OF KRISHNA**, and that pure devotee, he is qualified to lead one to Krishna."

(Letter to Stephen Graham, 10/14/74)

"ONE CAN ACHIEVE THE ULTIMATE SUCCESS OF GOING BACK TO GODHEAD IF HE IS FAVORED BY THE LORD'S SENDING HIS TRUE REPRESENTATIVE. As soon as a true representative of the Lord is met by a devotee of the Lord, the devotee is assured a guarantee for going back to Godhead just after leaving the present body. THIS, HOWEVER, DEPENDS ON THE **SINCERITY OF THE DEVOTEE HIMSELF**. The Lord is seated in the heart of all living beings, and thus he knows very well the

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movements of all individual persons. AS SOON AS THE LORD FINDS THAT A PARTICULAR SOUL IS VERY EAGER TO GO BACK TO GODHEAD, THE LORD AT ONCE SENDS HIS BONA FIDE REPRESENTATIVE. The **SERIOUS** devotee is thus assured by the Lord of going back to Godhead. The conclusion is that to get the assistance and help of a bona fide spiritual master means to receive the direct help of the Lord Himself.” (SB 1.19.36)

“*Tatra laulyam eka-mulam na labhyate yad janmabhih sukrtibhih.* Krsna consciousness can be achieved simply by your INTENSE DESIRE that ‘This life I shall try to achieve the favor of Krsna.’ Krsna will help you. *Tesam satata-yuktanam bhajatam priti-purvakam, buddhi-yogam dadami tam.* IF YOU ARE ACTUALLY **SERIOUSLY** ENGAGED IN KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS, THEN KRSNA GIVES US INTELLIGENCE HOW TO APPROACH HIM. So pure devotional service is rarely achieved. But by chance, *guru krsna krpayaya bhakti lata bija*, if we somehow or other come in contact with bona fide guru and Krsna... Krsna is already there. We are already in touch. And IF WE ARE **SERIOUS**, THEN BY THE GRACE OF KRSNA, WE GET NISKINCANA, A DEVOTEE, and by his grace we achieve to the platform of devotional service. Otherwise it is very difficult.” (NOD Lecture, Vrndavana 11/03/72)

“One should not, however, think himself on the level of Brahma to be initiated directly by the Lord from inside because in the present age no one can be accepted to be as pure as Brahma. [...]But one can have the same facility through unalloyed devotees of the Lord, through scriptural instructions (as revealed in the *Bhagavad-gita* and *Srimad-Bhagavatam* especially), AND ALSO THROUGH THE BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER AVAILABLE TO THE **SINCERE** SOUL. THE LORD HIMSELF APPEARS AS THE SPIRITUAL MASTER TO A PERSON WHO IS **SINCERE** IN HEART ABOUT SERVING THE LORD. Therefore the bonafide spiritual master who happens to meet THE **SINCERE** DEVOTEE should be accepted as the most confidential and beloved representative of the Lord. If a person is posted under the guidance of such a bona fide spiritual master, it may be accepted without any

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doubt that THE DESIRING PERSON HAS ACHIEVED THE GRACE OF THE LORD.” (SB 2.9.7 ppt.)

Did this grace and mercy of the Lord become unavailable after the departure of Srila Prabhupada?

“Your second question: Is there any particular reason why some spirit souls become directed toward Krsna Consciousness in the first place? How does one get on the progressive path of elevation to Krsna Consciousness? THE ANSWER IS THAT IT IS BY THE MERCY OF THE LORD THAT ONE COMES IN CONTACT WITH A SPIRITUAL MASTER WHO CAN REVIVE THE DORMANT KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE CONDITIONED SOUL. Krsna is always merciful and He comes Himself, He leaves behind Him instruction like the Bhagavad Gita, etc. AND HE SENDS HIS REPRESENTATIVE, THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. IN THIS WAY THE MERCIFUL PROPAGANDA IS GOING ON.”

(Letter to Jagadisha, 7/9/70)

Aren't there any more *sincere* souls, *sincere* enough for Krsna to come to them as the bona fide spiritual master? Did Krsna temporarily stop manifesting Himself through His devotees until further notice? This issue is one of the most important points to be addressed. Amongst other things, it has to do with our current vision about who is a Vaisnava and what it means to be one. How important are the Vaisnavas these days? Should we really see them as PRABHUPADA SAID?

“You'll find in *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu*, it is stated somewhere, that if, if a devotee is coming, then another devotee who is engaged in worship of the Deity may stop Deity worship for the time being and should go immediately to receive the devotee. So Krsna also says, *mad-bhakta-puja abhyadhika*. KRSNA IS SATISFIED MORE WHEN A DEVOTEE WORSHIPS HIS DEVOTEE. Krsna says, 'If one is worshipping Me and one is worshipping My devotee,' then the person who is worshipping the devotee, he's more important than the person who is worshipping Krsna.

[..]“So WHEN ONE IS ADVANCED, HE CAN SEE THE IMPORTANCE OF DEVOTEES. Advanced devotee never disobeys or disrespect another devotee. Disrespect to another devotee is a

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great offense. Vaisnava *aparadha*. Vaisnava *aparadha* is very serious offense. Therefore we teach to address amongst the devotees, 'PRABHU', 'PRABHU', 'Such and such PRABHU.' This should not be simply spoken by the lips. It should be realized. Everyone should think other devotee as his prabhu, master. Not that he should try to become master. *Trinad api sunicena taror api sahisnuna amanina manadena.*" (NOD Lecture, Vrndavana 10/23/72)

"So Lord Nityananda or Baladev is the original Spiritual Master, and such pure devotee sometimes takes the risk of life in order to reclaim a person who might have otherwise been rejected by the Lord. The devotee knows that the Lord wants all the fallen souls to come back to Home, and therefore the devotees always try to induce the conditioned souls to take to Krishna Consciousness by various ways and means. Therefore THE CONCLUSION IS THAT A DEVOTEE IS MORE KIND THAN THE LORD HIMSELF.

"By such advanced devotional service a devotee becomes quickly recognized by the Lord. That is also stated in the Bhagavad Gita. Actually, WITHOUT THE MERCY OF A DEVOTEE NOBODY CAN APPROACH THE LORD DIRECTLY--AND IT IS EASIER TO GET MERCY OF A DEVOTEE THAN TO GET MERCY OF THE LORD. SO THEREFORE THE MOST INTELLIGENT WAY OF APPROACHING GOD IS TO TAKE SHELTER OF A PURE DEVOTEE.

"Somehow or other if one can please a pure devotee of the Lord, such action means immediate satisfaction of the Lord, even though such a person is not officially qualified to receive the mercy of the Lord." (Letter to Sriman Yeager, 1/21/70)

Srila Narottama dasa Thakura says, *chadiya vaisnava seva nistara payeche keba*: UNLESS ONE SERVES A VAISNAVA, HE CANNOT BE DELIVERED. (Cc Madhya 1.218)

"All the great stalwart personalities in the universe, including Lord Brahma and Lord Siva, are fully under the control of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD IS FULLY UNDER THE CONTROL OF HIS DEVOTEE. Why is this? Because the devotee is *anyabhilasita-sunya*;

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in other words, he has no material desires in his heart. His only desire is to think always of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and how to serve Him best.

“Because of this transcendental qualification, the Supreme Lord is extremely favorable to the devotees --indeed, not only the devotees, but also the devotees of the devotees. Srila Narottama dasa Thakura says, *chadiya vaisnava-seva nistara payeche keba*: WITHOUT BEING A DEVOTEE OF A DEVOTEE, ONE CANNOT BE RELEASED FROM MATERIAL ENTANGLEMENT. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu identified Himself as *gopi-bhartuh pada-kamalayor dasa-dasanudasah*. Thus he instructed us to become not directly servants of Krsna but servants of the servant of Krsna. Devotees like Brahma, Narada, Vyasadeva and Sukadeva Gosvami are directly servants of Krsna, and one who becomes a servant of Narada, Vyasadeva and Sukadeva, like the six Gosvamis, is still more devoted.

“Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura therefore says, *yasya prasada bhagavat-prasada*: if one very sincerely serves the spiritual master, Krsna certainly becomes favorable to such a devotee. FOLLOWING THE INSTRUCTIONS OF A DEVOTEE IS MORE VALUABLE THAN FOLLOWING THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD DIRECTLY.” (SB 9.4.63)

“Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has therefore sung: *vaisnava thakura tomara kukura baliya janaha more*. In this way Bhaktivinoda Thakura offers to become a Vaisnava’s dog. A dog always keeps himself at his master’s door and does not allow any person unfavorable to enter. Similarly, ONE SHOULD ENGAGE IN THE SERVICE OF A VAISNAVA AND TRY TO PLEASE HIM IN EVERY RESPECT. UNLESS ONE DOES SO, HE DOES NOT MAKE SPIRITUAL ADVANCEMENT.” (SB 4.29.31)

Was Srila Prabhupada the last Vaisnava? Didn’t he create any genuine Vaisnavas? What did he think of his disciples?

“MY DISCIPLES ARE MY AGENTS, MY REPRESENTATIVES, SO BY HEARING IT FROM THEM, YOU ARE RECEIVING IT FROM ME. And because you are a sincere soul, those who are hearing the Mantra from you are receiving it in DISCIPLIC

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SUCCESSION, FROM LORD CAITANYA AND FROM LORD KRISHNA.”
(Letter to Andrea Temple, 3/6/68)

“So one who does not indulge in speculating habit, neither tries to gain something by his work, but simply engages himself in the service of the Lord, he is called a pure devotee. Such pure devotees are very rare. But by the Grace of Krishna, PRACTICALLY ALL THE DEVOTEES AND DISCIPLES WHO HAVE KINDLY JOINED ME, THEY ARE, THEIR SYMPTOMS ARE PURE DEVOTEES. Even if they have got some ulterior desire, that will be removed very soon, because they have taken to the pure process of Krishna Consciousness.”
(Letter to Janaki, 10/13/68)

“Krishna Consciousness is itself Brahma platform, so ALL OUR STUDENTS WHO ARE ENGAGED IN THE SERVICE OF GOD, THEY ARE NOT ON THE MATERIAL PLATFORM. THEY ARE ALREADY LIBERATED...”
(Letter to Sachisuta, 9/19/69)

“ALL OF MY DISCIPLES ARE PURE DEVOTEES. Anyone sincerely serving the spiritual master is a pure devotee...Anyone who is surrendered to the spiritual master is a pure devotee...”
(Letter to Tusta Krishna, 12/14/72)

“Anyone who is coming to Krsna consciousness, he’s not ordinary living being. Anyone who is connected with our movement, he’s not ordinary living being. ACTUALLY HE’S LIBERATED SOUL. I am very much hopeful that my disciples who are now participating today, even if I die, my movement will not stop, I am very much hopeful, yes.”
(Vyasa Puja Lecture, London 8/22/73)

“S.PRABHUPADA: Every one of us [is] messiah. Anyone Krsna conscious, he’s the messiah. Everyone. Why...? All of us. *Gaurangera bhakta-gane, jane jane sakti dhari, brahmando tari saksi*: ‘The devotee of Lord Caitanya, everyone has so immense power that every one, they can deliver the whole universe.’ *Gaurangera bhakta-jane, jane jane sakti.., brahmando tari...* That is Gauranga’s men.

D: Only you are that powerful, Srila Prabhupada. We’re like...

S.PRABHUPADA: Why you are not? You are my disciples.

D: We’re like the bugs.

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S.PRABHUPADA: ‘LIKE FATHER, LIKE SON.’ You should be. *Gaurangera bhakta... jane*. Everyone. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, *amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa*. He asked everyone, ‘just become guru.’ Follow His instruction. You become guru. *Amara ajnaya*. ‘What I say, you do. You become a guru.’ Where is the difficulty? ‘And what is Your *ajna*?’ *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa*. Bas. Everything is there in the *Bhagavad-gita*. You simply repeat. That’s all. You become guru. To become a guru is not difficult job. Follow Caitanya Mahaprabhu and speak what Krsna has said. Bas. You become guru.” (Morning Walk, Bombay 4/13/77)

“Hare Krsna. *Bhakta sane vasa*. Such a great opportunity. YOU ARE ALL PURE DEVOTEES. To live with you and to die while you are chanting, such a great opportunity. So there is no question of being afraid of death.” (Vigil, Vrndavana 5/28/77)

(For more quotes on this topic, please turn to Part Two, Question Eight)

Thus, when someone accepts as a guru a genuine Vaisnava devotee (one of those Vaisnavas that Srila Prabhupada just described as pure devotees) and, therefore, “has achieved the grace of the Lord” (SB 2.9.7), is it the correct thing to do to create doubts in the heart of such a person about the actual advancement of that Vaisnava? Are we going to subscribe in our preaching to that somewhat common-but-unspoken belief, “Nowadays, saints are only found in tombs”?

“WHEN A MAN COMES INTO GOOD CONSCIOUSNESS AND ACCEPTS A SAINTLY PERSON AS A SPIRITUAL MASTER, he hears many Vedic instructions in the form of philosophy, stories, narrations about great devotees and transactions between God and His devotees. [...] ONE CANNOT RETURN TO KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS UNLESS HE IS FAVORED BY THE INSTRUCTIONS OF A SAINTLY PERSON. Therefore Srila Narottama dasa Thakura sings: *sadhu-sastra-guru-vakya, cittete kariya aikya*. If we want to become saintly persons, or if we want to return to our original Krsna consciousness, we must associate with *sadhu* (a saintly person), *sastra* (authoritative Vedic literature) and *guru* (a bona fide spiritual master). THIS IS THE PROCESS.” (SB 4.26.12)

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What we would be indirectly doing by such an attitude is requesting the aspirant disciple to reject or doubt the way in which Kṛṣṇa has manifested Himself to him⁷. Was this Prabhupada's intention when advising that the guru be an *uttama-adhikari*?

Of course, there is no doubt that Srila Prabhupada recommends strongly that the guru be an *uttama-adhikari*. Such statements will be found in this book. But if they are understood as a deterrent, as a total discouragement or as a condition *sine qua non*, i.e. absolutely indispensable, then he would be contradicting himself in an unimaginable number of occasions in which he presented the matter under a totally different light. Many of these latter kind of quotes (which outnumber any others by far) will also be found in this book. Here is a sample. (Mind you, it is only a sample.)

“Guru is only one. Guru means, as you explained, *ajnana timirandhasya jnananjana salakaya, caksur unmilitam yena tasmai sri-gurave namah*. One who eradicates the *ajnana, andhakara*, darkness. In the darkness, if somebody brings lamp, *ajnana timirandhasya jnananjana salakaya...*, the *jnana-rupa*, torchlight, he's guru. SO MAYBE OF DIFFERENT DEGREES, BUT ANYONE WHO OPENS THE SPIRITUAL EYES, HE'S GURU.

“[...]It doesn't matter that degree. ACTUALLY, IF THE GURU TEACHES KṚṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS, THEN HE MAY BE IN LESSER DEGREE, BUT HE'S ACCEPTED AS GURU. THERE IS NO QUESTION OF REJECTION. Because Kṛṣṇa is actually jnana, one who teaches Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, “one has to know Kṛṣṇa, one has to surrender to Kṛṣṇa,” this kind of teaching is required.

“[...] So THE REAL TEST IS WHETHER THE GURU IS A VAISNAVA, WHETHER HE KNOWS THE SCIENCE OF KṚṢṆA. That is also confirmed by Caitanya Mahaprabhu: *kiba vipra*

⁷ The situation of someone who is looking for a guru is different from that of someone who comes to his guru without having searched for him. Previous quotes have stated that someone finds a guru by Kṛṣṇa's direct mercy. Again, we should not ask someone who has received Kṛṣṇa's mercy, to doubt or reject it.

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kiba sudra nyasikene naya, yei krsna-tattva vettha sei guru haya. A... IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT HE IS, whether he's a sannyasi or a grhastha or a brahmana or a su..., born in brahmana family or.... It doesn't matter. Yei krsna-tattva, anyone who knows Krsna, he can become guru, not others. So that is the statement of the sastras. A avaisnava cannot become guru." (Lecture, Ahmedabad 12/13/72)

"Just like a post peon who gives you five thousand rupees, delivers. He does not deliver. Somebody else is delivering. He's simply carrying. That's all. Similary, IF WE SIMPLY CARRY THE MESSAGE OF KRSNA AS IT IS, WE BECOME PERFECT. IT IS NOT VERY DIFFICULT. IF I SIMPLY CARRY THE MESSAGE OF KRSNA, WHERE IS THE DIFFICULTY? Everything is there. Krsna has said everything. Krsna says, *man-mana mad-bhaktto mad-yaji mam namaskuru*. We carry this message. Just always think of Krsna, always offer obeisances to Krsna, become a devotee of Krsna. Man-manah, think of Krsna always. We have to carry this message. Where is the difficulty?

"So TO BECOME A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, THERE IS NO DIFFICULTY. If you, simply, if we carry the message of Krsna as it is without any adulteration. So we must find out a person who is actually bona fide spiritual master by this test, that he's not, I mean to say adulterating Krsna's message. He's not playing howl with the message of Krsna in order to introduce himself, his person. He's simply presenting the message of Krsna as it is. Then he's spiritual master. Nobody else." (NOD Vrndavana 10/31/72)

"EVERYONE CAN BECOME REPRESENTATIVE OF KRSNA. How? If you simply carry the message of Krsna without any adulteration. That's all. Just like Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, *amara ajnaya guru hana* [Cc. Madhya 7.128], "You become a spiritual master under My order." SO IF YOU CARRY OUT THE ORDER OF CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU, KRSNA, THEN YOU BECOME GURU. *Amara ajnaya guru hana*. Unfortunately, we do not wish to carry out order of the acaryas. We manufacture our own ways. We have got practical experience how a great institution was lost by whimsical ways. Without carrying out the order of the spiritual

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master, they manufactured something and the whole thing was lost. Therefore Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura stresses very much on the words of the spiritual master. *Vyavasayatmika buddhir ekeha kuru-nandana* [Bg. 2.41]. IF YOU STICK TO THE ORDER OF SPIRITUAL MASTER, THEN, WITHOUT CARING FOR YOUR OWN CONVENIENCE OR INCONVENIENCE, THEN YOU BECOME PERFECT."

(Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.2.11 -- Vrndavana, October 22, 1972)

"...So Caitanya Mahaprabhu says *amara ajnaya guru hana tara'ei desa, yare dekha, tare kaha 'krsna'-upadesa...* He says *amara ajnaya...* 'by My order you become a spiritual master....' So one may be very illiterate, no education, no scholarship, may not be born in a *brahmana* family, or may not be a *sannyasi* --there are so many qualifications. But one may not have all these qualifications. HE MAY BE RASCAL NUMBER ONE. But still he can become spiritual master. ...How? *Amara ajnaya!!!* As Krsna says, as Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, if you follow, then you become spiritual master. ONE MAY BE RASCAL NUMBER ONE FROM MATERIAL ESTIMATION, BUT IF HE SIMPLY STRICTLY FOLLOWS WHATEVER IS SAID BY CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU OR HIS REPRESENTATIVE SPIRITUAL MASTER, THEN HE BECOMES A GURU."

(Vyasa-puja Address, London 8/21/73)

"IT IS SRI CAITANYA'S WISH that everyone should become a Vaisnava AND GURU. Following the instructions of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His disciplic succession, one can become a spiritual master, for THE PROCESS IS VERY EASY. One can go everywhere and anywhere to preach the instructions of Krsna. (...)The DUTY of every Vaisnava is to travel and preach *Bhagavad-gita*, either in his country or a foreign country." (C.c. M. 24.277 ppt.)

"This time I have requested all Nairobi important friends that 'Now you take *sannyasa* and become guru. Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu asked everyone to become guru.' *Amara ajnaya guruhaya tara ei desa.* 'You have come to Africa. Now become their guru and deliver them.' 'Now, how shall I do it?' *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa:* 'Simply

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speak. Don't become very big. SIMPLY SPEAK WHAT KRSNA HAS DONE. THAT'S ALL. YOU BECOME GURU.”

(Conversation, Bombay 11/3/75)

“We do not have to manufacture anything new. We are getting perfect knowledge from Krishna through the disciplic succession, so our position is very firm. WHATEVER WE HEAR FROM THE BONAFIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER SHOULD BE PRACTICED IN LIFE AND THE SAME MESSAGE DELIVERED TO WHOMEVER WE MEET. IN THIS WAY YOU BECOME SPIRITUAL MASTER.”

(Letter to Kirtiraja, 12/31/75)

“INTERVIEWER: What is your hierarchy in Krsna conscious? That is, do you have anything comparable to bishops and the hierarchy of the Christian faith and of other major faiths? That is, you are the spiritual preceptor, and who are all those below you, between you and the congregation, the members?

“PRABHUPADA: It is not exactly the hierarchy, but in the Christian method, Roman Catholic method, the process of the Pope, Archbishop, and..., that is very nice. There is no objection of us. But our point is that Krsna consciousness is lacking. In spite of all arrangement, if people lost faith in God, so simply by hierarchy, what is the benefit there? There is no benefit. You see? Bambarambhe laghu-kriya, in the Sanskrit word, that you can make a very high-grade arrangement, but the result is zero. So that hierarchical arrangement is exactly not in Krsna consciousness. But OUR METHOD IS VERY SIMPLE. IF ONE IS FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO MEET A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND IF HE ACTS STRICTLY UNDER HIS DISCIPLINE, HE ALSO BECOMES WITHIN A VERY SHORT TIME ANOTHER SPIRITUAL MASTER.”

(Interview, Seattle 9/24/68)

“‘HOW SHALL I become guru? I have no qualification.’ Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, ‘You don't require any qualification. YOU SIMPLY REQUIRE ONE QUALIFICATION, that you repeat the instruction of *Bhagavad-gita*. That's all.’ *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa*. That's all. You become a guru. Don't adulterate

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krsna-upadesa like a rascal or nonsense. Present it as it is --*Bhagavad-gita*. Then you become a guru. You can become a guru in your family, you can become a guru in your society, your nation --wherever you are. And if it is possible, you go outside and preach this mission of *Bhagavad-gita*. Therefore our movement's name is Krsna consciousness. WHATEVER KRSNA SAYS, YOU ACCEPT AND PREACH. YOU BECOME GURU. Thank you very much."

(Sannyasa Initiation, Mayapur 3/16/76)

"Make sure that they are well aware of the four rules and regulations and that they are fixed in chanting the prescribed number of 16 rounds daily on the beads. Without these two principles no one can make advancement on the path of regulated bhakti. Teach them the science of the *Bhagavad gita* and train them to be first class representatives of Krsna. IT IS NOT VERY DIFFICULT, simply one has to hear from the perfect authority who is in disciplic succession from Krsna Himself, and then repeat the same message without any change. IF ONE DOES THIS THEN HE IS QUALIFIED TO BECOME GURU."

(Letter to Jayadharma, 8/20/76)

"Because people are in darkness, WE REQUIRE MANY MILLIONS OF GURUS to enlighten them. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission is, He said, that 'Every one of you become guru.' *Amara ajnaya guru haya tara ei desa*. You haven't got to go foreign countries. Wherever you are, you teach; become guru. It doesn't matter. *Ei desa*. He says, *ei desa*. If you have got power, you can go other country but it doesn't require. In whichever village, whichever country or town you are, you become a guru. This is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission. *Amara ajnaya guru haya tara ei desa*. 'This country, this place.'

"So 'But I have no qualification. How can I become guru?' THERE IS NO NEED OF QUALIFICATION. 'Still, I can become guru?' Yes. 'How?' *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa*: 'Whomever you meet, you simply instruct what Krsna has said.' That's all. You become guru. Everyone is very anxious to become guru, but rascal does not know how to become guru, A SIMPLE THING.

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[...]“So that is our mission. ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE COME TO KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT, THAT IS OUR

REQUEST, THAT YOU, ALL OF YOU, BECOME GURU but don’t speak nonsense. That is our request. Simply speak what Krsna has said. Then you become *brahmana*. You’ll be guru, and everything. Thank you very much.” (Lecture, Honolulu 5/21/76)

“Caitanya Mahaprabhu said that you become a guru. *Amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa*. You become a guru and deliver them. So I am a fool, I have no education. How can I become a guru? The answer is ‘No no, *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa*.’ IF YOU SIMPLY ADVISE PEOPLE WHAT KRSNA HAS SAID, THEN YOU BECOME GURU. But if you manufacture your ideas, then you are not a guru.” (Conversation, Bombay 1/7/77)

“*Amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa*. Suppose you are living in that village. Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, ‘You become a guru here.’ Here. You haven’t got to go out. *Ei desa*, ‘where you are living.’ Just see how nice it is. *Amara ajnaya*: ‘By My order, you become a guru and deliver the people of this place.’ This is Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s... ‘So I am not a guru. I do not know. How I shall become?’ NO, YOU HAVEN’T GOT TO BOTHER. *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa*: ‘SIMPLY YOU REPEAT WHAT KRSNA HAS SAID.’ YOU BECOME GURU. THAT’S ALL. Everyone can do that. Gita is there. You sit down in your place and preach *Bhagavad-gita* and try to induce them to take it. YOU BECOME GURU.”

(Conversation, Bombay 4/23/77)

“OUR CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU’S MISSION IS THAT ‘YOU BECOME GURU,’ as I was telling, ‘AND TEACH, DELIVER PERSONS WHERE YOU ARE.’ If you say, ‘How can I become guru?’ there is no difficulty. SIMPLY REPEAT THE WORDS OF BHAGAVAD-GITA. THAT’S ALL. YOU BECOME GURU. SO OUR MISSION IS TO CREATE REAL GURU, NOT THESE JUGGLERS. AND REAL GURU IS HE WHO SPEAKS ON BEHALF OF KRSNA. And that is wan... IT IS VERY SIMPLE.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“...This is our mission. Everything is there. Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *yare dekha tare kaha krsna upade...* ‘YOU SIMPLY MAKE YOUR LIFE SUCCESSFUL BY UNDERSTANDING

BHAGAVAD-GITA AND PREACH THIS. YOU BECOME GURU.’ So where is the difficulty? WHY DON’T YOU DO THAT?”

(Conversation, Bombay 4/24/77)

“We repeat. We don’t manufacture. What is the use of manufacturing? I am imperfect. Whatever I manufacture, that is imperfect. So better to repeat the words of the perfect. That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s mission. HE SAID, ‘EVERY ONE OF YOU BECOME GURU AND DELIVER YOUR SURROUNDING PERSONS, EITHER YOU ARE IN FAMILY OR IN NEIGHBORHOOD OR IN SOCIETY OR IN NATION, AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.’ *Amara ajnaya guru hana taraei desa.* So whatever limited circle, YOU JUST BECOME GURU AND DELIVER THEM.

(Conversation, Hrisikesa 5/11/77)

“THIS IS VERY EASY. So I am not a scholar. I am simply...Whatever is said there, I am trying to distribute in a palatable way. That’s all. It is not my manufacture. And that is Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s... *Amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa.* YOU ALL BECOME GURU. ‘How can I become guru? I have no education. I have no knowledge.’ No, you haven’t got to acquire all these things. That is already...*Yare dekha tare kaha.* Finished. So I never tried to become a scholar. But I tried. Whatever is spoken by Krsna, deliver. That’s all. And that is guru.”

(Conversation, Vrndavana 6/26/77)

It is very significant that, as you see from the dates of some of these quotes and the similar ones in Part Two - Question Fifteen, Srila Prabhupada was insistently stressing this point in his last years amongst us. And it is quite improbable, to say the least, that what Prabhupada was actually saying was:

Chapter Five: “Become Guru!”

Become guru! Become guru! Become guru!

It is very simple.

Become guru!

It is not difficult. It is very easy.

Become guru!

You don't need any scholarship.

Become guru!

You don't have to be a *brahmana*.

Become guru!

You don't have to be a *sannyasi*.

Become guru!

You don't need any qualification whatsoever.

Become guru!

You may be Fool Number One!

Still, become guru!!!

(P.S.: All you need is to be an *uttama-adhikari*.)

The Guru and What Prabhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)



Chapter Six

“My Disciples”

“So we got this information from His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, and that knowledge is still going on. You are receiving through his servant. And in future the same knowledge will go to your students. This is called parampara system. Evam parampara prap... It is not that you have become a student and you'll remain student. No. One day you shall become also guru and make more students, more students, more. That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission, not that perpetually... Yes, one should remain perpetually a student, but he has to act as guru. That is the mission of Caitanya Mahaprabhu.”

(Lecture, Hyderabad 12/10/76)

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AT THIS POINT one may naturally ask, “What about all those statements in which Prabhupada refers to a guru as an *uttama-adhikari* or *mahabhagavata*?” One of such statements [you may read more of them in Part Two, Question Seven], taken from Nectar of Instruction, is the most quoted and is totally representative of the others:

“ONE SHOULD NOT BECOME A SPIRITUAL MASTER UNLESS HE HAS ATTAINED THE PLATFORM OF UTTAMA-ADHIKARI. A neophyte Vaisnava or a Vaisnava situated on the intermediate platform can also accept disciples, but such disciples must be on the same platform, and it should be understood that they cannot advance very well toward the ultimate goal of life under his insufficient guidance. Therefore A DISCIPLE SHOULD BE CAREFUL TO ACCEPT AN UTTAMA ADHIKARI AS A SPIRITUAL MASTER.”
(NOI Text 5 ppt.)

What does this mean exactly? In the midst of so many other instructions given by Srila Prabhupada, this quote comes as a perplexity. Didn't he just say that a liberated soul never says he's liberated (as quoted in Chapter Three)? Isn't it a main symptom of the *uttama-adhikari* that he does not see himself as being any better than anybody else?

“...[T]he *maha-bhagavata* or *uttama-adhikari*, the devotee in the highest stage of devotional life, does not see anyone as being against the Vaisnava principles, for HE REGARDS EVERYONE AS A VAISNAVA BUT HIMSELF.”
(Cc Adi 7.51)

“A REAL VAISNAVA, OF COURSE, WILL NEVER SAY THAT HE IS SUPERIOR TO ANYONE. He will say that he is the lowest of the living entities. If he says that he is superior then actually he is not superior.”
(Letter to Sukadeva, 12/28/74)

“S.PRABHUPADA: If anyone approaches Radharani, She recommends to Krsna, ‘Here is the best devotee. He is better than Me,’ and Krsna cannot refuse him. That is the best devotee. But it is not to be imitated: ‘I have become the best devotee.’

Chapter Six: “My Disciples”

*isvare tad-adhinesu
balisesu dvisatsu ca
prema-maitri-krpopeksa
yah karoti sa madhyamah (SB 11.2.46)*

A second-class devotee has the vision that some are envious of God, but this is not the vision of the best devotee. The best devotee sees, ‘Nobody is envious of God. Everyone is better than me.’ Just like Caitanya-caritamrta’s author, Krsnadasa Kaviraja. He says, ‘I am lower than the worm in the stool.’

BOB: Who is saying this?

S.PRABHUPADA: Krsnadasa Kaviraja, the author of Caitanya-caritamrta: *purisera kita haite muni se laghista*. He is not making a show. He is feeling like that. ‘I am the lowest. EVERYONE IS BEST, BUT I AM THE LOWEST. EVERYONE IS ENGAGED IN KRSNA’S SERVICE. I AM NOT ENGAGED.’ Caitanya Mahaprabhu said ‘Oh, I have not a pinch of devotion to Krsna. I cry to make a show. If I had been a devotee of Krsna, I would have died long ago. But I am living. That is the proof that I do not love Krsna.’ That is the vision of the best devotee. He is so much absorbed in Krsna’s love that he says, ‘Everything is going on, but I am the lowest. Therefore I cannot see God.’ That is the best devotee.”

(PQPA, pgs.55-56)

Furthermore, Prabhupada directly states that we should never think we have become perfect:

“I thank you for your sincere appreciation, and for your feelings of imperfectness. The more you think as imperfect, the more you make actual progress in Krishna Consciousness. This hankering after perfection is seen in even the most perfect devotees. So WE SHOULD NEVER THINK OF BEING PERFECT AT ANY STAGE. Actually, Krishna Consciousness is unlimited, because Krishna is unlimited, so WE DO NOT KNOW AT WHICH POINT THE PERFECTION IS THERE. Even Krishna Himself thinks that He is imperfect to understand Radharani’s feelings of devotion; and to understand the devotional feelings of Radharani, He became Lord Caitanya, to worship Krishna in the feelings of Radharani. So

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transcendental activities are so nice that it is all perfection, and still there is no perfect satisfaction. That is the duty of spiritual life.”

(Letter to Hansadutta, 2/17/68)

However, in another quote, PRABHUPADA SAID:

“So, when you want to learn something, you have to approach a teacher, and if the teacher is perfect, then you get perfect knowledge. This is the process. If the teacher is only another rascal like you, then whatever knowledge he may give you is useless. THE TEACHER MUST BE PERFECT; he must have real knowledge. Then he can teach. Therefore, the process is that you have to find out a perfect teacher. If you are fortunate, and you get such a perfect teacher, then you can learn everything. But if you approach a teacher who is blind as you are, then you don’t learn anything.”

(Consciousness: The Missing Link, pgs. 13-14)

Now, let’s put all the pieces together:

The *uttama-adhikari* does not see himself as such + “One should not become a spiritual master unless he has attained the platform of *uttama-adhikari*” = A

The other equation: “We should never think of being perfect at any stage” + “The teacher must be perfect” = B

It doesn’t take a degree in advanced calculus to solve the riddle:

A = B = No one a guru will be!

The quote from Nectar of Instruction (5) is definitely similar to other perplexing ones that require further elucidation. For example, in that same book we find some surprising idea being emphasized: should we take it verbatim?

“Sri Rupa Gosvami has given much stress to Radha-kunda because of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s desire to find it. Who, then, would give up Radha-kunda and try to reside elsewhere? No person with transcendental intelligence would do so.” (NOI Text 9, pg.80)

“Therefore everyone interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should ultimately take shelter of Radha-kunda and execute devotional service there throughout one’s life.” (NOI Text 10, pg.88)

Chapter Six: “My Disciples”

“The conclusion is that to live on the banks of the Radha-kunda and to bathe there daily constitute the highest perfection of devotional service.”
(NOI Text 11, pg.91)

Before packing your bags and leaving for Radha-kunda, please read on. In the following quote from Caitanya-caritamṛta, Srila Prabhupada says something truly amazing if we were to accept it “face-value”:

“A neophyte student who is not sufficiently educated or enlightened should not indulge in the worship of Sri Radha and Kṛṣṇa or the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. Even if he does so, he cannot get the desired result.”
(Cc Adi 8.31)

Which is a quote that requires Prabhupada’s further elucidation to understand what he actually means. For that I refer you to the full purport.

So, in regards to the previous *uttama-adhikari* quote from the Nectar of Instruction, if we don’t allow ourselves any further elucidation, then, again, Srila Prabhupada would seemingly be contradicting himself.

“As stated hereinbefore, there are three kinds of devotees of the Lord. The first-class devotee does not see anyone who is not in the service of the Lord, but the second-class devotee makes distinctions between devotees and nondevotees. THE SECOND-CLASS DEVOTEES ARE THEREFORE MEANT FOR PREACHING WORK, and as referred to in the above verse, they must loudly preach the glories of the Lord. THE SECOND-CLASS DEVOTEE ACCEPTS DISCIPLES FROM THE SECTION OF THIRD-CLASS DEVOTEES OR NONDEVOTEES.

“SOMETIMES the first-class devotee also comes down to the category of the second-class devotee for preaching work. But the common man, who is expected to become at least a third-class devotee, is advised herein to visit the temple of the Lord and bow down before the Deity, even though he may be a very rich man or even a king with a silk turban or crown.”
(SB 2.3.21 ppt.)

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The perfection required of a spiritual master is also, in Prabhupada's own words, something very broad, as we read in previous quotes (see Chapter Five) and will be confirmed in the following ones:

“PERFECTION, IN OUR PHILOSOPHY, IS TO ACT WITH UNFLINCHING FAITH IN KRSNA AND [THE] SPIRITUAL MASTER...”
(Letter to Karandhar, 4/22/71)

“S.PRABHUPADA: So, when you want to learn something, you have to approach a teacher, and if the teacher is perfect, then you get perfect knowledge. This is the process. If the teacher is only another rascal like you, then whatever knowledge he may give you is useless. THE TEACHER MUST BE PERFECT; he must have real knowledge. Then he can teach. Therefore, the process is that you have to find out a perfect teacher. If you are fortunate, and you get such a perfect teacher, then you can learn everything. But if you approach a teacher who is blind as you are, then you don't learn anything.

DR.BENFORD: Are there many perfect teachers?

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. Otherwise, there is no question of accepting a teacher. The first perfect teacher is Krsna, and others are those who have learned from Him. For example, you are a scientist. Suppose I learn something from you. Even if I am not a scientist, because I have learned from you my knowledge is perfectly scientific.

DR.BENFORD: I don't understand.

S.PRABHUPADA: Suppose a child goes to a mathematics teacher, and he says, “Two plus two equals four.” The child is not a mathematician, but if he accepts the teacher's teaching, “Two plus two equals four,” and repeats that, then his knowledge is perfect.

DR.BENFORD: But how does one know when the teacher is perfect? It seems to be very difficult.

S.PRABHUPADA: No, it is not difficult. A TEACHER IS PERFECT WHO HAS LEARNED FROM A PERFECT TEACHER.

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DR.BENFORD: But that merely removes the problem a step.

S.PRABHUPADA: No, it is not a problem. There is a perfect teacher, Krsna, who is accepted by all classes of teachers as their teacher. In India, the Vedic civilization is conducted by Vedic teachers. All these Vedic teachers accept Krsna as the supreme teacher. They take lessons from Krsna, and they teach the same message. That is the process.

DR.BENFORD: SO EVERYONE I MIGHT MEET WHO ACCEPTS KRSNA AS THE PERFECT TEACHER IS THE PERFECT TEACHER?

S.PRABHUPADA: YES, because he is teaching only Krsna's teachings, that's all. It is the same as the example we gave before: THEY MAY NOT BE PERSONALLY PERFECT, BUT WHATEVER THEY ARE SPEAKING IS PERFECT BECAUSE IT IS TAUGHT BY KRSNA.

DR.BENFORD: Then you are not perfect.

S.PRABHUPADA: No, I am not perfect. None of us claims to be perfect; we have so many faults. But because we don't speak anything beyond Krsna's teachings, our teaching is therefore perfect....”

(Consciousness: The Missing Link, pgs. 13-14)

“The science of Krishna Consciousness is transcendental science which is never understood by materialistic persons. Therefore, the Vedas order is that one must approach a spiritual master to understand that transcendental science. And THE QUALIFICATION OF A SPIRITUAL MASTER IS THAT HE HAS TO HAVE RECEIVED THE KNOWLEDGE SIMILARLY FROM A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, AND THE RESULT IS THAT A SPIRITUAL MASTER IS COMPLETELY CONVINCED OF THE EXISTENCE OF THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD, AND HE IS FIXED. THAT IS THE QUALIFICATION OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. In other words, this science is appreciated by service attitude only. It is never

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understood by any challenging spirit. One who is submissive and ready to give aural reception of the transcendental message, to him only the transcendence becomes revealed. So the more you become in service attitude for Krishna, Krishna will reveal Himself to you. Krishna is within you and He is awaiting your surrender and service, and as soon as He sees that you are seriously in serving mood, you will understand everything about Krishna--His qualities, His form, His pastimes, His entourage, and His abode.”(Letter to Sachisuta, 6/17/88)

“Everyone of us has got a certain amount of good energy derived from Krishna, and when that energy is employed under the expert direction of Spiritual Master, one’s life becomes successful. That is the secret of Krishna Consciousness. THE SPIRITUAL MASTER MUST BE BONA FIDE REPRESENTATIVE OF KRISHNA, BY DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, RECEIVING ORDERS FROM THE SUPERIOR, and the disciple must agree to abide by the orders of the Spiritual Master. This is the simple method of spiritual advancement; if you remember this principle it will be very nice.”

(Letter to Nathan Baruch, 8/7/68)

“S.PRABHUPADA:...Acarya is explained, *bhakti-samsanah*: ‘ONE WHO’S PREACHING THE CULT OF DEVOTIONAL SERVICE, HE’S ACARYA.’ Then why should you find any discrepancy?

D: Because we see... For instance, sometimes the acarya may seem to forget something or not to know something, so from our point of view, if someone has forgotten, that is...

S.PRABHUPADA:No, no, no.Then...

D:...an imperfection.

S.PRABHUPADA:That is not the...Then you do not understand. Acarya is not God, omniscient. HE IS SERVANT OF GOD. HIS BUSINESS IS TO PREACH BHAKTI CULT. THAT IS ACARYA.

D:And that is the perfection.

S.PRABHUPADA:THAT IS THE PERFECTION. Hare Krsna.

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D: So we have a misunderstanding about what perfection is?

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. PERFECTION IS HERE, HOW IS HE PREACHING BHAKTI CULT. THAT'S ALL.”

(Morning Walk, Mayapur 4/8/75)

One way to reconcile these apparently contradictory quotes is by understanding the emergency character of the preaching mission. *Deha-kala-patra*: time, place and circumstance are of the essence while preaching. In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.17.16, Srila Prabhupada speaks of concessions in an emergency situation. The text speaks of *anapady*, which is translated as “ordinary times, when there is no emergency.” In the purport Prabhupada speaks of “*apad-dharma*, or occupational duty at times of extraordinary happenings,” explaining that in an emergency one may do something that in ordinary times he wouldn't.

The emergency situation is quite clear. Srila Prabhupada entrusted the continuation of his mission to his disciples, just like in the previous generation his Guru Maharaja had done.... Disciplic succession, remember?

“EVERY ONE OF US SHOULD BECOME SPIRITUAL MASTER BECAUSE THE WORLD IS IN BLAZING FIRE. [...] So ALL MY STUDENTS PRESENT HERE who are feeling so much obliged...I am also obliged to them because they are helping me in this missionary work. At the same time, I SHALL REQUEST THEM ALL TO BECOME SPIRITUAL MASTER. EVERY ONE OF YOU SHOULD BE SPIRITUAL MASTER NEXT.

“...[D]on't be satisfied that you have understood [and] that's all. No. This should be distributed. Just like in my old age I have come to your country carrying the order of my spiritual master to distribute it, YOU ARE ALL YOUNG BOYS AND GIRLS, TAKE THIS MESSAGE AND DISTRIBUTE IT. The whole suffering humanity will be happy. THAT IS OUR MISSION. Thank you very much.”

(Vyasa-puja Address, Hamburg 9/5/69)

"So we got this information from His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, and that knowledge is still going on. You are receiving through his servant. And IN FUTURE THE SAME

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KNOWLEDGE WILL GO TO YOUR STUDENTS. THIS IS CALLED PARAMPARA SYSTEM. *Evam parampara prap...* IT IS NOT THAT YOU HAVE BECOME A STUDENT AND YOU'LL REMAIN STUDENT. NO. ONE DAY YOU SHALL BECOME ALSO GURU AND MAKE MORE STUDENTS, MORE STUDENTS, MORE. THAT IS CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU'S MISSION."
(Lecture, Hyderabad 12/10/76)

As we will read later on in this book (see Part Two, Question Eight), on several occasions in different years Srila Prabhupada was asked who would succeed him. The last of such occasions was on May 1977, his final year with us, when the question became official: his entrusted directors of the movement asked who would initiate after him.

"GBC1:...Then our next question concerns initiations in the future, particularly at that time when you're no longer with us. We want to know how first and second initiation would be conducted."

(Meeting with GBCs, Vrndavana 5/28/77)

Every time, he answered in the same matter-of-fact way: "My disciples." Wasn't he perfectly aware of what kind of *adhikaris* his disciples were? Did he actually fail to indicate how his movement would continue? At this point we could borrow his words when he was speaking about the same situation occurred after the departure of his spiritual master:

"He [Srila Bhaktisiddhanta], before passing away, he gave all direction.... He said so many things, and *this point* [referring to his succession] he missed? The real point?"

(Conversation, Bombay 8/16/76)

Indeed, soon after Srila Prabhupada left, our Back to Godhead Magazine (Vol.13, No.1-2) published his idea of his own succession:

"ALL OF MY DISCIPLES WILL TAKE THE LEGACY. If you want, you can also take it. Sacrifice everything. I --one-- may soon pass away. But they are hundreds, and this movement will increase. It's not that I'll give an order: 'Here is the next leader.' Anyone who follows the previous leadership is a leader. I don't make any distinction between Indian and European. All my disciples are

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leaders... as much as they follow purely. If you want to follow, then you can also lead. But you don't want to follow. 'Leader' means one who is a first-class disciple. Evam *parampara-praptam*. One who is perfectly following. Our instruction is, *guru-mukha-padma-vakya*. Do you know this? *Ara na kariha mane asa* ['My only wish is to have my consciousness purified by the words emanating from the lotus mouth of my spiritual master']. To become a leader is not very difficult, provided one is prepared to follow the instructions of the bona fide guru.”

From early he had included his disciples when speaking of the *parampara*:

“Regarding your question about the disciplic succession coming down from Arjuna, it is just like I HAVE GOT MY DISCIPLES, SO IN THE FUTURE THESE MANY DISCIPLES MAY HAVE MANY BRANCHES OF DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION. So in one line of disciples we may not see another name coming from a different line. But this does not mean that [that] person whose name does not appear was not in the disciplic succession.”

(Letter to Kirtanananda, 1/25/69)

"We have got a succession table from Krsna, genealogical table. There are two kinds of genealogical tables, one by the semina. Father, his son, his son, like that. That is material genealogical table. And there is one spiritual genealogical table, disciplic succession. Just like Krsna. Krsna, the original father, Supreme Personality of Godhead, He spoke the Vedic knowledge to Brahma, Lord Brahma. He spoke to Narada. Narada spoke to Vyasa. Vyasa spoke to Madhvacarya. So in this disciplic succession, Lord Caitanya, from Lord Caitanya, the six Gosvamis, and similarly, coming down, down, Bhaktivinoda Thakura, then Gaurakisora Dasa Babaji Maharaja, then my spiritual master, then WE ARE NEXT GENERATION, MY DISCIPLES. So there is a disciplic succession.”

(Lecture, London 9/23/69)

"So we have got this message from Krsna, from Caitanya Mahaprabhu, from the six Gosvamis, later on, Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Bhaktisiddhanta Thakura. And we are trying our bit also to distribute this knowledge. NOW, TENTH, ELEVENTH, TWELFTH... MY GURU MAHARAJA IS TENTH FROM CAITANYA

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MAHAPRABHU, I AM ELEVENTH, YOU ARE THE TWELFTH.
So distribute this knowledge. People are suffering."

(Arrival Lecture -- Los Angeles, May 18, 1972)

Therefore, there is no doubt that he intended purposefully that his disciples would succeed him. But, were they *uttama-adhikaris*?

Interestingly enough, when Srila Prabhupada was asked about initiations in the future he was also asked about publications in the future:

"GBC1: Next we have a question about the BBT. At present, no translation work is to be published without your seeing and approving it. So the question is: is there any system for publishing works in the future that you may not see? For example, we've heard suggested that the Padma Purana or the Sat-Sandarbha may be translated. But what would the system be to insure the *parampara* if you would not personally see these translations?

S.PRABHUPADA: That you have to examine expertly.

GBC2: In other words, there's no set principle that only the works which you have already translated can be published by the BBT. If there is some worthy translation of a bona fide Vedic reference, if it's properly done, the BBT could publish it.

S.PRABHUPADA: THAT WE ARE DOING, JUST LIKE HINDI. WE ARE DOING OTHER LANGUAGES. If it is properly translated, it can be...

GBC2: Even if it's a work which you have not yet translated yourself.

S.PRABHUPADA: No, no, no, THE PRINCIPLE IS... JUST LIKE MY TRANSLATION, ANOTHER PERSON TRANSLATING INTO HINDI OR OTHER LANGUAGES, WE ARE PUBLISHING. Similarly, if somebody has translated properly, it can be published. But amongst our disciples, I don't think there are many who can translate properly.

GBC3: None. We're not eager to publish anything which is not perfect because you have already set the highest standard for the BBT. The name BBT means the highest standard right now in the world.

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S.PRABHUPADA: That is good answer.

GBC4: Therefore, Srila Prabhupada, we think that you cannot leave us very soon.

S.PRABHUPADA: I don't want. But if I am obliged, what can I do?

GBC4: If you don't want, Krsna will not want.

S.PRABHUPADA: A REALIZED SOUL, MUST BE. OTHERWISE, SIMPLY BY IMITATING ABCD WILL NOT HELP. My purports are liked by people because it is presented as practical experience. [...]OUR TRANSLATION MUST BE DOCUMENTS. THEY ARE NOT ORDINARY... IT CANNOT BE DONE UNLESS ONE IS VERY REALIZED. IT IS NOT ABCD TRANSLATION.

GBC5: It's not a matter of scholarship.

S.PRABHUPADA: And Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *amara ajnaya guru hana*. One [who] can understand the order of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, he can become guru. Or one who understands his guru's order, the same *parampara*, he can become guru. And therefore I SHALL SELECT SOME OF YOU.”

(Meeting with GBCs, Vrndavana 5/28/77)

Just see! When asked about future initiations he immediately replied, “Yes. I shall recommend some of you” (see also Part Two, Question Eight), but when asked about future publications he expressed so much caution, “It cannot be done unless one is very realized.” And even while saying this he spoke again of his disciples becoming gurus, “I shall select some of you.” Considering his statement in Nectar of Instruction, “One should not become a spiritual master unless he has attained the platform of *uttama-adhikari*,” shouldn't he have expressed the same caution as with the writing of purports and say something to the effect of: “You will have to wait until some of you become *uttama-adhikaris*”?

A clue for solving the predicament can be found in a previous statement (SB 2.3.21):

“SOMETIMES the first-class devotee also comes down to the category of the second-class devotee for preaching work.”

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So, what to do at those times in which he does not come down or is otherwise unavailable? Emergency! Enter the second-class devotee, who, according to the same quote, is meant for preaching work and “accepts disciples from the section of third-class devotees or nondevotees.”

What we are trying to say is that the quote from Nectar of Instruction (5) is obviously propounding the most ideal situation, but does it mean that in its absence all initiations should stop? In a way, this is answered by the same quote:

“A neophyte Vaisnava or a Vaisnava situated on the intermediate platform can also accept disciples....”

One may still argue that the quote adds “but such disciples must be on the same platform, and it should be understood that they cannot advance very well toward the ultimate goal of life under his insufficient guidance.” Now, does this mean that they are better off without any guidance at all? And, also, does it mean that this guru will remain on that “same platform” permanently? Isn’t this guru continuing his advancement and, therefore, taking along his disciples with him? Or, more bluntly, aren’t any of Srila Prabhupada’s disciples going back to Godhead?

“The life of a sincere devotee of the Lord is thus explained in a nutshell by Narada Muni by his personal example. Such a devotee, after his initiation by the Lord or His bona fide representative, takes very seriously chanting of the glories of the Lord and traveling all over the world so that others may also hear the glories of the Lord. Such devotees have no desire for material gain. They are conducted by one single desire: to go BACK TO GODHEAD. THIS AWAITS THEM IN DUE COURSE ON QUITTING THE MATERIAL BODY. Because they have the highest aim of life, going back to Godhead, they are never envious of anyone, nor are they proud of being eligible to go back to Godhead. Their only business is to chant and remember the holy name, fame and pastimes of the Lord and, according to personal capacity, to distribute the message for others’ welfare without motive of material gain.” (SB 1.6.26 ppt)

Therefore, another way of understanding this quote, aside from the obvious meaning of describing the best and ideal situation, is understanding its application in those times in which there is a dire need. At such times we can resort to the alternative it hints at:

Chapter Six: “My Disciples”

“A neophyte Vaisnava or a Vaisnava situated on the intermediate platform can also accept disciples...”

In other words, the quote is obviously saying: “One can, but shouldn’t.” So, again, normally one wouldn’t, but, in this emergency, *some have to*.

Still, in such a circumstance the quote remains a warning both to the prospective disciple who is looking for a guru⁸ and to a guru who is not on the topmost platform. To the prospective disciple, the warning is not to be --nor become-- a blind follower, to understand that there are different levels of devotees acting as gurus, and to see that he takes shelter of a guru who is constantly engaged in the service of the Lord and is therefore always advancing towards the supreme goal and thus taking his disciples along.

“ONE SHOULD THEREFORE CHOOSE A BONA FIDE SERVANT OF THE LORD CONSTANTLY ENGAGED IN HIS SERVICE, ACCEPT SUCH A SERVANT AS THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND ENGAGE HIMSELF IN HIS (THE SPIRITUAL MASTER’S) SERVICE. Such a spiritual master is the transparent medium by which to visualize the Lord, who is beyond the conception of the material senses. By service of the bona fide spiritual master, the Lord consents to reveal Himself in proportion to the service rendered.” (SB 1.5.23)

The quote (NOI 5) also indirectly instructs the second- and third-class devotees acting as gurus that they should not claim the sole exclusivity to their disciples, that they should strive to advance more and more, that they should always be willing to hear from others, especially from those more advanced, and that they should be constantly seeking firm adherence to the instructions of their *uttama-adhikari* spiritual master, for whose service they have taken the position of guru. When pointing to the future of the *parampara* within his society, Srila Prabhupada himself stated this much by saying that his disciples acting as gurus should remain his students *perpetually*.

⁸ Again, the situation of someone who is looking for a guru is different from that of someone who comes to his guru without having searched for him. Previous quotes have stated that someone finds a guru by Krsna's direct mercy. Again, we should not ask someone who has received Krsna's mercy to doubt or reject it.

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"So we got this information from His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, and that knowledge is still going on. You are receiving through his servant. And in future the same knowledge will go to your students. This is called *parampara* system. Evam *parampara* prap... It is not that you have become a student and you'll remain student. No. One day you shall become also guru and make more students, more students, more. That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission, not that perpetually... Yes, ONE SHOULD REMAIN PERPETUALLY A STUDENT, BUT HE HAS TO ACT AS GURU. That is the mission of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. IT IS NOT THAT BECAUSE I AM ACTING AS GURU, I AM NO LONGER STUDENT. NO, I AM STILL STUDENT. CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU TAUGHT US THIS INSTRUCTION THAT WE SHALL ALWAYS REMAIN A FOOLISH STUDENT BEFORE OUR GURU MAHARAJA. THAT IS THE VEDIC CULTURE. I MAY BE VERY BIG MAN, BUT STILL, I SHOULD REMAIN A FOOLISH STUDENT TO MY GURU. THAT IS THE QUALIFICATION." (Lecture, Hyderabad 12/10/76)

That everyone --like these gurus and their disciples-- is always able to hear from those more advanced, is fundamental. The fact is that in Vaisnavism it is accepted that one may hear from others who are not one's initiating guru, as exemplified by the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.

"Although Balarama and Krsna are both transcendental personalities, They strictly followed the regulative principles. BOTH WERE INITIATED BY THEIR FAMILY PRIEST, GARGACARYA, USUALLY KNOWN AS GARGAMUNI, THE ACARYA OF THE YADU DYNASTY.

[...]"It is customary, after being initiated in the Gayatri mantra, for one to live away from home for some time, under the care of the acarya, to be trained in spiritual life. [...B]oth Lord Krsna and Balarama strictly followed those regulative principles WHILE LIVING UNDER THE INSTRUCTION OF THEIR SPIRITUAL MASTER, SANDIPANI MUNI, in his place in northern India."

(KB, Ch.44, New Ed., pg.357)

Chapter Six: “My Disciples”

Often times it has been seen in Vaisnava history that even a spiritual master would send his disciples to study with another spiritual master. And, as it has become common knowledge in nowadays ISKCON, “Our *parampara* is one of *siksa* more than *diksa*.” This means that a *siksa-guru* may become more prominent than the *diksa-guru* in the life of a disciple. So much so, that it is interesting to note how in the summary to Chapter One, *Adi-lila*, of the *Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta*, Srila Prabhupada describes part of our *parampara* in the following way:

“The direct disciple of Srila Kṛsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami was Srila Narottama dasa Thakura, who accepted Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti as his servitor. Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura accepted Srila Jagannatha dasa Babaji, the spiritual master of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, who in turn accepted Srila Gaurakisora dasa Babaji, the spiritual master of Om Visnupada Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Maharaja, the divine master of our humble self.”

But we know that the initiating guru of Srila Narottama dasa Thakura was Lokanatha dasa Goswami, and that of Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti was Sri Radha-Ramana Cakravarti. It is also said that the guru of Srila Jagannatha dasa Babaji was Madhusudana Dasa Babaji. Similarly, the initiating guru of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura was Vipina Vihari Goswami; Jagannatha dasa Babaji was his *siksa-guru*. About Srila Gaurakisora Dasa Babaji, Prabhupada himself says:

“...Thakur Bhaktivinoda was not official Spiritual Master of Gour Kishore das Babaji Maharaj. Gour Kishore das Babaji Maharaj was already [in the] renounced order, Paramhansa, but Thakur Bhaktivinoda, while He was even playing the part of a householder, was treated by Gour Kishore das Babaji Maharaj as Preceptor, on account of His highly elevated spiritual understanding, and thus He was always treating Him as His Spiritual Master. The Spiritual Master is divided into two parts: namely, *siksha guru* and *diksha guru*. So OFFICIALLY BHAKTIVINODE THAKUR WAS LIKE SIKSHA GURU OF GOUR KISHORE DAS BABAJI MAHARAJ.”

(Letter to Dayananda 5/1/69)

Likewise, still more specifically for those “insufficient-guidance” cases, in *Jaiva Dharma* (Ch. XX) Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura says that if the

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preceptor has insufficient knowledge, then, with due respect to him and with his permission, one may go to another preceptor to learn more, without rejecting one's original preceptor.

Therefore, generally speaking, a disciple is never at a loss if we follow the true Vaisnava ways.

Here is more on this, straight from the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. It is the story of Prsadhra being cursed by his spiritual master.

"[...]Prsadhra, following the order of his spiritual master, was engaged as a protector of cows. He would stand all night with a sword to give the cows protection."

"Once at night, while it was raining, a tiger entered the land of the cowshed. Upon seeing the tiger, all the cows, who were lying down, got up in fear and scattered here and there on the land."

"When the very strong tiger seized the cow, the cow screamed in distress and fear, and Prsadhra, hearing the screaming, immediately followed the sound. He took up his sword, but because the stars were covered by clouds, he mistook the cow for the tiger and mistakenly cut off the cows' head with great force."

"Because the tiger's ear had been cut by the edge of the sword, the tiger was very afraid, and it fled from that place, while bleeding on the street."

"In the morning, when Prsadhra, who was quite able to subdue his enemy, saw that he had killed the cow although at night he thought he had killed the tiger, he was very unhappy."

"Although Prsadhra had committed the sin unknowingly, his family priest, Vasistha, cursed him, saying, "In your next life you shall not be able to become a *ksatriya*. Instead, you shall take birth as a *sudra* because of killing the cow.""

"PURPORT"

"It appears that Vasistha was not free from *tamo-guna*, the mode of ignorance. As the family priest or spiritual master of Prsadhra, Vasistha should have taken Prsadhra's offense very lightly, but instead Vasistha cursed him to become a *sudra*. It is the duty of a family priest not to curse a disciple but to give him relief through the performance of some sort of atonement. Vasistha, however, did just the opposite. Therefore Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura says

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that he was *durmati*; in other words, his intelligence was not very good.

"WHEN THE HERO PRSADHRA WAS THUS CURSED BY HIS SPIRITUAL MASTER, HE ACCEPTED THE CURSE WITH FOLDED HANDS. Then, having controlled his senses, he took the vow of *brahmacarya*, which is approved by all great sages."

"Thereafter, Prsadhra gained relief from all responsibilities, became peaceful in mind, and established control over all his senses. Being unaffected by material conditions, being pleased with whatever was available by the grace of the Lord to maintain body and soul together, and being equal toward everyone, he gave full attention to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudeva, who is the transcendental Supersoul, free from material contamination. Thus Prsadhra, fully satisfied in pure knowledge, always keeping his mind on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, achieved pure devotional service to the Lord and began traveling all over the world, without affection for material activities, as if he were deaf, dumb and blind."

"WITH THIS ATTITUDE, PRSADHRA BECAME A GREAT SAINT, and when he entered the forest and saw a blazing forest fire, he took this opportunity to burn his body in the fire. THUS HE ACHIEVED THE TRANSCENDENTAL, SPIRITUAL WORLD."

"PURPORT"

"The Lord says in *Bhagavad-gita* (4.9):

*janma karma ca me divyam / evam yo vetti tattvatah
tyaktva deham punar janma / naiti mam eti so 'rjuna*

"One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna." Prsadhra, because of his karma, was cursed to take his next birth as a *sudra*, but because he took to saintly life, specifically concentrating his mind always upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he became a pure devotee. Immediately after giving up his body in the fire, he reached the spiritual world, as mentioned in *Bhagavad-gita* (mam eti), as a result of his devotional situation. Devotional service performed by

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thinking of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is so powerful that although Prsadhra was cursed he avoided the terrible consequence of becoming a *sudra* and instead RETURNED HOME, BACK TO GODHEAD. As stated in Brahma-samhita (5.54):

*yastvindra gopam athavendra mahosva
karma bandhanurupa phala-bhajanam atanoti
karmani nirdahati kintu ca bhakti-bhajam
govindam adi-purusam tam aham bhajami*

"Those who engage in devotional service are unaffected by the results of their material activities. Otherwise, everyone, from the smallest microbe up to the King of heaven, Indra, is subject to the laws of karma. A pure devotee, being always engaged in the service of the Lord, is exempt from these laws." (SB 9.2.3-14)

In spite of having a guru who "was not free from tamo-guna" and who cursed him to take another birth (and that the birth would be as a *sudra*), nevertheless Prsadhra "returned home, back to Godhead," due to his proper attitude as a disciple. Having a guru less than the ideal (and even having been cursed by his guru!) did not keep him from becoming self-realized and attaining the Supreme Destination. Thus, as said before, a disciple is never at a loss if we follow the true Vaisnava ways.

A side note. Although the focus of this book is to document that Srila Prabhupada was unequivocally expecting --and ordering-- his disciples and subsequent ISKCON generations of disciples to be the gurus for ISKCON, we should not miss the cue afforded by this *Bhagavatam* passage to look for one more moment at this aspect of "discipleship."

"THE IDEA IS THAT BOTH THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND THE DISCIPLE MUST BE BONA FIDE.

[...]There was none so attentive as Maharaja Pariksit in the matter of hearing *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, and there was none so qualified as Sukadeva Gosvami to recite the text of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. Therefore, anyone who follows in the footsteps of either the ideal reciter or the ideal hearer, Sukadeva Gosvami and Maharaja Pariksit respectively, will undoubtedly attain salvation like them." (SB 2.1.10)

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"TRANSLATION

And because you are submissive, your spiritual masters have endowed you with all the favors bestowed upon a gentle disciple. Therefore you can tell us all that you have scientifically learned from them.

PURPORT

[...]It is essential, therefore, that a disciple be very much obedient and submissive to the bona fide spiritual master. SRILA SUTA GOSVAMI FULFILLED ALL THESE QUALIFICATIONS AS A DISCIPLE, and therefore he was endowed with all favors by his learned and self-realized spiritual masters such as Srila Vyasadeva and others. The sages of Naimisaranya were confident that Srila Suta Gosvami was bona fide. Therefore they were anxious to hear from him." (SB 1.1.8)

"ONE WHO IS NOT SELF-CONTROLLED, SPECIFICALLY IN SEX LIFE, CAN BECOME NEITHER A DISCIPLE NOR A SPIRITUAL MASTER. One must have disciplinary training in controlling speaking, anger, the tongue, the mind, the belly and the genitals. One who has controlled the particular senses mentioned above is called a gosvami. WITHOUT BECOMING A GOSVAMI ONE CAN BECOME NEITHER A DISCIPLE NOR A SPIRITUAL MASTER. (SB 2.9.43)

"SO TWO THINGS MUST BE CORRECT: THE GURU MUST BE CORRECT AND THE DISCIPLE MUST BE CORRECT. THEN THE BUSINESS WILL BE CORRECT. And either of them, if guru is incorrect or the disciple is incorrect, there will be no action. So therefore Bhāgavata says, *tasmād gurum prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam* [SB 11.3.21]. Who shall approach? *Tad-vijñānārthaṁ sa gurum eva abhigacchet* [MU 1.2.12]. According to Vedic instruction, everyone should approach a guru. But who is that everyone? One who is *jijñāsu*. *Athāto brahma jijñāsā*. One who is inquisitive to understand "What I am? Am I this body or something else?" That is beginning of spiritual instruction."

(*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.10.3 -- Mayapura, June 18, 1973)

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Therefore, "true Vaisnava ways" fully includes that the disciple *must also be qualified*. The importance of this should not be minimized nor forgotten in the equation.

Back to our focus. From early in his teachings, Srila Prabhupada explained the three levels of *adhikara*, or qualification. The following is from a letter he wrote in 1968:

"Affection for God-brothers is nice, it is a good sign. Affection for God-brothers as well as for all other living entities, even they are not God-brothers, these signs are seen in the advanced devotees.

"There are three kinds of devotees: The lower grade devotees, they have high regard for the Deity in the temple, but not very much regard for devotees or people in general. THE SECOND GRADE DEVOTEE TAKES COMPASSION WITH INNOCENT NON-DEVOTEES. In that stage, he has got 4 kinds of vision: one is that he always keeps Krishna as the most Lovable Object, second is that he makes intimate friendship with his devotee God-brothers or any other devotees, third is that he takes compassion with innocent non-devotees, and tries to convince them about the importance of Krishna Consciousness, and fourth is that he does not take any serious interest for the atheist class of men."

That is the exact description of the *madhyam-adhikari*, which is the platform from where to preach. It has already been stated that the guru performs his function as such in that state of consciousness --as a *madhyam-adhikari*. It is from "there" that he accepts disciples. So much so, that the *uttama-adhikari* must "descend" to this platform to also accept disciples, because as an *uttama-adhikari* he doesn't see the need to preach, he doesn't make the distinctions mentioned above, as will continue to explain Srila Prabhupada in the letter at hand:

"The first grade devotee, of course, sees everyone in relationship with Krishna and as such, he makes no distinction between a devotee or nondevotee. His vision is high grade, because he sees that everyone is engaged in Krishna's service directly or indirectly. This position of high-grade devotee should never be imitated. It was possible only in Lord Caitanya or Lord Nityananda, or Haridasa Thakura. Thakura

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Haridasa was so powerful that he could convert even a harlot. But we should not try to imitate Haridasa Thakura or Lord Caitanya. OUR POSITION IS IN THE SECOND GRADE PLATFORM. We should not be satisfied remaining in the third grade platform. But we should try to elevate ourselves in the second grade platform. SO FAR THE FIRST GRADE PLATFORM IS CONCERNED, IT IS NOT ATTAINED BY OUR ENDEAVOR, BUT IT IS POSSIBLE WHEN WE HAVE FULL GRACE OF KRISHNA. IT COMPLETELY DEPENDS ON THE CAUSELESS MERCY OF KRISHNA.”

(Letter to: Madhusudana -- Montreal 29 July, 1968)

Thus, from the very beginning, Srila Prabhupada was asking his disciples to be *madhyam-adhikaris* and show concern for all living entities and preach. It is in no one's power to manifest the level of realization of an *uttama-adhikari* --"it completely depends on the causeless mercy of Krishna," he asserted.

Over and above all said, Prabhupada did directly address and accept as valid the circumstance of someone acting as a spiritual master and not being on the topmost platform. Those quotes are in Part Two, Question Nine. The following ones are examples of his teachings in this regard, and indicate that a guru may be bona fide without being on that topmost platform of *uttama-adhikari* and cannot be rejected:

“Guru is only one. Guru means, as you explained, *ajnana-timirandhasya jnananjana-salakaya, caksur unmilitam yena tasmai sri-gurave namah*. One who eradicates the *ajnana*, *andhakara*, darkness. In the darkness, if somebody brings lamp, *ajnana-timirandhasya jnananjana-salakaya...*, the *jnana-rupa*, torchlight, he's guru. SO MAYBE OF DIFFERENT DEGREES, BUT ANYONE WHO OPENS THE SPIRITUAL EYES, HE'S GURU.

“[...]But it doesn't matter that degree. ACTUALLY, IF THE GURU TEACHES KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS, THEN HE MAY BE IN LESSER DEGREE, BUT HE'S ACCEPTED AS GURU. THERE IS NO QUESTION OF REJECTION.” (Lecture, Ahmedabad 13/12/72)

“I1: If one has accepted a bona fide spiritual master and he did not receive much knowledge from him, can he change his spiritual master at later...”

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S.PRABHUPADA: A bona fide spiritual master, where is the necessity of changing?

II: No, he has not got the knowledge from him, but... can I change..?

S.PRABHUPADA: No, no, bona fide spiritual means he must get knowledge. He must get knowledge. He must inquire from the... The student must inquire from the spiritual master. If he remains dumb, then what bona fide spiritual master can do? *Adau gurv-asrayam sad-dharma-prcchat, jijnasuh*. He must be *jijnasuh*. He must be *jijnasuh*. We get so many letters daily. So many inquiries. The student must be very inquisitive. Otherwise how he shall make progress? If he remains dumb, then what the bona fide spiritual master can do?

“If you go to a very nice school but if you do not study, if you do not inquire, then what is the use of going to the nice school? You must be also very alert to inquire, to understand, to make progress. Then it will be all right. If you do not utilize the benefit of having a bona fide spiritual master, then that is your fault. You must utilize the opportunity. We are publishing so many books, so many literatures, magazines, why? Just to enlighten more and more. But if you don't take advantage of this, then how can you make progress? CHANGE OF SPIRITUAL MASTER [sic:] REQUIRES WHEN THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS NOT BONA FIDE. OTHERWISE THERE IS NO NECESSITY OF CHANGING.

(Lecture [Q&A], London 9/23/69)

“Generally the spiritual master comes from the group of such eternal associates of the Lord; but ANYONE WHO FOLLOWS THE PRINCIPLES OF SUCH EVER LIBERATED PERSONS IS AS GOOD AS ONE IN THE ABOVE MENTIONED GROUP....A person who is liberated acharya and guru cannot commit any mistake, but THERE ARE PERSONS WHO ARE LESS QUALIFIED OR NOT LIBERATED, BUT STILL CAN ACT AS GURU AND ACHARYA BY STRICTLY FOLLOWING THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION.”

(Letter to Janardana 4/26/68)

“This Krsna consciousness movement directly receives instructions from the Supreme personality of Godhead via persons who are strictly following His instructions. ALTHOUGH A FOLLOWER

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MAY NOT BE A LIBERATED PERSON, IF HE FOLLOWS the supreme, liberated Personality of Godhead, his actions are naturally liberated from the contamination of the material nature. Lord Caitanya therefore says: ‘By My order you may become a spiritual master.’ ONE CAN IMMEDIATELY BECOME A SPIRITUAL MASTER by having full faith in the transcendental words of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and by following His instructions.”

(SB 4.18.5 ppt.)

“DR.BENFORD: So everyone I might meet who accepts Krsna as the perfect teacher is the perfect teacher?

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes, because he is teaching only Krsna’s teachings, that’s all. It is the same as the example we gave before: THEY MAY NOT BE PERSONALLY PERFECT, BUT WHATEVER THEY ARE SPEAKING IS PERFECT BECAUSE IT IS TAUGHT BY KRSNA.”

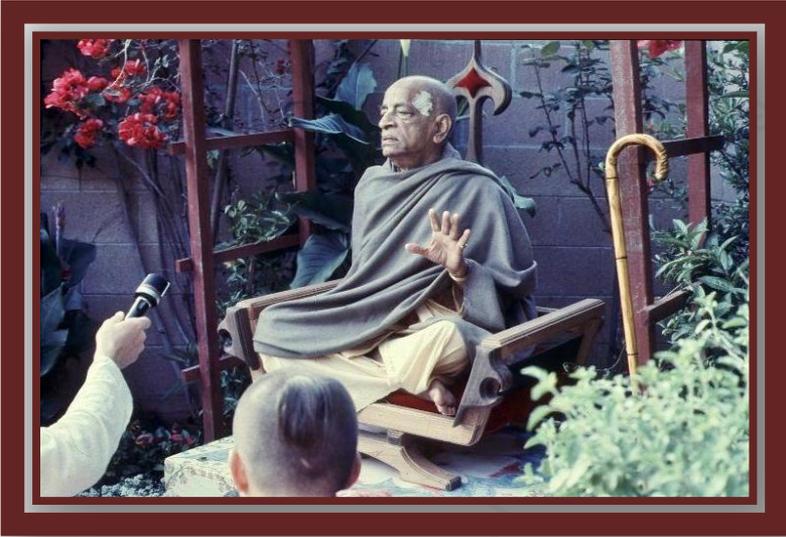
(Consciousness: The Missing Link, pg. 14)

Therefore, a disciple of Srila Prabhupada who is in the preaching field and has already become the *siksa-guru* of some aspirant devotees, can safely take shelter of his duty to the mission of his spiritual master and become their *diksa-guru*, if he is so requested by them and, of course, if he feels the need to accept such a weighty commitment.

“Generally a spiritual master who constantly instructs a disciple in spiritual science becomes his initiating spiritual master later on.”

(C.c. Adi 1.35)

The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)



Chapter Seven

Stop that Pendulum!

“A conditioned soul in the material world has the disqualification of cheating. He has four disqualifications: he is sure to commit mistakes, he is sure to be illusioned, he is prone to cheat others, and his senses are imperfect. But if one carries out the order of the spiritual master by disciplic succession, or the parampara system, he overcomes the four defects.”

(SB 3.24.12)

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NEVERTHELESS, I AGREE, there are still unanswered questions about our quote in point (NOI, Text 5):

“ONE SHOULD NOT BECOME A SPIRITUAL MASTER UNLESS HE HAS ATTAINED THE PLATFORM OF UTTAMA-ADHIKARI. A neophyte Vaisnava or a Vaisnava situated on the intermediate platform can also accept disciples, but such disciples must be on the same platform, and it should be understood that they cannot advance very well toward the ultimate goal of life under his insufficient guidance. Therefore A DISCIPLE SHOULD BE CAREFUL TO ACCEPT AN UTTAMA-ADHIKARI AS A SPIRITUAL MASTER.”

Undoubtedly a piercing statement. It still faces us with one of our initial questions. Can an *uttama-adhikari* acknowledge, both to himself and others, that he has attained that perfected stage, that he is liberated? So far, we have basically said "no," but the quote implies something different. Then, also, how distasteful and anguishing wouldn't it be for an honest devotee to become a guru --even under the emergency theory-- knowing that he is *insufficient*. And, wouldn't all this logic force people, either directly or indirectly, to have to surrender to a guru without fully trusting him? How would they relate to him? Could they genuinely feel that they are being taken back to Godhead?

Once again, Srila Prabhupada's words come to our rescue. With one stroke he resolves everything. *There is* an understanding by which a liberated soul can think and say that he's liberated. It's the same understanding by which any guru becomes as good as the *uttama-adhikari*:

“Our system, *parampara* system, is that, for example, I am just a disciple of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati. I DON'T SAY THAT I AM LIBERATED. I am conditioned. But BECAUSE I AM FOLLOWING the instruction of Bhaktisiddhanta, I'M LIBERATED. This is the distinction between conditioned and liberated. WHEN ONE IS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF A LIBERATED PERSON.... The same thing: Electricity. The copper is not electricity, but when it is charged with electricity, if it is touched, that is electricity. And, similarly, this *parampara* system, the electricity is going. If you cut the *parampara* system, then there is no electricity. Therefore it is stressed so much.”

(Morning Walk, Bombay 1/4/77)

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On this Morning Walk he discussed the matter very explicitly; his complete analysis is in Part Two, Question Nine. And there are many more statements like this one, in which Prabhupada emphasizes that someone who is following the liberated person is as good as liberated. In that same talk, he furthers:

“It is very easy. Just like a child. If he takes your direction, he is liberated, and if he acts according to his childish nature, then he’s conditioned. If you take Krsna’s instruction, then you are liberated. If you manufacture your own idea, then you are conditioned. Two things. Child is not actually liberated. He is child. But because he takes blindly the direction of the father, he’s liberated. That is *mam eva ye prapadyante* [Bg 4.11: ‘As they surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly’]. ANYONE WHO HAS SURRENDERED TO KRSNA AND STRICTLY FOLLOWS WHAT KRSNA SAYS, THEN HE IS LIBERATED. Otherwise not. If he manufactures [his own] idea then he’s conditioned.”

That was in 1977, his last year amongst us, but Srila Prabhupada had been saying exactly the same thing since the beginning of the movement:

“Generally the spiritual master comes from the group of such eternal associates of the Lord; but ANYONE WHO FOLLOWS THE PRINCIPLES OF SUCH EVER LIBERATED PERSONS IS AS GOOD AS ONE IN THE ABOVE MENTIONED GROUP. The gurus from nature’s study are accepted as such on the principle that an elevated person in Krishna Consciousness does not accept anyone as disciple, but he accepts everyone as an expansion of his guru. That is very high position, called Maha-bhagavat. Just like Radharani, sometimes thinks a subordinate of hers as her teacher, to understand devotion of Krishna. A person who is liberated acharya and guru cannot commit any mistake, but THERE ARE PERSONS WHO ARE LESS QUALIFIED OR NOT LIBERATED, BUT STILL CAN ACT AS GURU AND ACHARYA BY STRICTLY FOLLOWING THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION.” (Letter to Janardana 4/26/68)

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“YES, [THOSE WHO FOLLOW] THEY’RE ALSO PURE DEVOTEES BECAUSE THEY’RE FOLLOWING MY INSTRUCTION. Just like a technician, he is expert, but somebody is assisting him. So the assistants, because they are following the instruction of the expert, therefore their work is also complete. So IT IS NOT NECESSARILY THAT ONE HAS TO BECOME PURE DEVOTEE IMMEDIATELY. Just like we are also following the instruction of our spiritual master. I don’t claim that I am pure devotee or perfect, but my only qualification is that I am trying to follow the instruction of the perfect. Similarly... This is called disciplic succession. Just like here it is stated that Krsna is the original spiritual master and Arjuna is the original student.

“[...]If we follow Arjuna and Krsna, then we get the perfect knowledge. We may not be cent percent perfect, but as far as possible, if we follow the instruction as it is, that much perfect. In this way one will get perfection. So one has to follow. The same example, try to understand, that a perfect, expert technologist or technician or mechanic is working, and somebody is working under his instruction. So THIS SOMEBODY, BECAUSE HE IS STRICTLY WORKING UNDER THE INSTRUCTION OF THE EXPERT, HE’S ALSO EXPERT. HE MAY NOT BE CENT PERCENT EXPERT, BUT HIS WORK IS EXPERT. Is that clear? Because he is working under the expert. Do you follow?

“So IF YOU FOLLOW PURE DEVOTEE, THEN YOU ARE ALSO PURE DEVOTEE. It may not be that one is cent percent pure. Because we are trying to raise ourself from the conditional life. But IF WE STRICTLY FOLLOW THE PURE DEVOTEE, THEN WE ARE ALSO PURE DEVOTEE. So far we do, that is pure. So pure devotee does not mean one has to become immediately cent percent pure. But IF HE STICKS TO THE PRINCIPLE THAT ‘WE’LL FOLLOW A PURE DEVOTEE,’ THEN HIS ACTIONS ARE... HE IS AS GOOD AS A PURE DEVOTEE. It is not I am explaining in my own way. It is the explanation of Bhagavat. *Mahajano yena gatah sa panthah*. We have to follow the footprints of pure devotees.”

(Lecture, Los Angeles 11/25/68)

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Now, how good does such a follower actually become by following? What platform of liberation has he actually attained?

“A conditioned soul in the material world has the disqualification of cheating. He has four disqualifications: he is sure to commit mistakes, he is sure to be illusioned, he is prone to cheat others, and his senses are imperfect. BUT IF ONE CARRIES OUT THE ORDER OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER BY DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, OR THE PARAMPARA SYSTEM, HE OVERCOMES THE FOUR DEFECTS.”
(SB 3.24.12)

“WHEN ONE BECOMES SERIOUS TO FOLLOW THE MISSION OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, HIS RESOLUTION IS TANTAMOUNT TO SEEING THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD. As explained before, THIS MEANS MEETING THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD IN THE INSTRUCTION OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. This is technically called vani-seva. Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura states in his *Bhagavad-gita* commentary on the verse *vyavasayatmika buddhir ekeha kuru-nandana* (Bg. 2.41) that one should serve the words of the spiritual master. The disciple must stick to whatever the spiritual master orders. SIMPLY BY FOLLOWING ON THAT LINE, ONE SEES THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD.

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Paramatma, appeared before the Queen as a *brahmana*, but why didn't He appear in His original form as Sri Krsna? Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura remarks that unless one is very highly elevated in loving the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one cannot see Him as He is. Nonetheless, IF ONE STICKS TO THE PRINCIPLES ENUNCIATED BY THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, SOMEHOW OR OTHER HE IS IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD. Since the Lord is in the heart, He can advise a sincere disciple from within. This is also confirmed in *Bhagavad-gita* (10.10):

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tesam satata-yuktanam
bhajatam priti-purvakam
dadami buddhi-yogam tam
yena mam upayanti te

‘To those who are constantly devoted and worship Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me.’

“In conclusion, IF A DISCIPLE IS VERY SERIOUS TO EXECUTE THE MISSION OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, HE IMMEDIATELY ASSOCIATES WITH THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD BY VANI OR VAPUH. This is the only secret of success in seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Instead of being eager to see the Lord in some bush of Vrndavana while at the same time engaging in sense gratification, if one instead sticks to the principle of following the words of the spiritual master, he will see the Supreme Lord without difficulty. [...]IF ONE ENGAGES IN THE SERVICE OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, HE NOT ONLY SEES THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD BUT ATTAINS LIBERATION.” (SB 4.28.51)

Therefore, the essential point is for someone to be a strict FOLLOWER of his liberated spiritual master.

“SPIRITUAL MASTER IS NOT A NEW INVENTION. IT IS SIMPLY FOLLOWING THE ORDERS OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. So ALL MY STUDENTS PRESENT HERE who are feeling so much obliged...I am also obliged to them because they are helping me in this missionary work.At the same time, I SHALL REQUEST THEM ALL TO BECOME SPIRITUAL MASTER.EVERY ONE OF YOU SHOULD BE SPIRITUAL MASTER NEXT. And what is their duty? WHATEVER YOU ARE HEARING FROM ME, WHATEVER YOU ARE LEARNING FROM ME, YOU HAVE TO DISTRIBUTE THE SAME IN TOTO WITHOUT ANY ADDITION OR ALTERATION. Then all of you

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become the spiritual master. THAT IS THE SCIENCE OF BECOMING SPIRITUAL MASTER.”

(Vyasa-puja Address, Hamburg 9/5/69)

“...So Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *amara ajnaya guru hana tara’ei desa, yare dekha, tare kaha ‘krsna’-upadesa...* He says *amara ajnaya...* ‘by My order you become a spiritual master...’ So one may be very illiterate, no education, no scholarship, may not be born in a *brahmana* family, or may not be a *sannyasi* --there are so many qualifications. But one may not have all these qualifications. HE MAY BE RASCAL NUMBER ONE. But still he can become spiritual master. ...How? *Amara ajnaya!!!* As Krsna says, as Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, IF YOU FOLLOW, then you become spiritual master. ONE MAY BE RASCAL NUMBER ONE FROM MATERIAL ESTIMATION, BUT IF HE SIMPLY STRICTLY FOLLOWS WHATEVER IS SAID BY CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU OR HIS REPRESENTATIVE SPIRITUAL MASTER, THEN HE BECOMES A GURU.”

(Vyasa-puja Address, London 8/21/73)

“Regarding the Teachings in the temple; everyone of my disciples may become a teacher strictly following my instructions. I AM A BONA FIDE TEACHER AS LONG AS I FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS OF MY SPIRITUAL MASTER. THAT IS THE ONLY ONE QUALIFICATION FOR BECOMING A TEACHER. As soon as one deviates from this principle one is no longer a teacher.”

(Letter to Nandarani, 10/29/67)

“This is called *vyavasayatmika buddhi*. I may be quite incomplete. It doesn’t matter. But IF I TRY TO FOLLOW THE WORDS OF MY GURU MAHARAJA THEN I BECOME COMPLETE. This is the secret. *Yasya deve para bhaktir yatha deve tatha guro*. If one has strong faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead and as much faith in the guru, *yatha deve tatha guru*, then the revealed scriptures become manifest. It is not the education. It is not the scholarship. It is faith in Krsna and guru.”

(Lecture, Los Angeles 12/8/73)

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“IF ONE REMAINS ALWAYS A SERVANT EVERLASTINGLY OF GURU, THEN HE’S LIBERATED. And as soon as he thinks that he is liberated, he’s a rascal. That is the teaching of Caitanya Mahaprabhu.” (Conversation, Bombay 8/16/76)

That is the main platform of liberation that we should be concerned with in continuing the line of disciplic succession. But it’s interesting to note that although for years we have heard Prabhupada say so, now that we actually have to apply it, some of us are finding it “hard to swallow”.

It’s again the pendulum syndrome. When Srila Prabhupada left, some thought that his successors automatically had to be regarded as him. Now that the idea has proven a fallacy, the pendulum has swung to the other peak: “No one is qualified!”.

Well, it’s about time that we stop that pendulum if we want our mission to succeed. “Pendulumania” comes from sentimentality and ignorance. But we are meant to conduct our activities on the supremely solid basis of *sastra* and *parampara* understanding, not on the basis of “vox populi” feelings or “practical” speculations. These are the elements of the pendulum.

Granted, in preaching we have to be practical. But Prabhupada gave the example of what it meant to be practical. He never adjusted things in a way that would defeat the spirit of *sastra* and the disciplic succession, or make it seem obsolete.

“It is important that we preach the message of Krishna Consciousness exactly as we have heard it from our Spiritual Master. THE SAME PHILOSOPHY AND SPIRIT MUST BE THERE EXACTLY. Just like we preach in this country exactly as we have heard from our Spiritual Master, but there are changes due to the time, circumstances, and the trainees. THE SPIRIT OF THE DISCIPIC SUCCESSION MAY NOT BE CHANGED, BUT THERE MAY BE ADJUSTMENTS MADE TO SUIT THE SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES.” (Letter to Shivananda, 1/23/69)

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A case in point was the “mingling” of men and women in our movement; in spite of all practical adjustments, the spirit remained intact: no illicit sex.

“Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was an ideal acarya. AN ACARYA IS AN IDEAL TEACHER WHO KNOWS THE PURPOSE OF THE REVEALED SCRIPTURES, BEHAVES EXACTLY ACCORDING TO THEIR INJUNCTIONS AND TEACHES HIS STUDENTS TO ADOPT THESE PRINCIPLES ALSO. As an ideal acarya, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu devised ways to capture all kinds of atheists and materialists. Every acarya has a specific means of propagating his spiritual movement with the aim of bringing men to Krsna consciousness. Therefore, the method of one acarya may be different from that of another, but THE ULTIMATE GOAL IS NEVER NEGLECTED.

“Srila Rupa Gosvami recommends:

*yena tena prakarena
manah krsne nivesayet
sarve vidhi-nisedha syur
etayor eva kinkarah*

“AN ACARYA SHOULD DEVISE A MEANS BY WHICH PEOPLE MAY SOMEHOW OR OTHER COME TO KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS. First they should become Krsna conscious, and all the prescribed rules and regulations may later gradually be introduced. In our Krsna consciousness movement we follow this policy of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. For example, since boys and girls in the Western countries freely intermingle, special concessions regarding their customs and habits are necessary to bring them to Krsna consciousness. THE ACARYA MUST DEVISE A MEANS TO BRING THEM TO DEVOTIONAL SERVICE. Therefore, although I am a *sannyasi* I sometimes take part in getting boys and girls married, although in the history of *sannyasa* no *sannyasi* has personally taken part in marrying his disciples.” (Cc Adi 7.37)

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“It is the concern of the acarya to show mercy to the fallen souls. In this connection, *desa-kala-patra* (the place, the time and the object) should be taken into consideration. Since the European and American boys and girls in our Krsna consciousness movement preach together, less intelligent men criticize that they are mingling without restriction. In Europe and America boys and girls mingle unrestrictedly and have equal rights; therefore it is not possible to completely separate the men from the women. However, we are thoroughly instructing both men and women how to preach, and actually they are preaching wonderfully. OF COURSE, WE VERY STRICTLY PROHIBIT ILLICIT SEX. Boys and girls who are not married are not allowed to sleep together or live together, and there are separate arrangements for boys and girls in every temple. *Grhasthas* live outside the temple, for in the temple we do not allow even husband and wife to live together. The results of this are wonderful. Both men and women are preaching the gospel of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Lord Krsna with redoubled strength.

“In this verse the words *saba nistarite kare caturi अपरा* indicate that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu wanted to deliver one and all. THEREFORE IT IS A PRINCIPLE THAT A PREACHER MUST STRICTLY FOLLOW THE RULES AND REGULATIONS LAID DOWN IN THE SASTRAS YET AT THE SAME TIME DEVISE A MEANS BY WHICH THE PREACHING WORK TO RECLAIM THE FALLEN MAY GO ON WITH FULL FORCE.”

(Cc Adi 7.38)

What I am trying to discuss now is the tendency that is there these days to create an “adjusted” understanding of guru, guruship, and discipleship, that is not supported by *sastra*. We can adjust anything as long as it does not contradict *guru-sadhu-sastra*. But, today, are we backing all we say with the authorities and the scriptures, or are we just reacting out of frustration, accepting concocted ideas?

“So there is a disciplic succession. And the acaryas, they’re authorities. OUR PROCESS OF KNOWLEDGE IS VERY SIMPLE. WE TAKE IT FROM THE AUTHORITY. WE DON’T SPECULATE. Speculation will not help us to come to the real knowledge. Just like when we are in difficulty, in legal implication, we

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go to some authority, lawyer. When we are diseased we go to a physician, the authority. There is no use, speculation.”

(Lecture, London 9/23/69)

“Srla Narottama dasa Thakura says, *sadhu-sastra-guru-vakya, cittete kariya aikya*. One should accept a thing as genuine by studying the words of saintly people, the spiritual master and *sastra*. THE ACTUAL CENTER IS SASTRA, THE REVEALED SCRIPTURE. If a spiritual master does not speak according to revealed scripture, he is not to be accepted. Similarly, if a saintly person does not speak according to the *sastra*, he is not a saintly person. *Sastra* is the center for all. UNFORTUNATELY, AT THE PRESENT MOMENT, PEOPLE DO NOT REFER TO THE SASTRAS...”

(Cc Madhya 20.352)

Guru and disciple are two of the concepts that Srila Prabhupada explained the most. Why is there confusion? He wondered this himself.

“WHY DON'T YOU SEE ALL THESE INSTRUCTIONS? And you are presenting yourself as following Caitanya Mahaprabhu? Why? Answer! Why you remain fool and rascal? If you want to remain fool and rascal and question that is not very good. YOU MUST KNOW WHO IS GURU. And you say, 'I do not know who is guru.' Why? Hm? What is the answer? Guru is defined by Caitanya Mahaprabhu. We are chanting daily, sri krsna caitanya prabhu nityananda sri advaita gadadhara sri.. Take their lesson. Otherwise why you are praying, sri krsna caitanya prabhu nityananda? You rather glorify Hitler or Mussolini. Make them guru. Everything is there. You cannot say that 'I do not understand.' Do not understand means you do not take.”

(Conversation, Mayapur 2/3/76)

So, please, let's not try to redefine what is a guru, a disciple, and their relationship. Let's just keep it as PRABHUPADA SAID. “I've said everything in my books.” If this is not in his books, then *what is?*

“I HAVE INSTRUCTED EVERYTHING IN MY BOOKS.” (Letter to Dina Dayala dasa, 25th February, 1976)

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"I HAVE GIVEN MY IDEAS AND DIRECTION IN MY BOOKS. People appreciate. I think from my side I have done everything."

(Morning Conversation -- April 29, 1977, Bombay)

"Krsna has given you nice opportunity to preach the philosophy so you must be sure to understand it rightly. EVERYTHING IS GIVEN IN MY BOOKS FOR YOU." (Letter to Gunagrahi dasa, 10/14/73)

"I HAVE GIVEN YOU ALL THE GUIDANCE AND HINTS AND IT IS DESCRIBED IN ALL MY BOOKS. Now it is up to you."

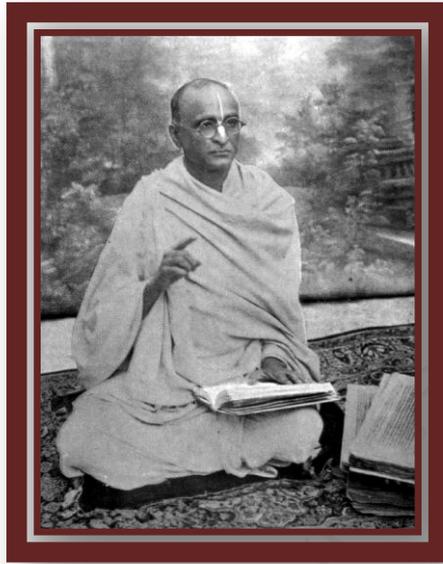
(Letter to Mukunda, 1st February, 1974)

"IN MY BOOKS THE PHILOSOPHY OF KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS IS EXPLAINED FULLY, so if there is anything which you do not understand, then you simply have to read again and again. By reading daily the knowledge will be revealed to you, and by this process your spiritual life will develop."

(Letter to Bahurupa Das, 11/22/74)

The Guru and What Parabhupada Said (I n the Service of Iskcon)

The Guru and What Parabhupada Said (I n the Service of Iskcon)



Chapter Eight

The Moneytor Guru

“Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura comments that there are many materialistic persons who become preachers, gurus, religionists or philosophers only for the sake of maintaining a high standard of living and sense gratification for themselves and their families. Sometimes they adopt the dress of a sannyasi or preacher. They train some of their family members as lawyers and continually seek help from a high court to acquire riches on the plea of maintaining temples. [...]They may also professionally

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recite the Bhagavatam or other scriptures, worship the Deity in the temple and initiate disciples. Making a show of devotional paraphernalia, they may also collect money from the public and use it to cure the disease of some family member or near relative. [...] Thus they spread a network of business schemes to collect money for sense gratification by cheating people in general who have no knowledge of pure devotional service.” (C.c. Antya 9.69)

AND, THEN, WE DO KNOW *what is not* in Prabhupada’s books. For example, there are no instructions about that new species of life, the so-called “monitor” gurus and their disciples. If we were to accept that in our society we have “monitor” gurus, we would have to write new books about everything concerning them. Besides the fact that Prabhupada considered this kind of classification bogus. According to him, guru is just one thing: guru.

“Gurus cannot be of different types. All gurus are of one type.”

(PQPA, Ch.3, pg. 28)

As God is one, guru is also one. THERE CANNOT BE DIFFERENT GURUS. Nowadays it has become a fashion that "I have got my own guru. You have got your own guru." No. Guru means the representative of God. As God is one, similarly, guru is also one. THERE CANNOT BE DIFFERENT GURUS. BECAUSE GOD IS ONE, HOW THERE CAN BE DIFFERENT GURUS? THE PRINCIPLE OF GURU IS ONE.

(Arrival Lecture -- San Francisco, July 15, 1975)

“What you have to do is simply try to understand what a genuine guru is. The definition of a genuine guru is that he is simply talking about God--that’s all. If he is talking about some other nonsense, then he is not a guru. A GURU CANNOT BE BAD. THERE IS NO QUESTION OF A BAD GURU, any more than A RED GURU or A WHITE GURU. GURU MEANS “GENUINE GURU.” All we have to know is that the genuine guru is simply talking about God and trying to get people to become God’s devotees. IF HE DOES THIS, HE IS GENUINE.”

(SSR, 4th.Printing, pg.71)

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Well, didn't Prabhupada coin the "monitor guru" term himself in Easy Journey to Other Planets?... Help yourself:

"13. He [the serious candidate for going back to Godhead] must not take on unlimited disciples. This means that a candidate who has successfully followed the first twelve items CAN ALSO BECOME A SPIRITUAL MASTER HIMSELF, just as a student becomes a MONITOR in class with a limited number of disciples."

(EJTOP, 7th Printing, pg.34)

If we take this quote as some unique statement exclusive of that book, I would agree that the example of the monitor in class could suggest the idea of an assistant of a spiritual master. But even so it would be confusing, as Prabhupada had just said that the candidate "can also become a spiritual master himself." He didn't say "can become an assistant of a spiritual master" nor "an assistant spiritual master." Anyway, fortunately this is not something special that Prabhupada is only mentioning in this book. All that he is doing here is listing the practices to be observed by someone in the path of devotional service, just as they were enumerated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to Sanatana Gosvami in *Caitanya-caritamrta* (see Madhya-lila, Ch.22, as well as Teachings of Lord Caitanya, Ch.12), and as were later identically recorded by Srila Rupa Gosvami in the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu*. Let's take a look at them (take note of the numbers).

"12. One should avoid the association of unholy non-devotees.

13. ONE SHOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO HAVE MANY DISCIPLES.

14. One should not take the trouble of understanding various books or to understand partially any particular book, and one should avoid discussing different doctrines." (TLC, Ch.12, 1st. Ed., pg.109)

"The twelfth item is to give up the company of nondevotees.

(13) ONE SHOULD NOT ACCEPT AN UNLIMITED NUMBER OF DISCIPLES.

(14) One should not partially study many scriptures just to be able to give references and expand explanations.

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PURPORT

“Accepting an unlimited number of devotees or disciples is very risky for one who is not a preacher. According to Srila Jiva Gosvami, a preacher has to accept many disciples to expand the cult of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. This is risky because when a spiritual master accepts a disciple, he naturally accepts the disciple’s sinful activities and their reactions. Unless he is very powerful, he cannot assimilate all the sinful reactions of his disciples. Thus if he is not powerful, he has to suffer the consequences, for one is forbidden to accept many disciples.”
(Cc Madhya 22.118)

From this purport it is crystal clear that the instruction is referring to what Srila Prabhupada calls “a regular guru” (see Part Two, Question Eight, Meeting with GBCs quoted). The same is concluded by reading Nectar of Devotion (Prabhupada’s summary of the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu*), Chapters Six and Seven, where we find the exact same list of devotional principles as in Easy Journey, Teachings of Lord Caitanya and Caitanya-caritamrta. Whenever Prabhupada mentioned this instruction of Lord Caitanya (“Don’t make many disciples”), he always referred to it as an instruction for any guru.

“Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu therefore stated that the spiritual master who plays the part of Krsna’s representative has to consume all the sinful reactions of his disciple. Sometimes a spiritual master takes the risk of being overwhelmed by the sinful reactions of the disciples and undergoes a sort of tribulation due to their acceptance. SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU THEREFORE ADVISED THAT ONE NOT ACCEPT MANY DISCIPLES.”
(SB 4.21.31)

Indeed, Srila Prabhupada even applies the instruction to himself when explaining the risks of initiations. Is he calling himself a “monitor” guru?

“S.PRABHUPADA: You see, Krsna says:

*aham tvam sarva-papebhyo
moksaisyami ma sucah*

‘I will deliver you from all sinful reaction. Do not fear.’ So Krsna is so powerful that He can immediately take up all the sins of others and immediately make them right. But when a living entity plays the part on behalf of Krsna, he also takes the responsibility for the sinful

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activities of his devotees. Therefore to become a guru is not an easy task. You see? He has to take all the poisons and absorb them. So sometimes --because he is not Krsna-- sometimes there is some trouble. THEREFORE CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU HAS FORBIDDEN, 'DON'T MAKE MANY SISYAS, MANY DISCIPLES.' But for preaching work we have to accept many disciples --for expanding preaching-- even if we suffer. That's a fact. The spiritual master has to take the responsibility for all the sinful activities of his disciples. Therefore to make many disciples is a risky job unless one is able to assimilate all the sins.

[..]"After initiation, all sinful reaction is finished. Now if he again commits sinful activities, his spiritual master has to suffer. A disciple should be sympathetic and consider this. 'For my sinful activities, my spiritual master will suffer.' If the spiritual master is attacked by some disease, it is due to the sinful activities of others. 'DON'T MAKE MANY DISCIPLES.' But we do it because we are preaching. Never mind --let us suffer-- still we shall accept them. Therefore your question was --when I suffer is it due to my past misdeeds? Was it not? That is my misdeed --that I accepted some disciples who are nonsense. That is my misdeed." (PQPA, Ch.6, pgs.57-59)

This leads us to conclude that the example of the monitor refers to anyone who becomes a guru. It is not only for some so-called "monitor" gurus. In other words, all gurus are supposed to be like "a monitor in class with a limited number of disciples," for Caitanya Mahaprabhu warns ALL gurus not to take many disciples. "Unless one is a preacher"--interjects Srila Prabhupada--, and then "he is taking a risk."

"Accepting an unlimited number of devotees or disciples is very risky for one who is not a preacher. According to Srila Jiva Gosvami, a preacher has to accept many disciples to expand the cult of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. THIS IS RISKY because when a spiritual master accepts a disciple, he naturally accepts the disciple's sinful activities and their reactions. Unless he is very powerful, he cannot assimilate all the sinful reactions of his disciples. Thus if he is not powerful, he has to suffer the consequences, for one is forbidden to accept many disciples." (Cc Madhya 22.118)

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Furthermore, going back to a previous discussion about the humility of the Vaisnava and his dependence on the previous acaryas, every spiritual master feels he is a "monitor," thinking he does everything ON BEHALF OF HIS GURU, on whom he is always depending and who is --to him-- the actual guru, whose "business" (or "class") he is taking care of. In this sense, EVERY GURU INITIATES ON BEHALF OF HIS GURU.

"You have rightly observed that I am simply trying to execute the order of my Spiritual Master. WHATEVER IS BEING DONE IT IS NOT ON ACCOUNT OF MY INTELLIGENCE OR ENDEAVOR BECAUSE I AM SIMPLY AN INSTRUMENT IN THE HANDS OF MY SPIRITUAL MASTER. I do not know how far I have got the capacity to carry His order, but I may say that I have a sincere desire to do it."
(Letter to Paramananda, 6/17/70)

"So in front of Caitanya Mahaprabhu you are chanting Hare Krsna mantra, and you are taking part in it very seriously. So MY GURU MAHARAJA WILL BE VERY, VERY MUCH PLEASED UPON YOU AND BLESS YOU WITH ALL BENEFITS. So he wanted this, and he is not... IT IS NOT THAT HE IS DEAD AND GONE. That is not spiritual understanding. Even ordinary living being, he does not die. Na hanyate hanyamane sarire. And what to speak of such exalted, authorized personality like Bhaktisiddhanta. HE IS SEEING. I NEVER FEEL THAT I AM ALONE. Of course, when I came to your country without any friend, without any means... Practically, just like a vagabond I came. But I HAD FULL FAITH THAT 'MY GURU MAHARAJA IS WITH ME.' I never lost this faith, and that is fact."
(S.Bhaktisiddhanta's App. Day, 3/2/75)

"[...]I am so much grateful to you for your kind sentiments for me. It is all Krishna's Grace that He has sent such a nice assistants to me, for executing the mission of my Spiritual Master. PERSONALLY, I AM NONENTITY; I HAVE COME HERE ON THE ORDER OF MY SPIRITUAL MASTER, and He has kindly sent you all boys to assist me. SO WHATEVER IS BEING DONE, THERE IS NO CREDIT FOR ME, BUT ALL THE CREDIT GOES TO MY SPIRITUAL MASTER, BECAUSE HE HAS ARRANGED EVERYTHING, AND I AM SIMPLY TO ABIDE BY HIS ORDER."

(Letter to Brahmananda, 10/16/68)

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“You are doing so much for fulfilling the desire of my Spiritual Master so YOU ARE INDIRECTLY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF MY GURU MAHARAJ. HE HAS BEEN HELPING ME IN THIS MATTER by sending so many young boys and girls, otherwise who would help me in this mission while I came here empty handed and without any friend. I can only pray to Krsna to take care of you, otherwise I cannot repay your sincere service in my mission.”

(Letter to Bali Mardan, 2/22/70)

“All of the sentiments expressed in all of your letters are just according to the Vaisnava *parampara*. This means that you are understanding the Krishna Consciousness philosophy rightly and I am very pleased. It is a fact that by serving the spiritual master one becomes free from material life and makes spiritual advancement. I have not done anything personally, very wonderful. I AM SIMPLY SERVING MY SPIRITUAL MASTER, SRILA BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASWATI GOSWAMI MAHARAJ AND ALL THE ACARYAS IN THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION. If I have done anything of credit it is that I have not changed their teachings. I have not added anything of my own interpretation.”

(Letter to Bhimadas et al, 5/16/74)

“[O]n behalf of Krishna I am accepting your sincere service, but on the whole, I am servant of the servant of Krishna. Therefore I MAY BE IN DESIGNATION YOUR SPIRITUAL MASTER, BUT ACTUALLY I AM SERVANT OF THE SERVANT OF KRISHNA, AND BECAUSE YOU ARE ALL SINCERE SERVANTS OF KRISHNA, I AM YOUR SERVANT.”

(Letter to Brahmananda 2/15/68)

“You are all my children and I LOVE MY AMERICAN BOYS AND GIRLS WHO ARE SENT TO ME BY MY SPIRITUAL MASTER AND I HAVE ACCEPTED THEM AS MY DISCIPLES.”

(Letter to Satsvarupa and Uddhava, 7/27/70)

“Although officially I am your Spiritual Master, I CONSIDER YOU ALL STUDENTS AS MY SPIRITUAL MASTER because your love for Krishna and service for Krishna teach me how to become a sincere Krishna Conscious person.”

(Letter to Jadurany, 12/16/67)

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“Your strong desire to serve me is very beautiful; your serving me means serving Krishna. I am also your servant so I cannot accept your service from you, or from any of my disciples. I ACCEPT SERVICE FROM MY DISCIPLES ON BEHALF OF KRISHNA. Just like a tax collector⁵ must collect for the treasury, not for himself. If he himself touches so much as a farthing it would be unlawful. So I have no right to accept service from any disciple, but ON BEHALF OF KRISHNA I CAN ACCEPT. Sincere service to the Spiritual Master is service to the Supreme Lord. As stated in the prayer, ‘Prasadad Bhagavat Prasadad’. That means because Krishna accepts service through the via media of Spiritual Master, therefore pleasing the Spiritual Master is equal to pleasing the Supreme Lord.”

(Letter to Upendra, 2/13/68)

“[T]he spiritual master does not think of himself as Hari. Although he’s offered the respect of Hari, he thinks himself as humble servant of Hari and all others. A SPIRITUAL MASTER TAKES HIS DISCIPLES AS HIS SPIRITUAL MASTER. That is the position. He thinks that ‘Krsna has sent me so many spiritual masters.’ He does not think himself as spiritual master. He thinks himself their servant. Because they have to be trained. Krsna has appointed him to train them. Therefore HE THINKS HIMSELF AS SERVANT OF THE DISCIPLES. This is the position.”

(NOD Lecture, Vrndavana 10/23/72)

“PRACTICALLY, I DO NOT HAVE ANY DISCIPLES; I select so many masters to train them in the service of the Lord.”

(Letter to Jai Mazo, 1/18/68)

“Regarding our books, yes, they are being printed in our press and they will come out very shortly. The books are being written specifically for my students and I am so glad to learn that you read them so carefully. THE WORDS ARE AMBROSIAL BECAUSE THEY ARE NOT MY PERSONAL WORDS, they are instructions of my predecessors and I am just trying to administer them to my best knowledge. THAT IS THE WAY OF PARAMPARA SYSTEM. WE HAVE NOTHING TO MANUFACTURE, BUT SIMPLY CARRY

Chapter Eight: The Moneytor Guru

THE MESSAGE AS A FAITHFUL PEON⁹. That will be effective. One should be very sincere to his Spiritual Master and Krsna simultaneously. Then everything comes out successful. That is the verdict of the Vedas and Lord Caitanya.”

(Letter to Jayapataka, 4/17/70)

“I am so pleased to learn that you are constantly trying to follow my instructions. OF COURSE, I HAVE NO PARTICULAR INSTRUCTIONS, SAVE AND EXCEPT THE INSTRUCTION WHICH I HAVE ALSO HEARD FROM MY SPIRITUAL MASTER. So all instructions in the disciplic succession directly come from the Supreme Person. Therefore to follow the instructions of a Spiritual Master is to follow the instructions of the Supreme Person. And as soon as we are accustomed to this habit, then all our misgivings of material existence are over.”

(Letter to Dayananda, 5/10/68)

“I thank you very much for your nice letter of appreciation. The kind words that you have used in this connection are very much pleasing, but ALL THE CREDIT GOES TO MY GURU MAHARAJ. He asked me to take up this job as soon as I met Him in 1922; unfortunately I was so worthless that I delayed the matter until 1965, but He is so kind that by force He engaged me in His service; and because I am very much worthless, therefore He has sent me so many of His nice representatives--the beautiful American boys and girls like you. I am so much obliged to you that YOU ARE ALL HELPING ME IN THE DISCHARGE OF MY DUTIES TOWARDS MY SPIRITUAL MASTER, although I was so much reluctant to execute it. After all, we are the eternal servants of Krsna, and by the Divine Will of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur we are now combined together, although originally we are born in different parts of the world, unknown to one another.

(Letter to Chandanacarya, 3/12/70)

⁹ Just see! Srila Prabhupada must be speaking here of the “peon” guru, a member of the same family of the “monitor” guru.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“Yes, as I have taken this work as my life and soul on the order of my Spiritual Master, similarly if you take my desires as life and soul, then the whole thing is immediately connected with Kṛṣṇa. THAT IS THE MEANING OF PARAMPARA SYSTEM. NONE OF THE ACTIVITIES ARE PERSONAL AFFAIRS. It comes only through the proper channel, otherwise each and every activity is directly connected with Kṛṣṇa. It is received through the Spiritual Master, but the business is for Kṛṣṇa as much as an office superintendent¹⁰ is the via media for pleasing the ultimate master.”

(Letter to Bali Mardan, 7/15/70)

“...I am so much moved from your kind sentiments that you have expressed for my humble activities. ACTUALLY I AM NOT WORTHY OF ANY ONE OF THE WORDS SPOKEN BY YOU, BUT ALL OF THEM ARE DUE TO MY SPIRITUAL MASTER WHO WAS SO KIND TO ME. In fact I am a worthless person because my Spiritual Master ordered me to take up this work in 1922 but I did not carry His order until 1958, when I was obliged to carry out His order by His arrangement only. This means although I was not very enthusiastic to carry out His order He forced me circumstantially to accept it. So this is His special mercy upon me and I always think about this with gratitude to this exalted personality coming directly from Vaikuntha World and we had the great fortune to meet Him. I think that is the only credit on our part that we happened to meet Him by some ‘*ajnata sukṛiti*’ or unknown auspicious activities. HE IS SO KIND UPON ME THAT WHEN I CAME TO YOUR COUNTRY, WHERE I WAS COMPLETELY UNKNOWN, HE SENT TO ME SOME GOOD SOULS LIKE YOU UNSOLICITED. SO I ACCEPT YOU ALL AS ASSISTANTS OR REPRESENTATIVES OF MY GURU MAHARAJ WHO IS STILL HELPING ME BECAUSE I AM SO FEEBLE AND UNWORTHY. Anyway, THE BUSINESS WHICH WE HAVE TAKEN TO WORK TOGETHER IS NEITHER YOUR BUSINESS NOR MY

¹⁰ Yes, there are many kinds of gurus. Here's another one! The "superintendent" guru. And reconsidering Prabhupada's famous examples of the post peon (on pgs. 107 & 163), we could also coin a most appropriate term, the "postmaster" guru. Postmaster, spiritual master, ...so obvious!

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BUSINESS AS FAR AS WE ARE PERSONALLY CONCERNED, BUT IT IS THE BUSINESS OF LORD CAITANYA AND HIS BONA FIDE SERVANTS LIKE MY GURU MAHARAJ. Therefore it is the duty of all of us to execute it as nicely as far as possible within our capacity. In other words, we shall just try to discharge our responsible duties faithfully and seriously, then all facilities will come for our help.” (Letter to Hayagriva, 1/14/70)

"So this is a memorable day. What he desired, I am trying little bit, and you are all helping me. SO I HAVE TO THANK YOU MORE. YOU ARE ACTUALLY REPRESENTATIVE OF MY GURU MAHARAJA (Srila Prabhupada starts to cry) because you are helping me in executing the order of my Guru Maharaja." (Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Disappearance Day, Lecture -- Los Angeles, December 13, 1973)

So, ultimately, number 13 is an instruction for ALL gurus, and the example of the monitor is not for referring to some different kind or category of guru, but to describe something that is applicable to ALL gurus. Therefore, please, the term and concept of “monitor” guru, let it R.I.P.

The Guru and What Parbhupada Said (I n the Service of Iskcon)



Chapter Nine

As Good as Who?!

*yasya saksad bhagavati
jnana-dipa-prade gurau
martyasad-dhiih srutam tasya
sarvam kunjara-saucavat*

“The spiritual master should be considered to be directly the Supreme Lord because he gives transcendental knowledge for enlightenment. Consequently, for one who maintains the

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material conception that the spiritual master is an ordinary human being, everything is frustrated. His enlightenment and his Vedic studies and knowledge are like the bathing of an elephant.”
(SB 7.15.26)

THIS BRINGS US to a most important item in our analysis: In the light of all said here and recent events in our ISKCON history, how should a disciple view his guru nowadays? Certain clarification on this point is very much in order, and I have been impatiently waiting to present it. This whole discussion about the level of a devotee acting as guru could very easily give way to offenses, and I definitely want to clear myself from being implicated. We have indulged in such a discussion because of the special circumstances our movement has gone through in recent times, specifically due to the falldown of spiritual masters. In such circumstances one may apply this kind of study to understand an unfortunate incident, just as one may analyze a devotee’s material background to understand some misbehavior or blemish in his character. An example of this is found in the story of Romaharsana Suta.

“When Lord Balarama saw that Romaharsana Suta did not understand the highest principle of religion in spite of his having studied all the Vedas, He certainly could not support his position. Romaharsana Suta had been given the chance to become a perfect *brahmana*, but BECAUSE OF HIS ILL BEHAVIOR IN HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD, HIS LOW BIRTH WAS IMMEDIATELY REMEMBERED.”
(Krsna, Ch.77, New Ed., pg. 663)

But this kind of analysis should not be in any way a regular practice. It is only for understanding the specific instance in which (as in the case of Romaharsana Suta) a spiritual master has deviated. Otherwise, the disciple is ordered to see his spiritual master with the highest regard and love, and Prabhupada’s teachings are flooded with instructions directing so.

“THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SPIRITUAL MASTER MUST ALWAYS BE CONTINUED WITH THE GREATEST RESPECT AND VENERATION, without forgetting His exalted position; like father and son.”
(Letter to Hansadutta, 1/16/69)

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“Our Krishna Consciousness movement is based on complete fellow feeling and love, but there is a word, *maryada*, which means RESPECT WHICH SHOULD ALWAYS BE OFFERED TO THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND ELDERLY MEMBERS.”

(Letter to Jayapataka, 4/17/70)

“It is the injuncture of the Vedas that the Spiritual Master should not be treated as ordinary man even if sometimes the Spiritual Master behaves like ordinary man. IT IS THE DUTY OF THE DISCIPLE TO ACCEPT HIM AS SUPERHUMAN MAN.”

(Letter to Brahmananda and Gargamuni, 7/31/70)

TRANSLATION

The spiritual master should be considered to be directly the Supreme Lord because he gives transcendental knowledge for enlightenment. Consequently, FOR ONE WHO MAINTAINS THE MATERIAL CONCEPTION THAT THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS AN ORDINARY HUMAN BEING, EVERYTHING IS FRUSTRATED. His enlightenment and his Vedic studies and knowledge are like the bathing of an elephant.

PURPORT

“IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT ONE HONOR THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AS BEING ON AN EQUAL STATUS WITH THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD. *Saksad dharitvena samasta-sastraih*. This is enjoined in every scripture. *Acaryam mam vijaniyat*. One should consider the acarya to be as good as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In spite of all these instructions, IF ONE CONSIDERS THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AN ORDINARY HUMAN BEING, ONE IS DOOMED. His study of the Vedas and his austerities and penances for enlightenment are all useless, like the bathing of an elephant. An elephant bathes in a lake quite thoroughly, but as soon as he comes on the shore it takes some dust from the ground and strews it over its body. Thus there is no meaning to the elephant’s bath. One may argue by saying that since the spiritual master’s relatives and the men of his neighborhood consider him an ordinary human being, what is the fault on the part of the

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disciple who considers the spiritual master an ordinary human being? This will be answered in the next verse, but THE INJUNCTION IS THAT THE SPIRITUAL MASTER SHOULD NEVER BE CONSIDERED AN ORDINARY MAN. One should strictly adhere to the instructions of the spiritual master, for if he is pleased, certainly the Supreme Personality of Godhead is pleased. *Yasya prasada bhagavat-prasado yasya prasadan na gatih kuto'pi*.

TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Krsna, is the master of all other living entities and of the material nature. His lotus feet are sought and worshiped by great saintly persons like Vyasa. Nonetheless, there are fools who consider Lord Krsna an ordinary human being.

PURPORT

The example of Lord Krsna's being the Supreme Personality of Godhead is appropriate in regard to understanding the spiritual master. THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS CALLED SEVAKA-BHAGAVAN, THE SERVITOR PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD, and Krsna is called sevya-bhagavan, the Supreme Personality of Godhead who is to be worshiped. The spiritual master is the worshiper God, whereas the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna, is the worshipable God. This is the difference between the spiritual master and the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

“Another point: *Bhagavad-gita*, which constitutes the instructions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is presented by the spiritual master as it is, without deviation. Therefore the Absolute Truth is present in the spiritual master. As clearly stated in Text 26, *jnana-dipa-prade*. The Supreme Personality of Godhead gives real knowledge to the entire world, and the spiritual master, as the representative of the Supreme Godhead, carries the message throughout the world. THEREFORE, ON THE ABSOLUTE PLATFORM, THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD. If someone considers the Supreme Personality --Krsna or Lord Ramacandra-- to be an ordinary human being, this does not

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mean that the Lord becomes an ordinary human being. Similarly, if the family members of the spiritual master, who is the bona fide representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, consider the spiritual master an ordinary human being, this does not mean that he becomes an ordinary human being. THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS AS GOOD AS THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD, AND THEREFORE ONE WHO IS VERY SERIOUS ABOUT SPIRITUAL ADVANCEMENT MUST REGARD THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IN THIS WAY. EVEN A SLIGHT DEVIATION FROM THIS UNDERSTANDING CAN CREATE DISASTER IN THE DISCIPLE'S VEDIC STUDIES AND AUSTERITIES.” (SB 7.15.26-27)

*“arcye visnau sila-dhir gurusu nara-matir vaisnave jati-buddhir
visnor va vaisnavanam kali-mala-mathane pada-tirthe ‘mbu-buddhih
sri-visnor namni mantre sakala-kalusa-he sabda-samanya-buddhir
visnau sarvesvarese tad-itara-sama-dhir yasya va naraki sah*

‘One who thinks the Deity in the temple to be made of wood or stone, WHO THINKS OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IN THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION AS AN ORDINARY MAN, who thinks the Vaisnava in the Acyuta-gotra to belong to a certain caste or creed or who thinks of caranamṛta or Ganges water as ordinary water is taken to be a resident of hell.’ (Padma Purana)” (SB 4.21.12)

“As enjoined in the *sastras*, *arcye visnau sila-dhir gurusu nara-matih*: ‘No one should treat the Deity in the temple as stone or metal, NOR SHOULD ONE THINK THAT THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS AN ORDINARY HUMAN BEING.’ One should strictly follow this sastric injunction and worship the Deity, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, without offenses. THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS THE DIRECT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LORD, AND NO ONE SHOULD CONSIDER HIM AN ORDINARY HUMAN BEING. By avoiding offenses against the Deity and the spiritual master, one can advance in spiritual life, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness.” (SB 5.17.14)

“Therefore, a devotee who engages in the service of the Supreme Lord and who constantly thinks of Him should never be considered to have a material body. It is therefore enjoined, *GURUSU*

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NARA-MATIḤ: ONE SHOULD STOP THINKING OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AS AN ORDINARY HUMAN BEING WITH A MATERIAL BODY. *Arcye visnau sila-dhiḥ*: everyone knows that the Deity in the temple is made of stone, but to think that the Deity is merely stone is an offense. Similarly, to think that the body of the spiritual master consists of material ingredients is offensive. Atheists think that devotees foolishly worship a stone statue as God and an ordinary man as the guru. The fact is, however, that by the grace of Kṛṣṇa's omnipotence, the so-called stone statue of the Deity is directly the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and the body of the spiritual master is directly spiritual." (SB 8.3.2)

"Yes, IF ONE SIMPLY COMES TO THAT PLATFORM OF SPONTANEOUS LOVE FOR THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, THEN VERY QUICKLY HE WILL GET LOVE OF GOD, OR KRISHNA, and his all hankerings and lamentations of life will be finished. That is the process. Just like when two friends meet and, if the friend is also with his dog, the gentleman pats his dog first, is it not? So the friend becomes automatically pleased, his dog being patted. I have seen it in your country sometimes when I used to walk in the Regents Park early mornings. So it is like that, the spiritual master is the pet dog of Krishna, and if he is pleased so Krishna is also pleased. That is the process." (Letter to George, 1/4/73)

"I am very glad to learn that you are doing spiritual activities very nicely and you are always alert to see whether you are committing some offense. This is a very nice attitude. IN RENDERING SERVICE TO LORD KṚṢṆA AND HIS REPRESENTATIVE THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, WE SHOULD ALWAYS MAINTAIN THIS FEARFUL ATTITUDE which means careful attention. This attitude will advance you progressively in Krishna Consciousness."

(Letter to Gopal Krishna 4/21/70)

"[...O]ne should not come very near a superior. THE DEITY OF THE LORD AND THE SPIRITUAL MASTER SHOULD BE SEEN FROM A DISTANT PLACE. This is called *maryada*. Otherwise, as is said, familiarity breeds contempt. Sometimes coming too near the Deity or the spiritual master degrades the neophyte devotee. Personal

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servants of the Deity and the spiritual master should therefore always be very careful, for negligence may overcome them in their duty.”

(Cc Madhya 12.212)

“The words *guru-susrusaya* mean that one should personally serve the spiritual master by giving him bodily comforts, helping him in bathing, dressing, sleeping, eating and so on. This is called *guru-susrusanam*. A DISCIPLE SHOULD SERVE THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AS A MENIAL SERVANT, AND WHATEVER HE HAS IN HIS POSSESSION SHOULD BE DEDICATED TO THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. Pranair arthair dhiya vaca. Everyone has his life, his wealth, his intelligence and his words, and all of them should be offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead through the via medium of the spiritual master. Everything should be offered to the spiritual master as a matter of duty, but the offering should be made to the spiritual master with heart and soul, not artificially to gain material prestige.”

(SB 7.7.30)

“I thank you very much for your many gifts to me and your concern for my well being. This is the correct attitude for a disciple. THE DISCIPLE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO OFFER EVERYTHING HE HAS INCLUDING HIS BODY, MIND, AND WORDS, IN THE SERVICE OF THE GURU. Anyone who is sincerely serving to his greatest capacity becomes dear in the eyes of the Lord.”

(Letter to Radhe-Syama, 8/14/76)

“I thank you very much for your *guru dakshine* gift and your nice letter expressing your appreciation for your spiritual master. THIS IS THE PROPER WAY TO RECEIVE THE BLESSINGS OF KRSNA, BY BEGGING THE MERCY OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. *Yasya prasada bhagavat prasado*. If one pleases the spiritual master, then it is to be understood that Krsna is pleased.”

(Letter to Padmanabha and Mahojjvala, 7/2/75)

“A DISCIPLE SHOULD NOT DO ANYTHING WITHOUT ASKING FIRST HIS SPIRITUAL MASTER. It is said in *Srimad Bhagavatam* that a brahmachary should beg and collect things and then deliver them to his Spiritual Master, and when the Spiritual

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Master will ask him to come and take *prasadam* he will do so. If one day the Spiritual Master forgets to call a brahmachary to participate in the lunch, he should rather fast that day than take food out of his own accord. Of course I do not mean to impose upon you such strictures, but the purport is that a brahmachary should not do anything without being directed by the Spiritual Master. I know that you are sincere devotee and a faithful brahmachary, but still you should not do anything without consenting me.”

(Letter to Shivananda, 12/31/68)

“You have also mentioned to repeatedly offer obeisances to your spiritual master. This is very important. A DISCIPLE SHOULD OFFER DANDABATS, NOT NAMASKAR. THE MORE ONE BECOMES FIXED UP IN GURU OBEISANCES, THE MORE HE ADVANCES IN SPIRITUAL PROGRESS. *Yasya deve para bhaktir yatha deve tatha gurau.*”

(Letter to Attreya Rishi, 11/15/74)

“One should always engage in the Lord’s devotional service. As recommended in the arcana-marga, one should worship the Deity in the temple and CONSTANTLY OFFER OBEISANCES TO THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND THE DEITY. These processes are recommended to one who actually wants to become free from material entanglement.”

(SB 4.29.75)

“Your confidence to do whatever you are instructed by the Spiritual Master is very encouraging. Yes, this is the method of the Vedic injunction, STAUNCH FAITH IN SPIRITUAL MASTER AND KRSNA MAKES ONE PERFECT IN SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING.”

(Letter to Himavati, 4/1/70)

“It is customary, after being initiated in the Gayatri mantra, for one to live away from home for some time, under the care of the acarya, to be trained in spiritual life. During this period, ONE HAS TO WORK UNDER THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AS AN ORDINARY MENIAL SERVANT. There are many rules and regulations for a *brahmacari* living under the care of an acarya, and both Lord Krsna and Balarama strictly followed those regulative principles while living under the instruction of Their spiritual master, Sandipani Muni, in his place in northern India. ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURAL

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INJUNCTIONS, A SPIRITUAL MASTER SHOULD BE RESPECTED AND REGARDED ON AN EQUAL LEVEL WITH THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD. Both Kṛṣṇa and Balarama exactly followed those principles with great devotion and underwent the regulations of brahmacharya. Thus They satisfied Their spiritual master, who instructed Them in Vedic knowledge. Being very satisfied, Sandipani Muni instructed Them in all the intricacies of Vedic wisdom and in supplementary literatures such as the Upanisads.” (KB, Ch.44, New Ed., pg.357)

“The Vedic literature instructs: *Tasmad gurum prapadyeta Jijnasuh sreya uttamam*. An intelligent man must be very inquisitive to know the transcendental science deeply. Therefore ONE MUST APPROACH A GURU, A SPIRITUAL MASTER. Although Jada Bharata explained everything to Maharaja Rahugana, it appears that his intelligence was not perfect enough to understand clearly. He therefore requested a further explanation. As stated in *Bhagavad-gita* (4.34): *Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya*. THE STUDENT MUST APPROACH A SPIRITUAL MASTER AND SURRENDER UNTO HIM FULLY (PRANIPATENA). He must also question him in order to understand his instructions (*Pariprasnena*). One should not only surrender to the spiritual master but also render loving service unto him (*sevaya*) so that the spiritual master will be pleased with the student and explain the transcendental subject matter more clearly. A CHALLENGING SPIRIT BEFORE THE SPIRITUAL MASTER SHOULD BE AVOIDED IF ONE IS AT ALL INTERESTED IN LEARNING THE VEDIC INSTRUCTIONS IN DEPTH.” (SB 5.12.3)

“TRANSLATION

‘One should know the acarya as Myself and never disrespect him in any way. One should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the representative of all the demigods.’

“PURPORT

This is a verse from *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (11.17.27) spoken by Lord Kṛṣṇa when He was questioned by Uddhava regarding the four social and spiritual orders of society. HE WAS SPECIFICALLY

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INSTRUCTING HOW A BRAHMACARI SHOULD BEHAVE UNDER THE CARE OF A SPIRITUAL MASTER. A spiritual master is not an enjoyer of facilities offered by his disciples. He is like a parent. Without the attentive service of his parents, a child cannot grow to manhood; similarly, WITHOUT THE CARE OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER ONE CANNOT RISE TO THE PLANE OF TRANSCENDENTAL SERVICE.

“THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS ALSO CALLED ACARYA, OR A TRANSCENDENTAL PROFESSOR OF SPIRITUAL SCIENCE. The Manu-samhita (2.140) explains the duties of an acarya, describing that a bona fide spiritual master accepts charge of disciples, teaches them the Vedic knowledge with all its intricacies, and gives them their second birth. [...]In the Vayu Purana an acarya is defined as one who knows the import of all Vedic literature, explains the purpose of the Vedas, abides by their rules and regulations, and teaches his disciples to act in the same way.

“Only out of His immense compassion does the Personality of Godhead reveal Himself as the spiritual master. Therefore in the dealings of an acarya there are no activities but those of transcendental loving service to the Lord. HE IS THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF SERVITOR GODHEAD. It is worthwhile to take shelter of such a steady devotee, who is called *asraya-vigraha*, or the manifestation or form of the Lord of whom one must take shelter.

“If one poses himself as an acarya but does not have an attitude of servitorship to the Lord, he must be considered an offender, and this offensive attitude disqualifies him from being an acarya. The bona fide spiritual master always engages in unalloyed devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By this test he is known to be a direct manifestation of the Lord and a genuine representative of Sri Nityananda Prabhu. Such a spiritual master is known as *acaryadeva*. Influenced by an envious temperament and dissatisfied because of an attitude of sense gratification, mundaners criticize a real acarya. In fact, however, a bona fide acarya is nondifferent from the Personality of Godhead, and therefore to envy such an acarya is to envy the Personality of Godhead Himself. This will produce an effect subversive to transcendental realization.

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“As mentioned previously, A DISCIPLE SHOULD ALWAYS RESPECT THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AS A MANIFESTATION OF SRI KRSNA, but at the same time one should always remember that a spiritual master is never authorized to imitate the transcendental pastimes of the Lord. [...]Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami [...] says that ONE SHOULD ALWAYS THINK OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IN TERMS OF HIS INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP WITH MUKUNDA (SRI KRSNA). [...]In his prayers to the spiritual master, Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura confirms that ALL THE REVEALED SCRIPTURES ACCEPT THE SPIRITUAL MASTER TO BE IDENTICAL WITH THE PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD because he is a very dear and confidential servant of the Lord. Gaudiya Vaisnavas therefore worship Srila Gurudeva (the spiritual master) in the light of his being the servitor of the Personality of Godhead. In all the ancient literatures of devotional service and in the more recent songs of Srila Narottama dasa Thakura, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura and other unalloyed Vaisnavas, the spiritual master is always considered either one of the confidential associates of Srimati Radharani or a manifested representation of Srila Nityananda Prabhu.”

(Cc Adi 1.46)

“Out of the ten kinds of offenses, THE NUMBER ONE OFFENSE IS TO DISOBEY THE ORDERS OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER.”

(Letter to Jayapataka, 7/11/69)

“We should always, therefore, be careful in the matter of being attacked by *Maya*’s influence and the only means of guarantee is to chant Hare Krishna offenselessly. THE GREATEST OFFENSE IS TO DEFY THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND TO ACT SINFULLY, THINKING IN THE STRENGTH OF CHANTING.”

(Letter to Woomapati, 11/23/67)

“[...D]O NOT DARE TO QUESTION IMPRUDENTLY BEFORE YOUR SPIRITUAL MASTER.” (Letter to Niranjana, 11/21/72)

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“Damodara Pandita was a great devotee of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Sometimes, however, a person in such a position becomes impudent, being influenced by the external energy and material considerations. Thus a devotee mistakenly dares to criticize the activities of the spiritual master or the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Despite the logic that ‘Caesar’s wife must be above suspicion,’ a devotee should not be disturbed by the activities of his spiritual master and should not try to criticize him. A DEVOTEE SHOULD BE FIXED IN THE CONCLUSION THAT THE SPIRITUAL MASTER CANNOT BE SUBJECT TO CRITICISM AND SHOULD NEVER BE CONSIDERED EQUAL TO A COMMON MAN. Even if there appears to be some discrepancy according to an imperfect devotee’s estimation, the devotee should be fixed in the conviction that even if his spiritual master goes to a liquor shop, he is not a drunkard; rather, he must have some purpose in going there. It is said in a Bengali poem:

yadyapi nityananda sura-badi yaya

tathapio haya nityananda-roya

“Even if I see that Lord Nityananda has entered a liquor shop, I shall not be diverted from my conclusion that Nityananda Raya is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” (Cc Antya 3.11)

“Your very sincere attitude for serving your Spiritual Master, as indicated in your letters, is the only way for making advancement in spiritual life. TO OFFER THE HIGHEST RESPECTS TO THE SUPREME PERSON AND AS MUCH RESPECT TO THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, MAKES ONE BONA FIDE TO RECEIVE SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE BY REVELATION; THAT IS THE INJUNCTION OF THE VEDAS. I see that your attitude is quite appropriate and so I pray to Krishna to bestow upon you all his blessings.” (Letter to Karandhar, 4/9/71)

“Your third question: why does Srila Narada Muni condemn Srila Vyasadeva for compiling the Vedic Scriptures? Sri Narada Muni was the Spiritual Master of Srila Vyasadeva. A SPIRITUAL MASTER HAS THE RIGHT TO CHASTISE HIS DISCIPLE ANY WAY HE LIKES. A sisya or a disciple means one who accepts the disciplinary

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action given by the Spiritual Master. Even although sometimes a Spiritual Master chastises his disciple as a fool or rascal in fatherly affection, it does not mean necessarily that the disciple is a fool or a rascal. You will find even in the statement of Lord Chaitanya--He presents Himself as a fool designated by His Spiritual Master, but that does not mean that He was a fool. A SINCERE DISCIPLE FEELS IT PLEASURABLE WHEN HIS SPIRITUAL MASTER CHASTISES HIM WITH CALLING HIM SUCH NAMES AS FOOL AND RASCAL. My Spiritual Master sometimes called me in that way and I remember that day always and feel transcendental pleasure.”

(Letter to Gajendra, 1/27/70)

“You’ll find in *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu*, it is stated somewhere, that if, if a devotee is coming, then another devotee who is engaged in worship of the Deity may stop Deity worship for the time being and should go immediately to receive the devotee. So Krsna also says, *mad-bhakta-puja abhyadhika*. KRSNA IS SATISFIED MORE WHEN A DEVOTEE WORSHIPS HIS DEVOTEE. Krsna says, ‘If one is worshipping Me and one is worshipping My devotee,’ then the person who is worshipping the devotee, he’s more important than the person who is worshipping Krsna.

“Therefore in, in the *Gurvastaka* by Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura, it is said there: *yasya prasadam bhagavat-prasado*. *Yasya prasadam bhagavat-prasado yasya aprasadam na gatih kuto ‘pi*. THE BEST DEVOTEE IS THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. UNLESS ONE IS DEVOTEE, PURE DEVOTEE, HOW HE CAN BE SPIRITUAL MASTER? Spiritual master means representative of God. So who can become representative of God. Unless he is twenty-four hours engaged in the service of God, Krsna, how he can be spiritual master? This is also explained by Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura *saksad dharitvena samasta-sastraih*. THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS DESCRIBED AS GOOD AS HARI, THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD. Because the, the spiritual master is representative of Krsna because he’s most confidential servant of Krsna. *Kintu prabhor ya priya eva tasya*. *Yasya pra... Saksad dharitvena samasta-sastrair uktas tatha bhavyata eva sadbhih*. The spiritual master is worshipped as good as the Supreme Person. *Saksad dharitvena*. This

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is not artificial, but in all the *sastras*, this is recommended. *Saksad dharitvena samasta-sastrair uktas tatha bhavyata eva sadbhih*. Those who are learned devotees, advanced devotees, they also accept this, that the spiritual master should be treated as good as Hari, the Supreme Person.

“But the spiritual master does not think of himself as Hari. Although he’s offered the respect of Hari, he thinks himself as humble servant of Hari and all others. A spiritual master takes his disciples as his spiritual master. That is the position. He thinks that ‘Kṛṣṇa has sent me so many spiritual masters.’ He does not think himself as spiritual master. He thinks himself their servant. Because they have to be trained. Kṛṣṇa has appointed him to train them. Therefore he thinks himself as servant of the disciples. This is the position.”

(NOD Lecture, Vrndavana 10/23/72)

“This is the duty of the guru, to awaken that *divya-jnana*. *Divya jnana*. And BECAUSE GURU ENLIGHTENS THAT *DIVYA-JNANA*, HE IS WORSHIPPED. That is required. [...] So, to worship guru means, because he gives us superior knowledge. Not this knowledge --how to eat, how to sleep, how to have sex life and defend. [...]A guru has no business with these things. He is giving *divya-jnana*, superior knowledge. That is required. This human form of life is an opportunity to awaken that *divya-jnana*, *hrde prakasito*. And if he’s kept in darkness about that *divya-jnana*, simply if he is trained up how to eat, how to sleep, how to have sex and to defend, then life will be lost. That is a great loss. [...]We should always remember this. Very risky life. Once again thrown into the waves of birth and death, we do not know where I am going. Very serious.

“This Kṛṣṇa consciousness is *divya-jnana*. It is not ordinary knowledge. [...]So you should always remember this word, *divya jnana hrde prakasito*. And because the spiritual master enlightens the *divya-jnana*, one feels obliged to him. *Yasya prasada bhagavat prasado yasya prasadan na gatih kuto ‘pi*. So THIS GURU-PUJA IS ESSENTIAL. AS THE DEITY WORSHIP IS ESSENTIAL... IT IS NOT CHEAP ADORATION. It is the process of enlightening the *divya-jnana*.”

(Lecture, Bombay 4/1/77)

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“According to etiquette, things used by Krsna should not be used by anyone else. Similarly, THINGS USED BY THE SPIRITUAL MASTER SHOULD ALSO NOT BE USED BY ANYONE ELSE. That is etiquette. Whatever is used by Krsna or the spiritual master is worshipable. In particular, their sitting or eating places should not be used by anyone else. A DEVOTEE MUST BE VERY CAREFUL TO OBSERVE THIS.”
(Cc Madhya 15.234)

“*Saksad-dharitvena samasta-sastrair, uktas tatha bhavyata eva sadbhih/kintu prabhor yah priya eva tasya*, THE GURU SHOULD BE TREATED AS GOOD AS GOD. THIS IS STATED IN ALL THE SHASTRAS. The difference is that God is master-God and guru is servant-God.”
(Letter to Karandhar, 1/29/76)

“One thing you may note also as a matter of etiquette. The Spiritual Master is addressed as HIS DIVINE GRACE, a Godbrother is addressed as His Grace, and any *Sannyasin* is addressed as His Holiness.”
(Letter to Brahmananda, 1/30/67)

“Sriila Vyasdeva therefore summarized the whole Vedic knowledge in the shape of *Srimad Bhagavatam* which is known as the ripened fruit of the desire tree known as Vedic knowledge. The ripened fruit is received hand to hand through disciplic succession and ANYONE WHO DOES THIS WORK IN DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION FROM SRILA VYASDEVA IS CONSIDERED AS REPRESENTATIVE OF VYASDEVA and as such the bonafide Spiritual Master’s Appearance Day is worshiped as Vyas Puja. Not only that, the exalted seat on which the Spiritual Master sits is also called Vyasasana.”
(Letter to Bali Mardan, 8/25/70)

“We should always remember that Krishna is the only order giver. His order is received through the agency of the spiritual master. THE BONAFIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS THE MANIFEST REPRESENTATIVE OF KRISHNA. The spiritual master is described in the scriptures as good as Krishna because he is the most confidential servitor of Krishna. TO PLEASE THE SPIRITUAL

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MASTER IS TO PLEASE KRISHNA. On this principle we must advance our Krishna Consciousness and there is no danger.”

(Letter to Nandarani et al, 10/3/67)

“Thank you for your nice appreciation of the Spiritual Master. UNLESS ONE HAS GOT UTMOST CONFIDENCE IN BOTH SPIRITUAL MASTER AND KRSNA HE CANNOT ADVANCE ON THE PATH OF BHAKTI YOGA OF KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS. Please keep up this nice attitude and render service sincerely and your life will come to perfection, love of Krsna.”

(Letter to Danavir, 2/11/71)

“Actually you are correct, it is not possible for the disciple to repay the debt to the spiritual master. Therefore THE DISCIPLE REMAINS ETERNALLY INDEBTED TO THE SPIRITUAL MASTER and continually works in such a way that the spiritual master may become pleased upon him for such sincere services rendered.”

(Letter to Mantrini devi dasi, 7/29/76)

"KNOWLEDGE OF KRSNA IS SUCH A GREAT GIFT THAT IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REPAY THE BENEFACTOR. Therefore Prthu Maharaja requested the Kumaras to be satisfied by their own benevolent activities in delivering souls from the clutches of *maya*. The King saw that there was no other way to satisfy them for their exalted activities. The word *vinoda-patram* can be divided into two words, *vina* and *uda-patram*, or can be understood as one word, *vinoda-patram*, which means "joker." A joker's activities simply arouse laughter, and A PERSON WHO TRIES TO REPAY THE SPIRITUAL MASTER OR TEACHER OF THE TRANSCENDENTAL MESSAGE OF KRSNA BECOMES A LAUGHINGSTOCK JUST LIKE A JOKER BECAUSE IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO REPAY SUCH A DEBT. The best friend and benefactor of all people is one who awakens humanity to its original Krsna consciousness." (SB 4.22.47)

“Doubts may come about, but ONE SHOULD BE FIRMLY FIXED UP THAT THERE CANNOT BE ANY DOUBT ON THE SPIRITUAL MASTER OR KRSNA.”

(Letter to Satyabhama, 11/1/70)

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“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 Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” (Cc Madhya 24.330)

“PLEASING THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS THE ACTIVE PRINCIPLE IN SPIRITUAL LIFE and offerings made with love and devotion are always pleasing to the spiritual master.”

(Letter to Kapardini dasi, 7/24/76)

“Yes WE ARE RUNNING ON THE MERCY OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, to understand this point is to get mercy more and more. *Yasya prasadat bhagavat prasada.*”

(Letter to Yogescandra, 12/7/75)

“One should always be sincere to PLEASE THE SPIRITUAL MASTER BY FOLLOWING HIS INSTRUCTIONS, then life is very easy.”

(Letter to Joan Feilds, 7/24/76)

“To take shelter of the Spiritual Master means to follow his instructions. So, YOU SHOULD BE VERY CAREFUL TO NOT DEVIATE EVEN A LITTLE BIT FROM THE ORDER OF YOUR GURU.”

(Letter to Sivani, 3/14/75)

“AS A MAN CANNOT SEPARATE HIS LIFE FROM HIS BODY, A DISCIPLE CANNOT SEPARATE THE ORDER OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER FROM HIS LIFE. If a disciple follows the instruction of the spiritual master in that way, HE IS SURE TO BECOME PERFECT.” (SB 3.24.13)

One should only accept as a spiritual master someone whom he can surrender to wholeheartedly, someone whom he can accept as his worshipable superior, someone whom he sees as the spiritual master the scriptures describe. What is the use of “accepting” someone otherwise?

“[...W]HAT IS THE USE OF ACCEPTING A SPIRITUAL MASTER IF YOU CANNOT TAKE HIS WORDS?”

(Letter to Bilasvighradas, 1/22/69)

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“Here is a technique. The same Krsna and same Arjuna, they are talking as friends. Then what was the necessity of Arjuna accepting Krsna as spiritual master? The same Arjuna and same Krsna, they’ll talk, but what is the necessity of accepting [Krsna] as spiritual master? That means after accepting spiritual master he’ll not argue. He’ll simply accept whatever He says. That is the technique. Friendly talks, equal level, He, Krsna was talking something, and he [Arjuna] was replying. So that argument has no end. But when he accepts Him as spiritual master, there is no more argument. One has to accept whatever He says. Therefore he’s accepting [Krsna] as spiritual master. After this, Arjuna will never say, ‘This is wrong, this is no,’ or ‘I don’t agree.’ No. He’ll accept. So acceptance of spiritual master means to accept anything, whatever he says. Therefore ONE HAS TO SELECT A SPIRITUAL MASTER WHOM HE CAN COMPLETELY SURRENDER. That is the technique. *Veda vakya*. Just like in the Vedic injunction, nobody can deny. Similarly, spiritual master is also representative of Veda. *Acaryavan puruso veda*. So similarly, [whatever he says] it is just like Vedic injunction.”

(Lecture, Los Angeles 11/25/68)

“IF YOU WANT TO KNOW THE TRUTH, then you have to follow these principles, how to know isvara tattva. And how to know? *Tad vijnanartham sa gurum eva abhigacet*. Then you have to go, approach the bona fide guru. He will let you know. *Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya*. No challenge. That is foolishness. No challenge. Pranipatena. First of all surrender. YOU DON’T SURRENDER TO A FOOLISH MAN. BUT YOU HAVE TO SURRENDER. Now it is your business to find out where to surrender. But you have to surrender. THIS IS THE PROCESS. WITHOUT SURRENDER, YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND THE TRUTH AS IT IS. THAT IS THE INSTRUCTION OF VEDAS EVERYWHERE. *Tasmad gurum prapadyeta jijnasuh sreya uttamam*. ‘One has to surrender to guru.’ Why? *Jijnasu*.’ If you are inquisitive to know the Absolute Truth.’ And if you want to know something which is flickering, relative truth, that is another thing. But if you want to know the Absolute Truth, *sreyah uttamam*... Absolute Truth means ultimate benefit, *sreya*. Ultimate... Yes, exactly the word, benefit. If you want

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ultimate benefit, then *gurum prapadyeta*. Who is guru? *Sabde pare ca nisnatam brahmany upasamasrayan*. One who is expert in understanding the Vedic literature, *sabde, pare ca*, especially transcendental. So WE HAVE TO GO THROUGH LIKE THAT.”

Lecture, Mayapur 4/5/75)

“First process is that you must surrender. *Tasmad gurum prapadyeta*, surrender. YOU HAVE TO FIND OUT SUCH AN EXALTED PERSON WHERE YOU CAN WILLINGLY SURRENDER....”

(Lecture, London 8/22/73)

“To accept a spiritual master is not a fashion. Just like we keep a dog, pet, similarly, if we keep a spiritual master, pet spiritual master, to get sanction of all my sinful activities. That is not accepting spiritual master. Spiritual master means *Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya*. YOU SHOULD ACCEPT A SPIRITUAL MASTER WHERE YOU THINK THAT YOU CAN SURRENDER YOURSELF FULLY. And offer him your service. That is spiritual master.

“[...]YOU CANNOT ARGUE WITH THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. First of all, you have to select a spiritual master where you can completely surrender. And as soon... Just like Arjuna surrendered to Krsna. When he saw that ‘The questions which have arisen in my mind, it cannot be solved by ordinary person,’ therefore he selected. He told Him that ‘I can understand, without Your Lordship, nobody can mitigate all the doubts in my mind.’ *Tasmad gurum prapadyeta*. *Sisyas te ‘ham sadhi mam*. Therefore original spiritual master is Krsna. Krsna is original spiritual master.”

(NOD Lecture, Vrndavana 11/13/72)

“I am glad that you are taking the recommendation of new initiates very seriously, that they are writing essays. Yes, it is a serious matter. NOT THAT LET ME TAKE A SPIRITUAL MASTER AS A PET AND I CAN DO WHATEVER I WANT. No, one must be prepared to follow the order of the spiritual master with life and soul.”

(Letter to Tulsi das, 10/7/74)

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“UNLESS YOU CENT PERCENT AGREE WITH THE SPIRITUAL MASTER’S OPINION OR PHILOSOPHY, THERE IS NO NEED OF ACCEPTING A SPIRITUAL MASTER. There is no need.”
(Lecture, Los Angeles 11/27/68)

Therefore, a candidate should take his time in analyzing the spiritual master sufficiently before initiation, not after.

“S.PRABHUPADA: According to our Vaisnava principles, *adau gurvasrayam*, the first business is to accept a spiritual master. *Sad-dharma-prcchat*. Then one has to inquire about *sad-dharma*. *Sadhu-marganugamanam*. One should follow the footprints of the previous acaryas. This is the process, one after another. So first thing is *adau gurvasrayam*, one has to accept a guru. SO YOU MAY, YOU SHOULD, I MEAN TO SAY, CHECK WHETHER HE’S GURU OR NOT. THAT IS ALLOWED. IT IS SAID FOR ONE YEAR THE SISYA AND THE GURU SHOULD MEET TOGETHER...

V: And don’t talk.

S.PRABHUPADA: Eh? No, the guru, I mean, THE ASPIRANT SISYA WILL HEAR AND STUDY WHETHER HE’S ACTUALLY FIT FOR BECOMING GURU. Similarly, the guru will also study that whether he’s actually fit for becoming a...Just like in our society. We don’t accept immediately. We don’t give initiation immediately. First of all [he] lives for some time. Then when he becomes eager, we give the first initiation, chanting Hare Krsna mantra. Then after one year, when he’s fit, he’s doing everything well, then we initiate him. This is our process.”
(Conversation, Bombay 3/23/74)

“Now here is another verse, Krsna says, *tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya*, in the *Bhagavad-gita*. *Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya upadeksyanti te jnanam jnaninas tattva-darsinah*. So you have to learn from guru by three processes. What is that? First process is that you must surrender. *Tasmad gurum prapadyeta*, surrender. You have to find out such an exalted person where you can willingly surrender, “Yes.” Therefore IT IS ENJOINED IN THE SASTRAS, BEFORE MAKING A GURU, TRY TO STUDY HIM, WHETHER YOU CAN SURRENDER THERE. DON’T ACCEPT ANY GURU ALL OF A SUDDEN AS FANATIC. No, don’t do

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that. That is the injunction. And guru also must study the disciple who wants to become a disciple, must study him, whether he's fit for becoming a disciple. This is the way of making relationship between guru and disciple. Everything is there provided we take them seriously. Then we can train up how to become bona fide disciple, how to find out bona fide guru, how to establish our relationship with guru and act accordingly and make our life successful.”

(Lecture, London 8/22/73)

“One who teaches other conclusion from that of the Bhagavad-gita and the succession of acaryas is certainly not a guru, and in fact according to Lord Krsna, he is a fool, (the word Krsna uses is mudha, ass, rascal). SO WE HAVE TO EXAMINE WHETHER THE PERSON WHO IS PRESENTING HIMSELF AS OUR GURU IS ACTUALLY IN KNOWLEDGE OF THE SCIENCE OF KRSNA OR WHETHER HE IS LEADING US AWAY FROM KRSNA, OR LEADING US TO HELL IN THE NAME OF YOGA MYSTICISM. In this connection, the chanting of Hare Krsna is very efficacious because it develops personal relationship with the Personality of Godhead and cleans the heart of sinful reactions. Please go on reading our literatures and pray to Krsna to give you the right direction from within how to approach a bona fide spiritual master for advancing in spiritual life.” (Letter to Trista Hubbard, 5/3/74)

“Now, the idea of accepting spiritual master, that is also very obligatory. You see? As soon as you accept one as the spiritual master. First of all, we have recorded in our...You have heard it, THAT ACCEPTANCE OF SPIRITUAL MASTER MUST BE SELECTED, YOU SEE, AFTER CAREFUL EXAMINATION, just like one selects his bride or bridegroom after careful examination. And in India they are very careful because the marriage of the boys and girls take place under the guidance of the parents. So the parents very carefully see. So similarly, if one has to... The acceptance of spiritual master is necessary. ACCORDING TO VEDIC INJUNCTION, ONE, EVERYONE, SHOULD HAVE A SPIRITUAL MASTER.

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[...]“One cannot deny the order of a spiritual master. Therefore ONE HAS TO SELECT A SPIRITUAL MASTER WHOSE ORDER, CARRYING, YOU’LL NOT COMMIT A MISTAKE. You see? Now, suppose if you accept a wrong person as spiritual master, and if you, IF HE GUIDES YOU WRONGLY, THEN YOUR WHOLE LIFE IS SPOILED. SO ONE HAS TO ACCEPT A SPIRITUAL MASTER WHOSE GUIDANCE WILL MAKE HIS LIFE PERFECT. That is the relation between spiritual master and disciple. IT IS NOT A FORMALITY. IT IS A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY BOTH FOR THE DISCIPLE AND FOR THE SPIRITUAL MASTER.

[...]“V: But if the disciple is in ignorance before...

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes.

V: ...how does he know which master to choose? I mean, because he doesn’t have the knowledge...

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes.

V: ...to make a wise selection.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. Yes. So the first thing is that one should be searching after a spiritual master. Now, just like you search after some school. You search after some school. So when you are searching after some school, you must have at least some preliminary knowledge what a school means. You cannot search after a school and go to a cloth shop. If you are so ignorant that you do not know what is a school and what is a cloth shop, then it is very difficult for you. You must know, at least, what is a school.” (Lecture, New York 3/2/66)

“YOU HAVE TO CORROBORATE WHETHER GURU, WHAT GURU IS SPEAKING, WHETHER IT IS THERE IN THE SCRIPTURE. WHAT SCRIPTURE IS SPEAKING, WHETHER THAT IS IN THE CHARACTER OF GURU, or in the *sadhu*, saintly persons, or spiritual master. So you have to always make comparison with three things: *sadhu*, *sastra*, *guru*. Nobody can become a spiritual master who has no reference to the scriptures and these qualities. Nobody can be accepted as a qualified man, if he has not, if one has not developed his character through the scripture under the instruction of guru. So *sadhu-sastra-guru*. A *sadhu*, a *guru*...

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Here Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *sadhu-sastra*. That *sadhu* includes guru also, because a spiritual master, unless he's a *sadhu*, he cannot be a guru, cannot be a spiritual master. And the primary qualification of spiritual master that he is completely surrendered to Krsna, completely Krsna conscious person." (Lecture, New York 11/24/66)

"The best thing will be that if you can come here for some days, say, at least for a fortnight, you can remain here with us in the temple here, and talk with me in details before you become my disciple. Actually, I shall be very glad to accept an educated and intelligent disciple like you, but FIRST OF ALL WE MUST MEET AND YOU SHOULD KNOW WHETHER YOU CAN ACCEPT ME AS YOUR SPIRITUAL MASTER, OR I CAN ACCEPT YOU AS MY DISCIPLE. THIS IS PRELIMINARY NECESSITY. I am therefore requesting you to come here at least for a fortnight, and let us understand one another." (Letter to Vinode Patel, 7/6/68)

"As far as the mutual testing of the spiritual master and disciple is concerned, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura explains that a bona fide disciple must be very inquisitive to understand the transcendental subject matter. As stated in *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (11.3.21):

tasmad gurum prapadyeta

jijnasuh sreya 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." Cc Madhya 24.330)

After being initiated, the disciple has to relate to his guru just as it is enjoined by Srila Prabhupada throughout his teachings.

"SO AT THE PRESENT MOMENT WE ARE IN THE KALI-YUGA. EVERYONE DISAGREES WITH THE OTHER. EVEN THE SO-CALLED DISCIPLE ALSO DISAGREES WITH THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. THIS IS THE INFLUENCE OF

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KALI-YUGA. One becomes disciple of a spiritual master, then he whimsically disagrees. So why, if you disagree, why should you accept somebody as spiritual master? That is not very good. THAT IS THE WAY OF NOT BEING SUCCESSFUL. We are chanting every day that *yasya prasada bhagavat-prasada* . By satisfying the spiritual master, one can satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead. *Yasya prasada*, “by the satisfaction of the spiritual master.” *Samsara davanala lidha loka tranaya karunya ghanaghanatvam*. One of the symptom is this, that spiritual master is so bona fide. Before accepting somebody as spiritual master you must know about his bona fides. “That time is allowed. It is said in the *sastra* that if you like to accept somebody as spiritual master, you should associate with him at least for one year, see how things are going. If you follow of course others, that is also good. But personally, it is advised that you just remain with the proposed spiritual master for at least one year, so that the spiritual master is also given chance to study you, whether you are acceptable. This is the process.

“But when one leaves a spiritual master, the spiritual master, there may be some reason. That reason is also given in the *sastra*, *gurur api avaliptasya karyakaryam ajanatah(?)*. *Karya akarya*. If the spiritual master does not know what is actually to be done, what is actually not to be done, and he acts against the rules and regulations of the *sastra*, then such spiritual master may be given up. “But SO LONG YOU DO NOT FIND THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS DOING AGAINST THE PRINCIPLES OF SASTRA OR GURU, THEN IF YOU GIVE UP THE COMPANY OF SPIRITUAL MASTER, THAT IS NOT GOOD FOR YOU. THAT IS YOUR DOWNFALL. First of all, you must take sufficient time to study the movements of a spiritual master. Spiritual master is onthe spiritual master. Because there may be many spiritual masters, but if their business is oneto satisfy Krsna although they're many, they're one. Although they're many, they are still one. The principle is one: to satisfy Krsna. Such is the position of spiritual master, that *yasya prasada bhagavat prasada*: if you try to please your spiritual master, then God, Krsna, becomes pleased. That is natural.

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“So in the Kali-yuga why there should be... In Kali-yuga even with the spiritual master there is disagreement. That is due to influence of Kali.”
(Lecture on SB 1.16.36, Tokyo 01/30/74)

"Prabhupada: [...A] DISCIPLE IS ALWAYS IN DEFICIENCY BEFORE HIS SPIRITUAL MASTER. Just like Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *guru more murkha dekhi karila sasana* [Cc. Adi 7.71]. "My spiritual master saw Me a fool number one. Therefore he has chastised Me." SO DISCIPLE SHOULD BE ALWAYS READY TO BE CHASTISED. He should not think that he has become perfect. That is perfection. So long he thinks that he is not perfect-he's to be chastised -- then he's perfect. And as soon as he thinks that he has become perfect, he's nonsense immediately, nonsense number one. [Break] ...always to be chastised by the spiritual master for perfection. And if he thinks that now he has become perfect, then he's a foolish. Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, *guru more murkha dekhi*. "My spiritual master saw Me a fool number one." Was He fool number one? He's God Himself. But THAT IS THE POSITION. HE SHOULD REMAIN ALWAYS A FOOL NUMBER ONE, READY TO BE CHASTISED. Then he's perfect. In the moral instruction, Canakya Pandita gives this instruction, that *lalane bahavo dosas tadane bahavo gunah*: "If you chastise your son or disciple, he'll improve, and if you say, 'Oh, you are all right,' then he'll degrade." *Tasmat putram ca sisyam ca tadayet na tu lalayet*: " THEREFORE YOU ALWAYS CHASTISE YOUR SON AND DISCIPLE. NEVER flat..." What is called?

Devotee (1): FLATTER.

Prabhupada: No.

[...]Devotee (2): Srila Prabhupada, is there any instance when you were chastised by your spiritual master?

Prabhupada: Eh?

Devotee (2): Is there any instance when you were chastised by your spiritual master?

Prabhupada: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

Devotee (2): Can you tell us?

Prabhupada: I remember the moment was very valuable. Yes.

Devotee (2): Can you tell us the story?

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Prabhupada: Yes. I think I have said that.

Devotee (3): When you were speaking to one man...

Prabhupada: Yes. He became very angry and chastised me.

Devotee (4): Srila Prabhupada, was this during a lecture by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta?

Prabhupada: Eh?

Devotee (4): Was this during a lecture?

Prabhupada: Yes. I was not... One of my old brother, he, he wanted to speak something. So I leaned my... I immediately became... [laughter] So he chastised him more than me.

Devotee (2): When Lord Caitanya chastised someone more than Advaita Acarya, Advaita felt that He had been neglected 'cause he had not received a greater chastisement.

Prabhupada: He wanted to be chastised, so Caitanya fulfilled His desire.”
(Morning Walk -- Mayapur, April 8, 1975)

We cannot introduce a different standard on the plea of the many problems we have had to face. As I see them, those problems, more than a test to the system, are a test to how much we believe in what PRABHUPADA SAID. Did “the lawbooks for mankind for the next ten thousand years” become obsolete in the first ten?¹¹

“So we have no difficulty. *Tandera carana sevi bhakta sane vasa.* That’s all. Let us follow the footprints of the acaryas, Gosvamis, and live together as sincere, serious devotees. Then our life is successful. It is not very difficult. *Bhakta sane vasa. Tandera carane.* We should live together as devotees and follow the footprints of the acaryas. DON’T MANUFACTURE CONCOCTION. THEN IT WILL BE SPOILED. SIMPLY TRY TO FOLLOW. THEY’LL PROTECT. THEY’LL GIVE PROTECTION. Because Krsna says, *aham tvam sarva-papebhyo moksaisyami.* So if we take shelter of the acaryas, that means we take shelter of Krsna. *Yasya prasada bhagavat-prasada.* If the acarya, guru, is satisfied, then we must know certainly that Krsna is satisfied. *Yasya prasada bhagavat-prasada. Acarya mam vijaniyat.* So this is the principle, and the acaryas give us

¹¹ This book was originally written in the year 1987, ten years after Srila Prabhupada's disappearance.

Chapter Nine: As Good as Who ?!

direction. It is not very difficult. Simply we have to be, become very serious and sincere. Then everything is all right.”

(NOD Lecture, Vrndavana 11/13/72)

Either we accept that we have regular gurus in our movement, i.e. the kind of guru that is described in Prabhupada’s teachings, or we honestly say we don’t believe that at this moment anyone is qualified to be a guru. But let’s not invent a new system by which a disciple can doubt his guru or not see him nor treat him as it is said in *sastra*.

“The disciple accepts the spiritual master as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As stated by Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura in *Gurv-astaka, saksad-dharitvena*: ‘One directly accepts the guru, the spiritual master, as the Supreme Personality of Godhead.’ One should accept the spiritual master not in the sense that the *Mayavadi* philosophers do, but in the way recommended here. SINCE THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS THE MOST CONFIDENTIAL SERVANT OF THE LORD, HE SHOULD BE TREATED EXACTLY LIKE THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD. The spiritual master should never be neglected or disobeyed, like an ordinary person.” (SB 4.28.43)

To try to introduce an understanding different from Prabhupada’s instructions is to disrespect him. To honor Srila Prabhupada properly, he himself gives the formula:

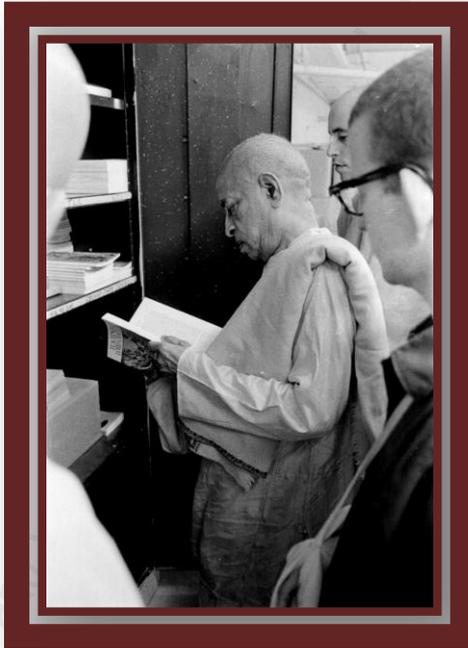
“To honor the spiritual master means to carry out his instructions word for word.” (SB 3.24.12)

And Prabhupada’s instructions in regards to the supreme position of the spiritual master are patent. We don’t need a “revised edition” of what is a guru. We just need to truly and firmly believe in what PRABHUPADA SAID.

The Guru and What Prabhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)

Part Two

*The Guru that Prabhupada Spoke of
Is the Servant of what Prabhupada Said*



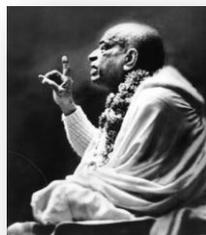
The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)

Question One

Prila Prabhupada, is it really necessary to accept a guru and take initiation from him?

“SOMETIMES LESS INTELLIGENT MEN ASK WHETHER ONE HAS TO APPROACH A GURU TO BE INSTRUCTED IN DEVOTIONAL SERVICE FOR SPIRITUAL ADVANCEMENT.

The answer is given here --indeed, not only here, but also in *Bhagavad-gita*, where Arjuna accepted Kṛṣṇa as his guru (*sisyas te'ham sadhi mam tvam praṇnam*). The Vedas also instruct, *tad-vijvanartham sa gurum evabhiṅacchet*: one must accept a guru for proper direction if one is seriously inclined toward advancement in spiritual life. The Lord says that one must worship the acarya, who is the representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead (*acaryam mam vijaniyat*). One should definitely understand this. In *Caitanya-caritamṛta* it is said that the guru is the manifestation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore, according to all the evidence given by the *sastra* and by the practical behavior of devotees, one must accept a guru. Aditi accepted her husband as her guru, so that he would direct her how to advance in spiritual consciousness, devotional service, by worshiping the Supreme Lord.”



(SB 8.16.23 ppt.)

“THERE ARE MANY INEXPERIENCED PERSONS WHO ADVOCATE SELF-REALIZATION WITHOUT THE HELP OF A SPIRITUAL MASTER. They decry the necessity of the spiritual master and try themselves to take his place by propagating the theory that a spiritual master is not necessary. *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, however, does not approve this viewpoint. Even the great transcendental scholar Vyāsadeva had need of a spiritual master, and under the instruction of his spiritual master, Narada, he prepared this sublime literature, *Srimad-Bhagavatam*. Even Lord Caitanya,

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although He is Krsna Himself, accepted a spiritual master; even Lord Krsna accepted a spiritual master, Sandipani Muni, in order to be enlightened; and all the acaryas and saints of the world had spiritual masters. In *Bhagavad-gita* Arjuna accepted Krsna as his spiritual master, although there was no question about the necessity of accepting a spiritual master. The only stipulation is that the spiritual master be bona fide, i.e., the spiritual master must be in the proper chain of disciplic succession, called the *parampara* system.” (S.B. 3.7.39 ppt.)

“ONE SHOULD ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT A PERSON WHO IS RELUCTANT TO ACCEPT A SPIRITUAL MASTER AND BE INITIATED IS SURE TO BE BAFFLED IN HIS ENDEAVOR TO GO BACK TO GODHEAD. One who is not properly initiated may present himself as a great devotee, but in fact he is sure to encounter many stumbling blocks on his path of progress toward spiritual realization, with the result that he must continue his term of material existence without relief. Such a helpless person is compared to a ship without a rudder, for such a ship can never reach its destination. IT IS IMPERATIVE, THEREFORE, THAT ONE ACCEPT A SPIRITUAL MASTER if he at all desires to gain the favor of the Lord. The service of the spiritual master is essential.

“...IF ONE THINKS THAT HE IS ABOVE CONSULTING ANYONE ELSE, INCLUDING A SPIRITUAL MASTER, HE IS AT ONCE AN OFFENDER AT THE LOTUS FEET OF THE LORD. Such an offender can never go back to Godhead. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT A SERIOUS PERSON ACCEPT A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER IN TERMS OF THE SASTRIC INJUNCTIONS. Sri Jiva Gosvami advises that one not accept a spiritual master in terms of hereditary or customary social and ecclesiastical conventions. One should simply try to find a genuinely qualified spiritual master for actual advancement in spiritual understanding.”

(C.c. Adi 1.35)

“[...]We can offer many services with our bodily activities. But all such activities must be in relationship with Krsna. This relationship is established by connecting oneself with the bona fide spiritual master, who is the direct representative of Krsna in disciplic succession. Therefore, the execution of Krsna conscious activities with the body should be directed by the spiritual master and then performed with faith. The connection with the spiritual

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master is called initiation. From the date of initiation by the spiritual master, the connection between Krsna and a person cultivating Krsna consciousness is established. WITHOUT INITIATION BY A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, THE ACTUAL CONNECTION WITH KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS IS NEVER PERFORMED.”

(NOD Introduction, Second Edition, pg. XXII)

“In the Caitanya-caritamṛta, by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Lord Caitanya states that it is a fortunate person who comes in contact with a bona fide spiritual master by the grace of Kṛṣṇa. ONE WHO IS SERIOUS ABOUT SPIRITUAL LIFE IS GIVEN BY KRSNA THE INTELLIGENCE TO COME IN CONTACT WITH A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, and then by the grace of the spiritual master one becomes advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In this way the whole jurisdiction of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is directly under the spiritual energy --Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master. This has nothing to do with the material world.”

(NOD Introduction, Second Edition, pgs. XXII-XXIII)

“In answer to your question about the importance of initiation, it is to be understood that initiation means that power is coming from the Supreme by the bona fide disciplic succession. This is required. Of course, for anyone to hear the message of *Srīmad-Bhāgavatam* will produce a favorable result but FORMALLY ONE SHOULD RECEIVE THIS KNOWLEDGE FROM THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION. FOR EXAMPLE, ARJUNA AND KRISHNA WERE FRIENDS BUT STILL ARJUNA SUBMITTED HIMSELF FORMALLY AS KRISHNA'S DISCIPLE. THIS IS ESSENTIAL. We should take example from these great Personalities. Arjuna was hearing Krishna speaking Bhagavad-Gita but still he submitted as Krishna's disciple. 'Now I submit unto You, please teach me.' So THIS IS THE PROCESS. I hope this will clear up your question sufficiently.”

(Letter to John Darsinos, 11/23/68)

“Although Balarama and Kṛṣṇa are both transcendental personalities, They strictly followed the regulative principles. Both were initiated by Their family priest, Gargacarya, usually known as Gargamuni, the acarya of the Yadu dynasty. ACCORDING TO VEDIC CULTURE, EVERY RESPECTABLE FAMILY HAS AN ACARYA, OR SPIRITUAL MASTER. ONE IS NOT CONSIDERED A PERFECTLY CULTURED

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MAN WITHOUT BEING INITIATED AND TRAINED BY AN ACARYA. It is said, therefore, that one who has approached an acarya is actually in perfect knowledge. Lord Krsna and Balarama are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of all education and knowledge. THERE WAS NO NEED FOR THEM TO ACCEPT A SPIRITUAL MASTER OR ACARYA, YET FOR THE INSTRUCTION OF ORDINARY MEN, THEY ALSO ACCEPTED A SPIRITUAL MASTER FOR ADVANCEMENT IN SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE.” (KB, Ch.44, New Ed., pg.357)

“So to approach a bona fide Spiritual Master and to understand the science of God from him is the Vedic way of understanding. Even Lord Krishna, Lord Caitanya, and what to speak of other acharyas, ALL OF THEM ACCEPTED A SPIRITUAL MASTER, EVEN IF SOME OF THEM WERE INCARNATIONS OF GOD. The Vedic way of receiving knowledge is called avaroha, against aroha. Aroha means to try to understand God by one’s own effort, and avaroha means to understand God by disciplic succession. THEREFORE WE FIND IN VEDIC INSTRUCTION THAT ONE MUST APPROACH A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER TO LEARN THAT TRANSCENDENTAL SUBJECT.”

(Letter to Gopal Krishna das, 9/3/69)

“Acaryopasanam. Here it is said. You have to worship acarya. Acaryavan puruso veda. One who has accepted... Narottama dasa Thakura has also said, asraya loiya bhaje krsna tare nahi tyaje ara saba more akarana. Asraya. You have to take shelter. Evam *parampara* praptam imam rajarsayo viduh. And Arjuna also said, sisyas te ‘ham sadhi mam prapannam. Sisyas te... Acarya, acaryopasanam. Krsna and Arjuna, two friends. There was no need of accepting Krsna as Arjuna’s spiritual master. Still, he is accepting officially. Sisyas te ‘ham sadhi mam prapannam: ‘I am accepting You as my spiritual master. Please teach me.’ So THIS IS ESSENTIAL. Acaryopasanam.

“Tad-vijnanartham sa gurum eva *abhigacchet*. This is Vedic instruction. If you at all interested in the understanding of spiritual subject matter, then you must approach a bona fide spiritual master. Tad vijnanartham sa gurum eva *abhigacchet*. *Abhigacchet* means must. IT IS NOT THAT IF YOU LIKE, YOU CAN GO; IF YOU DO NOT LIKE, YOU DO NOT. NO, YOU MUST. *Abhigacchet*. Samit-pani srotriyam brahma. *Tasmad gurum*

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prapadyeta jijnasuh sreya-uttamam. It is not a fashion to accept one guru. If you are actually interested, *sreya uttamam*, the highest perfection of life --*Tasmad gurum prapadyeta*-- then you have to accept a guru. This is called *acaryopasanam*. EVEN KRSNA, THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD, HE ACCEPTED SANDIPANI MUNI AS TEACHER, MASTER. CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU, HE IS ALSO INCARNATION OF KRSNA, BUT HE ACCEPTED ISVARA PURI AS HIS GURU. They do not require guru, but JUST TO KEEP PACE WITH THE OFFICIAL PROGRAM, EVEN GOD PERSONALLY, HE ACCEPTED SPIRITUAL MASTER. SO THIS IS ESSENTIAL. *Acaryopasanam.*”

(Lecture, Bombay 10/2/73)

“First of all, one must know in which subject matter he’s inquisitive, in material things, or in spiritual matters. If he’s actually interested in spiritual matter, then he should search out a proper, bona fide spiritual master. *Gurum eva abhigacchet.* MUST FIND OUT. IT IS NOT AN OPTION. IT IS A MUST. MUST --YOU CANNOT AVOID IT. WITHOUT BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, YOU CANNOT GO A STEP FORWARD.”

(NOD Lecture, Vrndavana 11/13/72)

“We must connect with the current. Just like you have heated your room with electrical wires, but if you do not touch it with the current going on, then simply electrical (sic:) feeling will not help you. Similarly, INITIATION IS ESSENTIAL. *Adau gurvasrayam.* Srila Rupa Gosvami recommends in his *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* FOR EXECUTING PROPER SPIRITUAL LIFE, ONE MUST TAKE SHELTER OF THE BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER. *Tasmad gurum prapadyeta jijnasuh sreya-uttamam.* [...I]f we establish our bona fide relationship with the spiritual master, representative of Krsna, immediately our connection with Krsna becomes established.”

(NOD Lecture, Vrndavana 10/29/72)

“A person who is fully Krsna conscious, he has no problem. Now how to become Krsna conscious? Lord Caitanya says, *sadhu-sastra-krpa*: ‘One can become Krsna conscious by the mercy of saintly devotees and by the mercy of the scriptures.’ These two things are recommended. Not that fools, as they are thinking, ‘I can, I can think myself. I don’t agree with the *sastra*. I don’t

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agree with the spiritual master. I don't agree with scriptures. I have got my independent opinion.' He is fool number one, rascal number one. One who says like that, you'll at once take him that he's fool, rascal, anything. YOU HAVE TO TAKE SHELTER OF SADHU, GURU AND SASTRA.”

(Lecture, New York 11/24/66)

“By acting on the platform of fruitive activity, one wanders throughout the universe in different species and forms. UNLESS HE COMES IN CONTACT WITH A DEVOTEE OF THE LORD, A GURU, HE DOES NOT BECOME ATTACHED TO THE SERVICE OF LORD VASUDEVA. Knowledge of Vasudeva requires many births to understand. As confirmed in *Bhagavad-gita* (7.19): *vasudevah sarvam iti sa mahatma sudurlabhah*. After struggling for existence for many births one may take shelter at the lotus feet of Vasudeva, Krsna. When this happens. one actually becomes wise and surrenders unto Him. That is the only way to stop the repetition of birth and death. This is confirmed in *Caitanya-caritamrta* (Madhya 19.151) in the instructions given by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to Srila Rupa Gosvami at Dasasvamedha-ghata.

brahmānda bhramite kona bhāgyavan jiva

guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-lāta-bija

The living entity wanders throughout different planets in different forms and bodies, but if by chance he comes in contact with a bona fide spiritual master, by the grace of the spiritual master he receives Lord Krsna's shelter, and his devotional life begins.” (SB 5.5.26 ppt.)

“Here the process of devotional service is further explained. Kasyapa Muni wanted to instruct Aditi in the same process recommended to him by Brahma for satisfying the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is valuable. The guru does not manufacture a new process to instruct the disciple. The disciple receives from the guru an authorized process received by the guru from his guru. This is called the system of disciplic succession (*evam parampara-praptam imam rajarsayo viduh*). This is the bona fide Vedic system of receiving the process of devotional service, by which the Supreme Personality of Godhead is pleased. Therefore, TO APPROACH A BONA FIDE GURU, OR SPIRITUAL MASTER, IS ESSENTIAL. The bona fide spiritual master is he who has received the mercy of his guru, who in turn is

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bona fide because he has received the mercy of his guru. This is called the *parampara* system. UNLESS ONE FOLLOWS THIS PARAMPARA SYSTEM, THE MANTRA ONE RECEIVES WILL BE CHANTED FOR NO PURPOSE. Nowadays there are so many rascal gurus who manufacture their mantras as a process for material advancement, not spiritual advancement. Still, the mantra cannot be successful if it is manufactured. Mantras and the process of devotional service have special power, provided they are received from the authorized person.” (SB 8.16.24 ppt.)

“ONE WHO IS NOT TAUGHT BY A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER CANNOT UNDERSTAND THE VEDIC LITERATURE. To emphasize this point, Lord Kṛṣṇa, while instructing Arjuna, clearly said that it was because Arjuna was His devotee and confidential friend that he could understand the mystery of *Bhagavad-gita*. It is to be concluded, therefore, that one who wants to understand the mystery of revealed scriptures must approach a bona fide spiritual master, hear from him very submissively and render service to him. Then the import of the scriptures will be revealed. It is stated in the Vedas:

yasya deve para bhaktir yatha deve tatha gurau

tasyaite kathita hy arthah prakasante mahatmanah

‘THE REAL IMPORT OF THE SCRIPTURES IS REVEALED TO ONE WHO HAS UNFLINCHING FAITH IN BOTH THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD AND THE SPIRITUAL MASTER.’ Srila Narottama dasa Thakura advises, *sadhu-sastra-guru-vakya, hrdaye kariya aikya*. The meaning of this instruction is that one must consider the instructions of the *sadhu*, the revealed scriptures and the spiritual master in order to understand the real purpose of spiritual life. Neither a *sadhu* (saintly person or Vaisnava) nor a bona fide spiritual master says anything that is beyond the scope of the sanction of the revealed scriptures. Thus the statements of the revealed scriptures correspond to those of the bona fide spiritual master and saintly persons. One must therefore act with reference to these three important sources of understanding.” (C.c. Adi 7.48 ppt.)

“Srila Rupa Gosvami states that his elder brother (Sanatana Gosvami) has compiled *Hari-bhakti-vilasa* for the guidance of the Vaisnavas and therein has mentioned many rules and regulations to be followed by the Vaisnavas.

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Some of them are very important and prominent, and Srila Rupa Gosvami will now mention these very important items for our benefit. The purport of this statement is that Srila Rupa Gosvami proposes to mention only basic principles, not details. For example, A BASIC PRINCIPLE IS THAT ONE HAS TO ACCEPT A SPIRITUAL MASTER. Exactly how one follows the instructions of his spiritual master is considered a detail. For example, if one is following the instruction of his spiritual master and that instruction is different from the instructions of another spiritual master, this is called detailed information. But THE BASIC PRINCIPLE OF ACCEPTANCE OF A SPIRITUAL MASTER IS GOOD EVERYWHERE, although the details may be different. Srila Rupa Gosvami does not wish to enter into details here, but wants to place before us only the principles.

“HE MENTIONS THE BASIC PRINCIPLES AS FOLLOWS: (1) accepting the shelter of the lotus feet of A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, (2) becoming initiated by THE SPIRITUAL MASTER and learning how to discharge devotional service from him, (3) obeying the orders of THE SPIRITUAL MASTER with faith and devotion, (4) following in the footsteps of great acaryas under the direction of THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, (5) inquiring from THE SPIRITUAL MASTER how to advance in Krsna consciousness...” (NOD Ch.6, 2nd. Edit. pg.53)

“WITHOUT FOLLOWING THE ABOVE-MENTIONED TEN PRINCIPLES, ONE CANNOT PROPERLY ELEVATE HIMSELF TO THE PLATFORM OF SADHANA-BHAKTI, OR DEVOTIONAL SERVICE IN PRACTICE. Altogether, Srila Rupa Gosvami mentions twenty items, and all of them are very important. OUT OF THE TWENTY, THE FIRST THREE --namely accepting the shelter of a bona fide spiritual master, taking initiation from him and serving him with respect and reverence-- ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT.” (NOD Ch.6, 2nd. Edit. pg.54)

“The following details outline a general practice by which one can prepare himself for an easy journey to the Vaikuntha (antimaterial) planets, where life is free from birth, old age, disease and death.

General practice (positive functions):

1. THE SERIOUS CANDIDATE MUST ACCEPT A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER in order to be trained scientifically. Because the senses are material, it is not at all possible to realize the Transcendence by

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them. Therefore the senses have to be spiritualized by the prescribed method under the direction of the spiritual master.

2. When the student has chosen a bona fide spiritual master, HE MUST TAKE THE PROPER INITIATION FROM HIM. This marks the beginning of spiritual training.

3. THE CANDIDATE MUST BE PREPARED TO SATISFY THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IN EVERY WAY. A bona fide spiritual master who is fully cognizant of the methods of spiritual science, learned in the spiritual scriptures such as the *Bhagavad-gita*, Vedanta, *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and Upanisads, and who is also a realized soul who has made a tangible connection with the Supreme Lord, is the transparent medium by which the willing candidate is led to the path of the Vaikunthas. The spiritual master must be satisfied in all respects, because simply by his good wishes a candidate can make wonderful progress along the path.

4. THE INTELLIGENT CANDIDATE PLACES INTELLIGENT QUESTIONS TO THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IN ORDER TO CLEAR HIS PATH OF ALL UNCERTAINTIES. The spiritual master shows the way, not whimsically, but in accordance with the principles of the authorities who have actually traversed the path. The names of these authorities are disclosed in the scriptures, and one has simply to follow them under the direction of the spiritual master. The spiritual master never deviates from the path of the authorities.” (EJTOP, 7th Printing, pgs.32-33)

“In the Shastras it is said that Spiritual advance of life is achieved thru the combined mercy of the Spiritual Master and Krishna. THOSE WHO ARE SINCERE SOULS, KRISHNA HELPS THEM TO HAVE A BONAFIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, and the bonafide Spiritual Master helps the disciple approach Krishna. THIS IS THE PROCESS.”

(Letter to Jadurany, Book of Letters #67-7-9)

[...Y]OU SHOULD KNOW THAT WITHOUT THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER THAT THERE IS NO QUESTION OF DEVOTIONAL SERVICE.” (Letter to Shivananda, 12/17/68)

“IT IS A BASIC PRINCIPLE THAT ONE MUST ACCEPT A BONAFIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THE HIGHEST

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PERFECTION OF LIFE, LOVE OF GOD. I thank all of you very much for accepting me as your spiritual master, and I promise that I will take you back to home, back to Godhead. I ask you all to promise me to always chant at least 16 rounds, follow the regulative principles, read our books and try to preach this Krishna Consciousness Movement all over the world. So far my qualifications are concerned, I am simply trying to carry out the order of my Guru Maharaj.”
(Letter to Nityananda Dasa, 12/11/71)

*"tad viddhi pranipatena
pariprasnena sevaya
upadeksyanti te jnanam
jnaninas tattva-darsinah*

TRANSLATION

“JUST TRY TO LEARN THE TRUTH BY APPROACHING A SPIRITUAL MASTER. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth.

PURPORT

“The path of spiritual realization is undoubtedly difficult. THE LORD THEREFORE ADVISES US TO APPROACH A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER IN THE LINE OF DISCIPIC SUCCESSION FROM THE LORD HIMSELF. No one can be a bona fide spiritual master without following this principle of disciplic succession. The Lord is the original spiritual master, and a person in the disciplic succession can convey the message of the Lord as it is to his disciple.

“NO ONE CAN BE SPIRITUALLY REALIZED BY MANUFACTURING HIS OWN PROCESS, AS IS THE FASHION OF THE FOOLISH PRETENDERS. The *Bhagavatam* (6.3.19) says, *dharmam tu saksad bhagavat-pranitam*: the path of religion is directly enunciated by the Lord. Therefore, mental speculation or dry arguments cannot help lead one to the right path. Nor by independent study of books of knowledge can one progress in spiritual life. One has to approach a bona fide spiritual master to receive the knowledge. Such a spiritual master should be accepted in full surrender, and one should serve the spiritual master like a menial servant, without false prestige.

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“SATISFACTION OF THE SELF-REALIZED SPIRITUAL MASTER IS THE SECRET OF ADVANCEMENT IN SPIRITUAL LIFE. Inquiries and submission constitute the proper combination for spiritual understanding. Unless there is submission and service, inquiries from the learned spiritual master will not be effective. One must be able to pass the test of the spiritual master, and when he sees the genuine desire of the disciple, he automatically blesses the disciple with genuine spiritual understanding.

“In this verse, both blind following and absurd inquiries are condemned. Not only should one hear submissively from the spiritual master, but one must also get a clear understanding from him, in submission and service and inquiries. A bona fide spiritual master is by nature very kind toward the disciple. Therefore when the student is submissive and is always ready to render service, the reciprocation of knowledge and inquiries becomes perfect.”
(BG 4.34 text & ppt.)

“So tad viddhi. YOU HAVE TO FIRST OF ALL SEARCH OUT A PERSON. So Kṛṣṇa recommends that if you want knowledge then first of all... THAT IS THE PROCESS, THE WHOLE VEDIC PROCESS. In the Kathopanisaḍ also it is said that tad-vijñānartham gurum eva *abhigacchet*: ‘If you want to understand the transcendental science, then you have to approach to a spiritual master.’

“...*Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena*. In Katha Upanisaḍ it is said tad-vijñānartham sa gurum eva*bhigacchet*. *Abhigacchet*. This is a Sanskrit grammatical injunction. Where there is the question of imperative, ‘you must,’ there *vidhilin*, this form of verb, is used, *gacchet*, *gacchet*. *Gacchet* means ‘You must go.’ YOU DON’T THINK THAT WITHOUT GOING TO A QUALIFIED, BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER YOU CAN HAVE. NO. THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE. Here also, Lord Kṛṣṇa also recommends, *Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya*: ‘If you want to learn that transcendental science, then you have to find out a transcendentalist first of all.’ That is also recommended in Kathopanisaḍ.

“In Bhagavata also it is said, *Tasmad gurum prapadyeta Jijnasuh sreya uttamam*: ‘One who is hankering after the highest type of question...’ We have got so many questions. We can question the whole day and night ‘What is the rate of this commodity? What is happening in the political field? What is going on in China?’ These questions are not... Not these question. *Sreya*

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uttamam. One who has become inquisitive in the *uttamam*. *Uttamam* means *udgata-tama*, not any question of pertaining to the material world. One who is eager to question about the Absolute Truth or the spiritual world, he requires a spiritual master.

“*Tasmad gurum prapadyeta*. THE FIRST INJUNCTION IS THAT TASMAD GURUM PRAPADYETA: ‘YOU MUST SUBMIT TO A SPIRITUAL MASTER.’ Who? Who is recommended to find out a spiritual master? *Tasmad gurum...jijnasuh*. *Jijnasuh* means who is inquisitive. What kind of inquisitive? *Jijnasuh sreya uttamam*: ‘What is the ultimate goal of my life?’ If you have no such view to inquire what is the ultimate goal of your.., you need not require to search out a spiritual master. Spiritual master is not a show bottle. Just like, ‘Oh, so many people, they have got a spiritual master. Let me have also some spiritual master.’ It is not like that. It is only *jijnasuh*, one must be very much inquisitive of the transcendental subject matter. He requires a spiritual master. So here also, the Lord says that *tad viddhi*: ‘If you want to understand that transcendental subject matter, then you must approach a person, a bona fide spiritual master.’

“And the process is *pranipata*, *pranipatena*. PRANIPATAMEANS FULL SURRENDER. *Pra* means *prakṛsta-rupena*, fully, and *nipata* means completely becoming a blank slate. Blank slate. Nobody should approach a bona fide spiritual master just to argue with him and just to, with a desire that ‘I shall see what kind of spiritual master.’ No. This is useless. You have to select a spiritual master... My guru maharaja, my spiritual master, used to say that YOU HAVE TO SELECT A SPIRITUAL MASTER NOT BY SEEING BUT BY YOUR EAR, BUT BY HEARING. And you don’t select a spiritual master who has got a very good hair or beard or some very beautiful feature, ‘Oh, he is a very good, nice looking.’ No. You must hear. *Tad viddhi pranipatena. Sruti*. The whole process is *sruti*. The Vedas are called *sruti*. The ear has to give aural reception.

“So here also the same thing is recommended by Lord Kṛṣṇa, that *pranipata*. First of all, you have to find out a bona fide spiritual master, and then you should surrender unto him. This is the first process. *Pranipatena pariprasnena*. *Pariprasnena* means by sincere inquiries. Not only surrender, you must be intelligent enough to inquire. Not that when something is heard,

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and there is no question. No. There must be some question. *Pariprasnena* and *sevaya*. So surrender, inquiry, and *seva*, service.

“We sing this song every day, *yasya prasada bhagavat-prasado yasyaprasadan na gatih kuto ‘pi, dhyayan stuvams tasya yasas tri-sandhyam vande guroh sri-caranaravindam. Yasya, IF WE ACTUALLY FIND A SPIRITUAL MASTER, BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, AND IF WE CAN MAKE HIM SATISFIED BY MY SERVICE, THEN MY PATH FOR REALIZATION OF GOD IS GUARANTEED.* This is the thing. Here it is. First of all we have to find out a bona fide spiritual master. Then by my service, by my surrender, by my questions, if we utilize, then my path for back to Godhead, back to home, is guaranteed. That is the... It is very important verse. *Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya, upadeksyanti te jnanam.* That knowledge by which you can go to the point of your self-interest, *Visnu*, that knowledge you can realize. Thank you very much.”

(Lecture, BG 4.34, NY 8/12/66)

“Your nice letter with deep regard for Guru is quite appropriate. Guru and Krishna are two parallel lines on which the spiritual express runs very smoothly. In the *Chaitanya Charitamrita* it is said ‘Guru Krishna prasade paya bhakti lata vija.’ By the Grace of Guru one gets Krishna and by the Grace of Krishna one gets a bonafide Guru. THEREFORE KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS MEANS STAUNCH FAITH BOTH IN GURU AND KRISHNA. ONE MINUS THE OTHER IS NO GOOD FOR THE DEVOTEE. So your faith in the principle of devotion to Guru will certainly help you more and more Krishna. DO NOT EVER TRY TO APPROACH KRISHNA DIRECTLY. Anyone who talks of Krishna without service to Guru will not be successful. So your faith in Guru and Krishna simultaneously will help you to become crowned with success in the progressive march in Krishna consciousness. Do not be worried, be situated in the present aptitude and everything will be clear.”

(Letter of 9/27/67, portion to Devananda)

“TO STICK TO THE PRINCIPLES ADVISED BY THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND SERVE KRISHNA UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS THE ONLY HOPE OF OUR ADVANCING IN KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS. The Spiritual Master and Krishna are two parallel lines. You have to make progress on these two parallel lines, you

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cannot avoid one in preference of the other. The train, on two tracks, moves forward. The Spiritual Master and Krishna are like these two tracks, they must be served simultaneously. Krishna helps one to find bona fide Spiritual Master, and [the] bona fide Spiritual Master helps one to understand Krishna. IF ONE DOES NOT GET BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, THEN HOW HE CAN EVER UNDERSTAND KRISHNA? YOU CANNOT SERVE KRISHNA WITHOUT SPIRITUAL MASTER, OR SERVE JUST SPIRITUAL MASTER WITHOUT SERVING KRISHNA. THEY MUST BE SERVED SIMULTANEOUSLY.”

(Letter to Mahapurusha, 2/12/68)

“AS I HAVE REPEATEDLY SAID, THAT KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS IS DEVELOPED BY FOLLOWING TWO PARALLEL LINES, MEANS SERVICE OF KRISHNA, AND SERVICE OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. THIS IS THE SECRET OF SUCCESS. The Spiritual Master must be bona fide, that is, he must come down from a bona fide Spiritual Master and must act according to the directions of the Spiritual Master, and by doing so he gives proper directions about Krishna and the devotees serve Krishna under the direction of such Spiritual Master, and Krishna accepts service, and in this way the whole thing becomes beautiful and successful.”

(Letter to Brahmananda, 2/20/68)

“...Rsabhadeva tells His sons how they can be freed from the false identification arising from false ego and material conditional life. One gradually becomes liberated by practicing as mentioned above. All these prescribed methods enable one to give up the material body (lingam vyapohet) and be situated in his original spiritual body. FIRST OF ALL ONE HAS TO ACCEPT A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER. This is advocated by Srila Rupa Gosvami in his *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu: sri-guru-padasrayah*. To be freed from the entanglement of the material world, one has to approach a spiritual master. Tad-vijvanartham sa gurum evabhigacchet. By questioning the spiritual master and by serving him, one can advance in spiritual life.”

(SB 5.5.13 ppt.)

“D1: One *Mayavadi sannyasi*, he wrote a book, ‘Be Your Own Guru,’ and he said you can...”

S.PRABHUPADA: So why do you write book?

D1: Yes, he is being guru. He is teaching them to do without a guru.

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S.PRABHUPADA: Let everyone become his guru. Why you write books?

D2: ...one book that one should not write a book without the permission of a spiritual master.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. You'll find in today's tape that Prahlada Maharaja is recommending, that 'SPIRITUAL LIFE BEGINS BY GURU-SUSRUSAH, BY SERVING GURU.' (break) ...[Rupa] Gosvami said, adau gurvasrayam: 'THE FIRST BEGINNING IS TO TAKE SHELTER OF THE BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER.' Sad-dharma-pracchat: 'THEN INQUIRE FROM HIM ABOUT THE SPIRITUAL PATH.' *Sadhu*-marganaugamanam: 'Follow the previous acaryas.' These are the steps. *Bhagavad-gita*, Arjuna said, sisyas te 'ham sadhi mam: 'Now I become Your disciple. Teach me.' And these rascals are more than Arjuna --'There is no need of guru.' He says, sisyas te 'ham. Why? He was already friend. WHY HE SHOULD SUBMIT HIMSELF AS DISCIPLE? THAT IS THE BEGINNING OF SPIRITUAL LIFE."

(Morning Walk, Vrndavana 12/10/75)

"So there is a disciplic succession. And the acaryas, they're authorities. OUR PROCESS OF KNOWLEDGE IS VERY SIMPLE. WE TAKE IT FROM THE AUTHORITY. WE DON'T SPECULATE. Speculation will not help us to come to the real knowledge. Just like when we are in difficulty, in legal implication, we go to some authority, lawyer. When we are diseased we go to a physician, the authority. There is no use, speculation.

"Suppose I am in difficulty in some legal implication. I simply speculate, 'I shall be free in this way and that way.' That will not help. We have to go to the lawyer who knows things, and he gives us instruction that 'You do not do this; then you'll be free.' Similarly, when we are diseased, if I speculate at home that 'My disease will be cured in this way and that way,' no. That is useless. You go to an authorized physician and he will give you a nice prescription and you'll be cured. That is the process of knowledge.

"But in the modern age people think that 'I am free, I am independent, and I can make my own solution.' That is rascaldom. That's not good. So Arjuna, when he was talking with Krsna as friend, but when he saw that there was no solution talking like this, he surrendered to Krsna. He said, sisyas te 'ham, aham: 'Myself, I, surrender unto You as Your disciple.' Sisyas te 'ham sadhi mam *prapannam*. *Prapannam* means surrender."

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“...Simply you require little intelligence. That intelligence is developed through the instruction of acarya. Therefore, Vedic injunction is not to acquire knowledge by speculation. That is useless. *Athapi te deva padambuja-dvayam-janati tattvam, prasada-lesanugrhitva eva hi, na canya eko 'pi ciram vicinvan. Ciram vicinvan.* Ciram means for thousands of years you can speculate; you cannot understand what is God. That is not possible. But IF YOU RECEIVE KNOWLEDGE FROM THE DEVOTEE, HE CAN DELIVER YOU.

“Therefore Vedic injunction is that *tad-vijnana...* in order to understand *tad-vijnana...* *Vijnana* means science. IF YOU WANT TO KNOW THE TRANSCENDENTAL SCIENCE, THEN YOU MUST APPROACH A GURU. *Tad-vijnanartham*, in order to... If you are at all interested to understand the spiritual science. *Tad-vijnanartham, gurum eva abhigacchet.* You must approach guru. GURU MEANS THIS DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, as I have explained.

“...So we have to follow the acaryas. If we at all, if we are at all interested in spiritual science, then we must follow the Vedic instruction, *tad-vijnanartham sa gurum eva abhigacchet.* We must approach. You cannot have spiritual knowledge simply by speculating. Impossible. Simply waste of time. *Srama eva hi kevalam...*

“In the *Bhagavad-gita*, therefore, it is recommended, acaryopasanam. Acarya-upasana. Not only worshiping the Lord, but also the acarya. Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, *guru-krsna-krpaya paya bhakti-lata-bija.* GURU --ACARYA-- AND KRSNA. ONE SHOULD SEEK FAVOR OF BOTH OF THEM. Not that ‘I am now seeking favor of Krsna. What is the use of guru or acarya?’ No. YOU CANNOT OVERLAP ACARYA AND GO TO KRSNA. THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE. KRSNA WILL NOT ACCEPT YOU. Just like if you want to see a big man you should go through his secretary, through his orderly, doorkeeper, similarly, OUR PROCESS IS ACARYOPASANAM, GO THROUGH THE ACARYA. That is the injunction of the Vedas.

“...Therefore sastra says, *dharmasya tattvam nihitam guhayam.* The truth is very confidential. So if you want to know that truth, *mahajano yena gatah sa panthah*, you should have to follow the great acaryas. Then you will

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understand. THEREFORE ACARYA-UPASANA IS ESSENTIAL. *Acarya-upasana* is very essential. In all the Vedic sastras the injunction is that. *Tad-vijnanartham sa gurum eva abhigacchet, srotiriyam brahma-nistham. Tasmad gurum prapadyeta Jijnasuh sreya uttamam.* ANYONE WHO IS INQUISITIVE TO UNDERSTAND HIGHER TRUTHS, HE MUST SURRENDER TO GURU. *Tasmad gurum prapadyeta, Jijnasuh sreya uttamam.* One who is inquisitive, who is now inquiring about transcendental subject matter. *Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya.* So all the sastras says, in our Vaisnava sastra also, Rupa Gosvami says, ADAU GURV-ASRAYAM: 'IN THE FIRST BEGINNING, YOU MUST TAKE SHELTER OF A BONA FIDE GURU.'

"...So we are interested in spiritual subject matter. Therefore the process is adau gurv-asrayam. One has to accept a bona fide spiritual master. That is our process. WITHOUT ACCEPTING A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER WE CANNOT MAKE ANY PROGRESS. IT IS IMPOSSIBLE.

"...Acarya-upasana, simply by the blessings of the acaryas we can make very rapid progress. *Vedesu durlabham adurlabham atma-bhaktau.* If we... *Yasya prasada bhagavat-prasada...* We sing every day. By the mercy of the spiritual master, acarya, we immediately get the blessings of Lord. Immediately. *Yasya prasada. Yasya* means whose, *prasada*, benediction. By the benediction of the spiritual master. *Yasya prasada bhagavat-prasada.* IF SPIRITUAL MASTER, ACARYA, IS PLEASED, THEN YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT KRSNA IS ALSO PLEASED. You should know through. This is not very difficult.

"Just like you are working in office. If your immediate officer, boss, is pleased, that means the proprietor of the firm, he's also pleased. Although you do not see him. This is fact. Your immediate boss, if he's pleased. So similarly, we, our business, THIS SPIRITUAL LINE IS GURU-KRSNA-KRPA. WE HAVE TO FIRST RECEIVE THE MERCIFUL BENEDICTION FROM THE ACARYA, AND THEN KRSNA WILL BE PLEASED AND HE'LL ALSO GIVE HIS BLESSINGS. *Mad-bhaktah.*

"There is a version in the *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, *mad-bhaktah pujabhyadhikah.* He says, Krsna says, that 'If anyone worships Me directly and if anyone worships Me through the acarya, he's better devotee who is coming to Me through acarya.' *Mad-bhaktah pujabhyadhikah.* SO OUR, THIS

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VAISNAVA PHILOSOPHY, PROCESS, IS TO GO THROUGH THE ACARYA. Servant of the servant of the servant. We should try to become servant of the servant. *Gopi-bhartuh pada-kamalayor dasa-dasanudasah. Dasa-dasanudasah.* WE SHOULD NOT APPROACH THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD DIRECTLY. THAT IS NOT GOOD.

“...*Tasmad gurum prapadyeta Jijnasuh sreya uttamam.* Those who are inquisitive to understand higher scientific knowledge, *uttamam. Uttama* means higher. *Uttama, madhyama, adhama.* There are three words. First-class, second-class, third-class. So spiritual knowledge is *uttamam*. ANYONE WHO IS INQUISITIVE TO UNDERSTAND FIRST-CLASS KNOWLEDGE, HE REQUIRES TO GO TO A GURU. Those who are interested in third-class knowledge, they do not require any guru.

“...So after being liberated from the material concept of life by the blessings of Krsna and guru, one comes to the platform of first-class knowledge, where he engages himself directly in the service of the Lord. That is first-class knowledge.”
(Lecture, London 9/23/69)

“Suppose a man is fallen in the pit and he’s trying to come out, and another man drops a rope, ‘Please catch it. I shall take you out of the pit.’ He does not catch it. Then how he can be taken out? So *sadhu* and *sastra*, they’re always ready to give you mercy, but you have to take it. If you don’t accept it, then how you can recover?

“Therefore initiation means to accept the mercy of the *sadhu* and spiritual master. If you don’t accept, so there is no other way. If you think... If you cry that ‘I am fallen in the pit. Please take me,’ and when somebody comes to help you, you say, ‘No, I’ll not catch it,’ then you remain there. Who’ll help you?

“So because I am a living entity, I try for so many things, for my daily bread, and I don’t try to catch the mercy of *sadhu* and *sastra*. Just see my foolishness. I, for getting a work, I flatter so many persons and put my, serving my application, but for my deliverance from the material bondage I don’t care. ‘No, I am not going to submit to anyone. I don’t require.’ Just see. How much foolishness there is. Just like a dog, for his bread he’ll submit to everyone, but for his spiritual emancipation, oh, he’s not agreeing to submit. Just see the foolishness.

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[...]“We are not creating anything. It is not a manufactured thing, concocted thing. It is standard. Followed by great acaryas like Caitanya. So we have to accept. That is the way. We have to become Krsna conscious, and follow, as the *sastra* says. Sometimes, as we... The law books are there. As we take help of a lawyer, how to utilize the law book, similarly YOU HAVE TO UTILIZE THE SCRIPTURES BY ACCEPTING A SPIRITUAL MASTER WHO CAN GUIDE YOU. He’s a lawyer. This is the process. If you don’t accept, then go on suffering. If you accept, then everything is there. That is the way of Krsna consciousness.” (Lecture, New York 11/24/66)

“You have inquired why Chaitanya Mahaprabhu has not mentioned anything about accepting a Spiritual Master in His Shikshastak. But perhaps you have missed the point that He says *amanina manadena kirtaniya sada hari*. This means one has to chant the Holy Names of Krishna, becoming humbler than the straw, and more tolerant than the tree. So WHO CAN BECOME HUMBLER THAN THE STRAW UNLESS HE ACCEPTS A SPIRITUAL MASTER? The whole world is puffed up. Everyone wants to become the Lord of everything. Ultimately, the *Mayavadi* philosopher wants to become one with the Supreme Lord. This means that when one fails to become Lord of everything, he wants to mix up with the Supreme Lord and tries in that way to automatically become Lord of everything. What he can’t perform by his own capacity he wants to have done by being merged into the Supreme Lord. That is the mentality of the general people. But if anyone becomes humbler than the grass and more tolerant than the tree, it is understood that he has accepted a Spiritual Master. Besides that, if we accept *Sikshastak* as authority given by Lord Chaitanya, this means we accept Lord Chaitanya as Spiritual Master. In the *Bhagavad Gita* it is openly mentioned that Arjuna accepted Krishna as the Spiritual Master.

“There is another mention in the *Sikshastak*, Lord Chaitanya says ‘I do not want any wealth of this world, I do not want any following, neither do I want a beautiful wife. Simply I want to become a servant of the Lord.’ TO BECOME THE SERVANT OF THE LORD MEANS TO ACCEPT A SPIRITUAL MASTER. Without accepting somebody as master, how can one become an expert servant? It is not that in every literature you will find the words that everyone has to accept a Spiritual Master, but we have to study things scrutinizingly. In the *Chaitanya Charitamrita* there is mention *guru krsna kripaya paya bhakti latha bij*. By the mercy of the Spiritual

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Master and Krishna one can get the seeds of bhakti lata, the plant of devotional service.” (Letter to Jaya Govinda, 7/4/69)

“Yes, the students should agree to be malleable by the Spiritual Master, then his success is sure. In your western part of the world, people are falsely taught not to become slavish. Everyone wants to assert his personal views and opinions, without following any authority. That is the general tendency. But although such persons claim not to be slaves, actually they are slaves to the senses. So instead of being a slave of the senses, if one voluntarily becomes the slave of Krishna, or His representative, that is good for him. This is *maya*, thinking that we are independent. We are slaves--every moment we are serving our senses. We are slaves to so many abominable things, to drugs, intoxication, sex, doing the most abominable things in the service of the senses. So IT IS NOT SLAVISH WHEN ONE AGREES TO BECOME SLAVE OF KRISHNA AND HIS REPRESENTATIVE, THEN THIS IS LIBERATED POSITION, liberated from being slave to the senses. Yes, Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur said, My Dear Vaishnava Thakur, Spiritual Master, let me become your dog, and I shall remain at your door, and I shall guard against any nonsense persons trying to enter, and whatever food you will give me, I shall eat, and I shall remain as your dog.

“Your specific talents are to be engaged under direction of the Spiritual Master. Everything, every talent can be employed in Krishna’s service, and how to do it is known to the Spiritual Master.

(Letter to Shivananda, 11/11/68)

“[...O]ne should, by deliberate consideration, raise himself to the platform of Krsna consciousness. To attain such an end, one must touch the lotus feet of the spiritual master. KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS CANNOT BE ACHIEVED BY SELF-ENDEAVOR. One must therefore approach a self-realized, Krsna conscious person and touch his lotus feet. Prahlada Maharaja therefore said:

*naisam matis tavad urukramagghrim
sprsaty anarthapagamo yad-arthah
mahiyasam pada-rajo-'bhisekam
niskincananam na vrnita yavat*
(Bhag. 7.5.32)

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“ONE CANNOT COME TO THE PRECINCTS OF KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS UNLESS HE TOUCHES THE DUST OF THE LOTUS FEET OF A PERSON WHO HAS BECOME A MAHATMA, A GREAT DEVOTEE. This is the beginning of the surrendering process. Lord Krsna wants everyone to surrender unto Him, and this surrendering process begins when one touches the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master. BY SINCERELY RENDERING SERVICE TO A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, ONE BEGINS HIS SPIRITUAL LIFE IN KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS. Touching the lotus feet of a spiritual master means giving up one’s false prestige and unnecessarily puffed-up position in the material world. [...] In other words, ONE CANNOT AROUSE KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS SIMPLY BY HIS OWN MENTAL SPECULATION. ONE MUST SURRENDER TO A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER. ONLY THIS PROCESS WILL HELP ONE.” (SB 4.26.20)

“From the personal example of Sri Narada Muni in his previous birth, it is clear that the service of the Lord begins with the service of the Lord’s bona fide servants. The Lord says that the service of His servants is greater than His personal service. Service of the devotee is more valuable than the service of the Lord. ONE SHOULD THEREFORE CHOOSE A BONA FIDE SERVANT OF THE LORD CONSTANTLY ENGAGED IN HIS SERVICE, ACCEPT SUCH A SERVANT AS THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND ENGAGE HIMSELF IN HIS (THE SPIRITUAL MASTER’S) SERVICE. Such a spiritual master is the transparent medium by which to visualize the Lord, who is beyond the conception of the material senses. By service of the bona fide spiritual master, the Lord consents to reveal Himself in proportion to the service rendered.” (SB 1.5.23)

“UNLESS ONE GETS THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASSOCIATE WITH A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER BY THE GRACE OF THE LORD, there is no possibility of one’s liberation from the cycle of birth and death in the different species of life and through the different grades of planets.” (SB 3.31.43)

“Once one enters into the continuation of material existence, it is very difficult to get out. Therefore the Supreme Personality of Godhead comes Himself or sends His bona fide representative, and He leaves behind scriptures like *Bhagavad-gita* and *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, so that the living

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entities hovering in the darkness of nescience may take advantage of the instructions, the saintly persons and the spiritual masters and thus be freed. Unless the living entity receives the mercy of the saintly persons, the spiritual master or Kṛṣṇa, it is not possible for him to get out of the darkness of material existence; BY HIS OWN ENDEAVOR IT IS NOT POSSIBLE.”
(SB 3.32.38 ppt.)

“The Vedic literature instructs: *Tasmad gurum prapadyeta Jijnasuh sreya uttamam*. An intelligent man must be very inquisitive to know the transcendental science deeply. Therefore ONE MUST APPROACH A GURU, A SPIRITUAL MASTER. Although Jada Bharata explained everything to Maharaja Rahugana, it appears that his intelligence was not perfect enough to understand clearly. He therefore requested a further explanation. As stated in *Bhagavad-gita* (4.34): *Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya*. THE STUDENT MUST APPROACH A SPIRITUAL MASTER AND SURRENDER UNTO HIM FULLY (PRANIPATENA). He must also question him in order to understand his instructions (*Pariprasnena*). One should not only surrender to the spiritual master but also render loving service unto him (*sevaya*) so that the spiritual master will be pleased with the student and explain the transcendental subject matter more clearly. A CHALLENGING SPIRIT BEFORE THE SPIRITUAL MASTER SHOULD BE AVOIDED IF ONE IS AT ALL INTERESTED IN LEARNING THE VEDIC INSTRUCTIONS IN DEPTH.” (SB 5.12.3)

“THE PRINCIPLE OF ACCEPTING A SPIRITUAL MASTER, AS MENTIONED IN THE EIGHTH VERSE, IS ESSENTIAL. Even for one who takes to devotional service, it is most important. TRANSCENDENTAL LIFE BEGINS WHEN ONE ACCEPTS A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Kṛṣṇa, clearly states here that this process of knowledge is the actual path. Anything speculated beyond this is nonsense.

“[...]As for acceptance of the spiritual master, that is essential, because WITHOUT THE INSTRUCTION OF A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER ONE CANNOT PROGRESS IN THE SPIRITUAL SCIENCE. One should approach the spiritual master with all humility and offer him all services so that he will be pleased to bestow his blessings upon the disciple. BECAUSE A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS A REPRESENTATIVE OF KṚṢṆA, IF HE BESTOWS ANY BLESSINGS

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UPON HIS DISCIPLE, THAT WILL MAKE THE DISCIPLE IMMEDIATELY ADVANCED WITHOUT THE DISCIPLE'S FOLLOWING THE REGULATIVE PRINCIPLES. Or, the regulative principles will be easier for one who has served the spiritual master without reservation.” (BG 13.8-12)

“Before the creation the Lord was there (*narayanah paro'vyaktat*), and therefore the words spoken by the Lord are vibrations of transcendental sound. There is a gulf of difference between the two qualities of sound, namely prakṛta and aprakṛta. The physicist can deal only with the prakṛta sound, or sound vibrated in the material sky, and therefore WE MUST KNOW THAT THE VEDIC SOUNDS RECORDED IN SYMBOLIC EXPRESSIONS CANNOT BE UNDERSTOOD BY ANYONE WITHIN THE UNIVERSE UNLESS AND UNTIL ONE IS INSPIRED BY THE VIBRATION OF SUPERNATURAL (APRAKṚTA) SOUND, WHICH DESCENDS IN THE CHAIN OF DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION from the Lord to Brahma, from Brahma to Narada, from Narada to Vyasa and so on.

“NO MUNDANE SCHOLAR CAN TRANSLATE OR REVEAL THE TRUE IMPORT OF THE VEDIC MANTRAS (HYMNS). THEY CANNOT BE UNDERSTOOD UNLESS ONE IS INSPIRED OR INITIATED BY THE AUTHORIZED SPIRITUAL MASTER. The original spiritual master is the Lord Himself, and the succession comes down through the sources of *parampara*, as clearly stated in the Fourth Chapter of the *Bhagavad-gita*. So UNLESS ONE RECEIVES THE TRANSCENDENTAL KNOWLEDGE FROM THE AUTHORIZED PARAMPARA, ONE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED USELESS (VIPHALA MATAH), even though one may be greatly qualified in the mundane advancements of arts or science.” (SB 2.4.22)

“If one develops love for Kṛṣṇa by Kṛṣṇa conscious activities, one can know the Supreme Absolute Truth, but HE WHO TRIES TO UNDERSTAND GOD SIMPLY BY LOGICAL ARGUMENTS WILL NOT SUCCEED, nor will he get a taste for unalloyed devotion. THE SECRET IS THAT ONE MUST SUBMISSIVELY LISTEN TO THOSE WHO KNOW PERFECTLY THE SCIENCE OF GOD, AND ONE MUST BEGIN THE MODE OF SERVICE REGULATED BY THE PRECEPTOR. A devotee already attracted by the name, form, qualities, etc., of the Supreme Lord may be

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directed to his specific manner of devotional service; he need not waste time in approaching the Lord through logic. The expert spiritual master knows well how to engage his disciple's energy in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, and thus he engages a devotee in a specific devotional service according to his special tendency." (C.c. Adi 1.35 ppt.)

"When by learning from the self-realized spiritual master one actually engages himself in the service of Lord Visnu, FUNCTIONAL DEVOTIONAL SERVICE BEGINS. The procedures of this devotional service are known as abhidheya, or ACTION ONE IS DUTY-BOUND TO PERFORM. Our only shelter is the Supreme Lord, and ONE WHO TEACHES HOW TO APPROACH KRSNA IS THE FUNCTIONING FORM OF THE PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD." (C.c. Adi 1.47 ppt.)

"Therefore, in all actions, the experienced guide, THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, who is the manifested mercy of the Lord, SHOULD ALWAYS BE CONSULTED, and the path of progress will be assured." (SB 1.10.36 ppt.)

"In this verse the word vrdhha-sevaya is very significant. Vrdhha means 'old.' Sevaya means 'by service.' Perfect knowledge is acquired from the acaryas, or liberated souls. NO ONE CAN BE PERFECT IN KNOWLEDGE WITHOUT BEING TRAINED BY THE PARAMPARA SYSTEM."

(SB 4.20.4)

"FREEDOM FROM MAYA'S INFLUENCE IS POSSIBLE WHEN ONE ENGAGES IN THE SERVICE OF THE GREAT DEVOTEES (MAHAC-CARANA-SEVA). WITHOUT WORSHIPING THE LOTUS FEET OF A GREAT DEVOTEE, ONE CANNOT BE FREED FROM MAYA'S INFLUENCE. Srila Narottama dasa Thakura therefore says, chadiya vaisnava-seva nistara payeche keba: 'WHO HAS BEEN FREED FROM MAYA'S CLUTCHES WITHOUT SERVING THE LOTUS FEET OF A VAISNAVA?' Maya is aparajita, and her influence is also aparajita. As confirmed in *Bhagavad-gita* (7.14):

*daivi hy esa gunamayi
mama maya duratyaya*

"This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome.' Only a devotee can surpass *maya's* great influence. It was no fault on Maharaja Nabhi's part that he wanted a son. He wanted a son like the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the best of all

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sons. By the association of the Lord's devotee, one no longer desires material opulence. This is confirmed in *Caitanya-caritamṛta* (Madhya 22.54):

*'sadhu-sanga', 'sadhu-sanga' sarva-sastre kaya
lava-matra sadhu-sange sarva-siddhi haya*

and Madhya 22.51:

*mahat-kṛpā vina kona karme 'bhakti' naya
kṛṣṇa-bhakti dure rahu, saṁsāra nahe kṣaya*

“IF ONE IS SERIOUS ABOUT ESCAPING MAYA'S INFLUENCE AND RETURNING HOME, BACK TO GODHEAD, ONE MUST ASSOCIATE WITH A SADHU (DEVOTEE). THAT IS THE VERDICT OF ALL SCRIPTURES. By the slight association of a devotee, one can be freed from the clutches of *maya*. Without the mercy of the pure devotee, one cannot get freedom by any means. Certainly a pure devotee's association is necessary in order to obtain the loving service of the Lord. One cannot be freed from *maya*'s clutches without *sadhu-sanga*, the benediction of a great devotee. In *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (7.5.32) Prahlaḍa Maharaja says:

*naisam matis tavad urukramagghrim
sprsaty anarthapagamo yad arthah
mahiyasam pada-rajo-'bhisekam
niskincananam na vrñita yavat*

“ONE CANNOT BECOME THE LORD'S PURE DEVOTEE WITHOUT TAKING THE DUST OF A GREAT DEVOTEE ON HIS HEAD (PADA-RAJO-'BHISEKAM). A pure devotee is *niskincana*; he has no material desire to enjoy the material world. One has to take shelter of such a pure devotee in order to attain his qualities. The pure devotee is always free from the clutches of *maya* and her influence.” (SB 5.3.14)

“TRANSLATION

My dear King, if a sinful person engages in the service of a bona fide devotee of the Lord and thus learns how to dedicate his life unto the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, he can be completely purified. One cannot be purified merely by undergoing austerity, penance, brahmacharya and the other methods of atonement I have previously described.

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PURPORT

“Tat-purusa refers to a preacher of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, such as the spiritual master. Srila Narottama dasa Thakura has said, chadiya vaisnava-seva nistara payeche keba: ‘WITHOUT SERVING A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, AN IDEAL VAISNAVA, WHO CAN BE DELIVERED FROM THE CLUTCHES OF MAYA?’ This idea is also expressed in many other places. *Srimad-Bhagavatam* (5.5.2) says, mahat-sevam dvaram ahur vimukteh: if one desires liberation from the clutches of *maya*, one must associate with a pure devotee *mahatma*. A *mahatma* is one who engages twenty four hours daily in the loving service of the Lord. As Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gita* (9.13):

*mahatmanas tu mam partha
daivim prakrtim asritah
bhajanty ananya-manaso
jnatva bhutadim avyayam*

“O son of Prtha, 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.’ Thus the symptom of a *mahatma* is that he has no engagement other than service to Kṛṣṇa. ONE MUST RENDER SERVICE TO A VAISNAVA IN ORDER TO GET FREED FROM SINFUL REACTIONS, REVIVE ONE’S ORIGINAL KṚṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS AND BE TRAINED IN HOW TO LOVE KṚṢṆA. This is the result of *mahatma-seva*. Of course, if one engages in the service of a pure devotee, the reactions of one’s sinful life are vanquished automatically. Devotional service is necessary not to drive away an insignificant stock of sins, but to awaken our dormant love for Kṛṣṇa. As fog is vanquished at the first glimpse of sunlight, one’s sinful reactions are automatically vanquished as soon as one begins serving a pure devotee; no separate endeavor is required.

“The word *kṛṣṇa-rpita-pranah* refers to a devotee who dedicates his life to serving Kṛṣṇa, not to being saved from the path to hellish life. A devotee is *narayana-parayana*, or *vasudeva-parayana*, which means that the path of Vasudeva, or the devotional path, is his life and soul. *Narayana-parah sarve na kutascana bibhyati* (*Bhag.* 6.17.28): such a devotee is not afraid of going anywhere. There is a path toward liberation in the higher planetary systems and a path toward the hellish planets, but a *narayana-para* devotee is

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unafraid wherever he is sent; he simply wants to remember Kṛṣṇa, wherever he may be. Such a devotee is unconcerned with hell and heaven; he is simply attached to rendering service to Kṛṣṇa. When a devotee is put into hellish conditions, he accepts them as Kṛṣṇa's mercy: *tat te 'nukāmpam susāmikṣamaṇah* (Bhag. 10.14.8). He does not protest, 'Oh, I am such a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Why have I been put into this misery?' Instead he thinks, 'This is Kṛṣṇa's mercy.' SUCH AN ATTITUDE IS POSSIBLE FOR A DEVOTEE WHO ENGAGES IN THE SERVICE OF KṚṢṆA'S REPRESENTATIVE. THIS IS THE SECRET OF SUCCESS."

(SB 6.1.16 ppt.)

“TRANSLATION

Because you are great personalities, you can give me real knowledge. I am as foolish as a village animal like a pig or dog because I am merged in the darkness of ignorance. Therefore, please ignite the torch of knowledge to save me.

PURPORT

“This is the way to receive knowledge. One must submit oneself at the lotus feet of great personalities who can actually deliver transcendental knowledge. It is therefore said, *Tasmāḍ gurum prapadyeta Jīnāsuh 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.’ Only one who is actually eager to receive knowledge to eradicate the darkness of ignorance is eligible to approach a guru, or spiritual master. The guru should not be approached for material benefits. One should not approach a guru just to cure some disease or receive some miraculous benefit. This is not the way to approach the guru. *Tad-vijñānārtham*: one should approach the guru to understand the transcendental science of spiritual life.” (SB 6.15.16 ppt.)

“One has to receive the transcendental sound from the right source, accept it as a reality and prosecute the direction without hesitation. THE SECRET OF SUCCESS IS TO RECEIVE THE SOUND FROM THE RIGHT SOURCE OF A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER. Mundane manufactured sound has no potency, and as such, seemingly transcendental sound received from an unauthorized person also has no potency. One should

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be qualified enough to discern such transcendental potency, and either by discriminating or by fortunate chance if one is able to receive the transcendental sound from the bona fide spiritual master, his path of liberation is guaranteed. The disciple, however, must be ready to execute the order of the bona fide spiritual master as Lord Brahma executed the instruction of his spiritual master, the Lord Himself. FOLLOWING THE ORDER OF THE BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS THE ONLY DUTY OF THE DISCIPLE, AND THIS completely faithful execution of the order of the bona fide spiritual master IS THE SECRET OF SUCCESS.”

(SB 2.9.8 ppt.)

“THE SECRET OF SUCCESS in spiritual life is in satisfying the spiritual master and thereby getting his sincere blessings. Srila Visvanantha Cakravarti Thakura has sung in his famous eight stanzas on the spiritual master as follows: ‘I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master. ONLY BY HIS SATISFACTION CAN ONE PLEASE THE PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD, and when he is dissatisfied there is only havoc on the path of spiritual realization.’ It is essential, therefore, that a disciple be very much obedient and submissive to the bona fide spiritual master.”

(SB 1.1.8 ppt.)

“In the spiritual field nobody can become a bonafide spiritual master by dissatisfying his spiritual master. IT IS SAID THAT ONE CAN SATISFY THE SUPREME LORD SIMPLY BY SATISFYING THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND ONE WHO DISSATISFIES THE SPIRITUAL MASTER HAS NO PLACE IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.”

(Letter to Madhusudan, 11/2/67)

“THE LORD’S ORDER DESCENDS IN DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION THROUGH THE BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, and thus execution of the order of the bona fide spiritual master is factual control of the senses.”

(SB 2.9.8 ppt.)

“So how they will understand unless they come to the proper guru? Therefore *sastra* says, tad-vijnanartham: ‘If you want to know the real problem of your life and if you want to be enlightened how to become Krsna conscious, how to become eternal, go back to home, back to Godhead, then YOU MUST APPROACH THE GURU.’

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“And who is guru? That is explained, very simple thing. Guru never manufactures idea that ‘You do this and give me money and you become happy.’ That is not guru. That is another process of earning money.

“So here it is said, *mudha*, everyone who is simply living in the fool’s paradise, manufacturing his own ideas like *Ajamila* --somebody has taken, ‘This is my duty,’ somebody has...-- he is a fool. YOU MUST KNOW WHAT IS YOUR DUTY FROM GURU. You are singing every day *guru-mukha-padma-vakya*, *cittete koriya aikya*, *ar na koriho mane asa*. [‘My only wish is to have my consciousness purified by the words emanating from the lotus mouth of my spiritual master.’][This is life. This is life. *Guru-mukha-pad...* YOU ACCEPT THE BONA FIDE GURU, AND WHAT HE ORDERS YOU, CARRY OUT. THEN YOUR LIFE IS SUCCESSFUL.

[...]“This is the order. *Guru-mukha-padma-vakya*, *cittete koriya aikya*. Now *citta* means consciousness or heart. ‘I shall do this only, *bas*. My Guru Maharaja told me, I shall do this.’ *Cittete koriya aikya*, *ara na koriho mane asa*. So it is not my pride, but I can say, for your instruction, I did it. Therefore, whatever little success you see [I’ve had more] than all my Godbrothers, it is due to this. I HAVE NO CAPACITY, BUT I TOOK IT, THE WORDS OF MY GURU, AS LIFE AND SOUL. So this is fact. *Guru-mukha-padma-vakya*, *cittete koriya aikya*.

“Everyone should do that. But if he makes addition, alteration, then he is finished. No addition, alteration. YOU HAVE TO APPROACH GURU --GURU MEANS THE FAITHFUL SERVANT OF GOD, KRSNA-- AND TAKE HIS WORD HOW TO SERVE HIM. THEN YOU ARE SUCCESSFUL. If you concoct, ‘I am more intelligent than my guru and I can make addition or alteration,’ then you are finished.

[...]“*Sri-guru-carane rati*, *ei se uttama-gati*. If you want to make real progress then you must be firmly faithful at the lotus feet of guru.

[...]Je *prasade pure sarva asa*. [By the guru’s mercy all desires are fulfilled.][*Yasya prasada...* THIS IS THE INSTRUCTION IN THE WHOLE VAISNAVA PHILOSOPHY. SO UNLESS WE DO THAT, WE REMAIN MUDHA...”
(Lecture, Philadelphia 7/12/75)

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“We sing in our daily prayers, *yasya prasada bhagavat-prasado yasyaprasadan na gatih kuto 'pi* . By the pleasure of the spiritual master, one can get extraordinary power, especially in spiritual advancement. THE BLESSINGS OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER ARE MORE POWERFUL THAN ONE'S PERSONAL ENDEAVOR FOR SUCH ADVANCEMENT. Narottama dasa Thakura therefore says:

*guru-mukha-padma-vakya, cittete kariya aikya,
ara na kariha mane asa*

“Especially for spiritual advancement, one should carry out the bona fide order of the spiritual master. BY THE PARAMPARA SYSTEM, ONE CAN THUS BE ENDOWED WITH THE ORIGINAL SPIRITUAL POWER COMING FROM THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD (*evam parampara-praptam imam rajarsayo viduh*).” (SB 8.15.28)

“S.PRABHUPADA: ... Because you are rascal, you do not know. You learn it. One who knows the meaning. *Tad-vijnanartham sa gurum evabhigacchet*. You are fool, rascal. How can you know the meaning? You must have to go to the real person.

J: Who knows?

S.PRABHUPADA: Guru. Therefore we go to guru. *Tasmad gurum prapadyeta jijnasur sreya uttamam*. ONE WHO IS ACTUALLY SERIOUS ABOUT INQUIRING, HE MUST GO. GURUM PRAPADYETA. MUST SURRENDER TO GURU.

S: *Sabde pare ca nisnatam*.

S.PRABHUPADA: Ah. That is... Therefore there is guru. *Adu gurvasrayam*. If you know, want to know, FIRST OF ALL TAKE SHELTER OF GURU. THAT IS THE INJUNCTION.”

(Conversation, Mayapur 2/3/76)

“Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, *ei rupe bhramando bhramite kono bhagyavan jiva, guru krsna kr̥paya paya bhakti lata bija*. Krsna also says, *bahunam janmanam ante jnanavan mam prapadyate*. TO APPROACH KRSNA IS NOT SO EASY THING. AFTER MANY, MANY BIRTHS... WE ARE ROTATING... (Break)

Q. #1: *Is it really necessary to accept a guru...?*

“[...T]here are innumerable planets. That we can see. So we are wandering in all these places, sometimes down, sometimes up, sometimes in the middle, according to our karma, in different species of life, in different planets, in different position. So we are rotating. Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, ‘Out of these innumerable entities who are entrapped with this *brahmāṇḍa* and *janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyadhī...*’ *Mṛtyu-samsāra-vartmani*. Life after life, life after life, they are... That we do not know. This is called *mṛtyu-samsāra-vartmani*. You die, accept another body, another place, another situation, another position. This is going on. *Brahmaṇḍo bhramite*. And Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, ‘In this way, rotating, and IN COURSE OF OUR ROTATION, IF WE ARE FORTUNATE ENOUGH, THEN WE COME TO KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS.’ *Ei rupe brahmaṇḍo bhramite. Ei rupe brahmaṇḍo bhramite kono bhāgyavan*.”

“So to come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, it is meant for persons who are very, very fortunate, *kono bhāgyavan*. *Guru kṛṣṇa kṛpāya pāya bhakti lata bīja*. When one is very much eager, serious, that ‘I want to see God...’ Nobody’s serious. But IF ONE BECOMES SERIOUS, THEN KRSNA GIVES HIM CHARGE. HE SENDS HIM TO THE PROPER GURU.”

(Conversation, Hṛṣīkeśa 5/15/77)

“So KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT MEANS WE HAVE TO ACT EVERYTHING FOR KRSNA UNDER PROPER DIRECTION. We cannot manufacture that ‘I am doing for Kṛṣṇa.’ Then that is another misleading. Therefore we require the guidance of the spiritual master. Kṛṣṇa. *Guru kṛṣṇa kṛpāya*. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* [it is said] that YOU HAVE TO SEEK THE MERCY BOTH OF KRSNA AND GURU, NOT THAT YOU HAVE BECOME SO ADVANCED THAT YOU ARE DIRECTLY IN CONNECTION WITH KRSNA and whatever you are doing, it is mercy. No. Don’t think like that. IT MUST BE GUIDED, IT MUST BE CONFIRMED BY GURU. *Guru kṛṣṇa kṛpāya pāya bhakti lata bīja*.”

(Lecture, London 7/31/73)

“If you feel at all indebted to me then you should preach vigorously like me. That is the proper way to repay me. Of course no one can repay the debt to the spiritual master, but the spiritual master is very much pleased by such an attitude by the disciple. In the *Bhagavad-gīta* it is said: *vyavasāyatmika buddhir ekeha kuru-nandana*, “Those who are on this path are resolute in

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purpose, and their aim is one.” Our only business is to be fixed up in devotional service by pleasing the spiritual master. Those who are not fixed up they have various lines of action. (Eka means ‘one’ and bahu means ‘many’).

“The real ocean of mercy is Krsna and it is the duty of the spiritual master to tell his disciple to come to the ocean and be happy. The spiritual master’s duty is to lead the disciple to this ocean. I am trying my best and if you try to follow, surely you will benefit.

“Bhaktivinode Thakura has sung, *‘krsna sei tomara, krsna dite para, tomara sakati ache. Ami ta’kangala, krsna krsna boli, dhai tava pache pache.’* ‘Krsna is yours and you have the power to give Him to anyone you wish. I am poor and wretched and running behind you shouting Krsna Krsna!’

“Krsna is unlimited, no one can catch Him, but IF SOMEONE FOLLOWS THE PARAMPARA, He agrees to be captured. Everyone is afraid of Krsna, but Krsna is afraid of Mother Yasoda. That is Krsna’s special mercy.”

(Letter to the Residents of New Dvaraka 08/14/76)

The Guru and What Prabhupada Said (I n the Service of Iskcon)

The Guru and What Prabhupada Said (I n the Service of Iskcon)

Question Two

Some say that to chant is enough, that it does not require initiation, is it actually so?

“NO, THAT CHANTING OF HARE KRSNA DOES NOT MEAN WHIMSICAL. [...]OFFENSELESS –HE MUST BE PROPERLY INITIATED. IT DOES NOT MEAN THAT HE SHOULD NOT BE INITIATED AND CHANT. THAT IS NOT THE IDEA. You can –you must be initiated, either you are *grhastha*, *sannyasi* or *brahmacari*. NOT THAT WITHOUT BEING INITIATED YOU WHIMSICALLY CHANT AND THE EFFECT WILL BE THE SAME. NO, HE MUST BE INITIATED. ADAU GURV ASRAYAM. YOU MUST ACCEPT A GURU.” (Conv. Editors BTG, Mayapur 2/25/77)



“I am very much encouraged that you are all chanting Hare Krishna and trying to become Krishna Conscious. But I do not advise that you approach the matter of perfecting your life in this independent way. UNLESS THERE IS CONNECTION WITH A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, COMING IN THE LINE OF DISCIPIC SUCCESSION, THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF MAKING PROGRESS IN SPIRITUAL LIFE. So I have established ISKCON centers for the purpose of catching up the Lotus Feet of Krishna by intimate connection with the spiritual master. These are my authorized centers for that purpose. You say that whatever I instruct you you will carry out, so again my instruction is that you abandon this independent scheme and join your good god-brothers and sisters at some one of our ISKCON centers.” (Letter to Friends, 5/23/72)

“These boys and girls, European and Americans, they were not informed about the regulative principles in the beginning. We enforce the regulative principle when a student is serious to become initiated. Otherwise, ordinarily, in all our centers, everyone is welcome to join the chanting of

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Hare Krsna mantra. GRADUALLY, BY MIXING WITH THE DEVOTEES, BY BEING PURIFIED ON THE TRANSCENDENTAL VIBRATION OF HARE KRSNA MANTRA, THEY VOLUNTARILY OFFER TO BECOME SERIOUS STUDENT, INITIATED.” (NOD Lecture, Vrndavana 11/14/72)

“WHEN THE SPIRITUAL MASTER UTTERS THE HOLY NAME OF THE LORD, Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare, AT THAT TIME, the vibration enters into the ear of the disciple, and IF THE DISCIPLE RECEIVES THE HOLY NAME ACCORDING TO THE INSTRUCTION GIVEN BY THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, and with faith and reverence he places the Hare Krsna maha-mantra within his heart AND, AS INSTRUCTED AND GUIDED BY THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, he worships the holy name as good as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then the beginning of worshipment to the Lord immediately starts. In this way, when the disciple continues to worship the holy name of the Lord, the holy name, being Krsna Himself, by His own internal potency, expands His influence upon the person who is engaged in chanting the holy name.”

(Lecture, Seattle 10/21/68)

“Communion with the Lord by transmission of the transcendental sound is nondifferent from the whole spirit Lord Sri Krsna. It is a completely perfect method for approaching the Lord. By such pure contact with the Lord, without offense of material conceptions (numbering ten), the devotee can rise above the material plane to understand the inner meaning of the Vedic literatures, including the Lord’s existence in the transcendental realm. The Lord reveals His identity gradually to one who has unflinching faith, both in the spiritual master and in the Lord. After this, the devotee is endowed with mystic opulences, which are eight in number. And above all, the devotee is accepted in the confidential entourage of the Lord and is entrusted with specific service of the Lord through the agency of the spiritual master. A pure devotee is more interested in serving the Lord than in showing an exhibition of the mystic powers dormant in him. Sri Narada has explained all these from his personal experience, and one can obtain all the facilities which Sri Narada obtained by perfecting the chanting process of the sound representation of the Lord. THERE IS NO BAR FOR CHANTING THIS TRANSCENDENTAL SOUND BY ANYONE, PROVIDED IT IS RECEIVED THROUGH NARADA’S REPRESENTATIVE, COMING

Q. #2: *Some say that to chant is enough...?*

DOWN BY THE CHAIN OF DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, OR THE PARAMPARA SYSTEM.” (SB 1.5.39)

“I am very glad to hear you are following my instructions by chanting 16 rounds daily. In order to chant offenselessly, so that the chanting will have the greatest effect, one must avoid the four sinful activities. You have asked ‘How serious would it be for me if I should miss the golden opportunity to become your initiated disciple?’ YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT THE VALUE OF ACCEPTING A BONAFIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS MORE THAN WE CAN CALCULATE. IT IS NOT A MERE FORMALITY. Of course everyone is encouraged to chant Hare Krishna, but until one gives up sinful activities and becomes determined to serve Krishna through His representative then the firm fixing up of devotional service will not take hold, and there is every chance that one will fall prey to all sorts of material desires and have to come back again in the next life—and one cannot guarantee that he will be born in the form of life he may desire. “I know you have been attending our temple in Boston sometimes, and that you wish to be a sincere devotee of Krishna. So go on faithfully with you chanting and pray to Krishna to give you strength for advancing in His service. IT IS A FACT, HOWEVER THAT WE MUST BECOME FREE OF ALL MATERIAL DESIRE BEFORE GOING BACK TO GODHEAD, AND THIS CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED BY FOLLOWING THE INSTRUCTIONS OF A BONAFIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER.” (Letter to Ravendra Gupta, 2/12/74)

“The chanting Hare Krishna is our main business, that is real initiation. And AS YOU ARE ALL FOLLOWING MY INSTRUCTION, IN THAT MATTER, THE INITIATOR IS ALREADY THERE. Now the next initiation will be performed as a ceremony officially, OF COURSE THAT CEREMONY HAS VALUE BECAUSE THE NAME, HOLY NAME, WILL BE DELIVERED TO THE STUDENT FROM THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, it has got value, but in spite of that, as you are going on chanting, please go on with this business sincerely and Krishna willing, I may be coming to you very soon.” (Letter to Tamal Krishna, 8/19/68)

“[A] mantra should be received from the disciplic succession. The Vedic injunction is *sampradaya-vihina ye mantras te nisphala matah*. IF YOUR MANTRA DOES NOT COME THROUGH THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, IT WILL NOT BE EFFECTIVE. Mantras te nisphala. Nisphala means that it will not produce the desired result. So the mantra

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must be received through the proper channel, or it will not act. A mantra cannot be manufactured. It must come from the original Supreme Absolute, coming down through the channel of disciplic succession. It has to be received in that way, and only then will it act.”

(Search for Liberation, pgs. 17-18)

“In the beginning, we simply invite men to come and join us in the transcendental vibration by chanting Hare Krishna. We do not say that you pay me something and I give you this chanting. But this chanting is open without any secret, and we do not ask anyone to pay for it. But the chanting is transcendental, and therefore, simply by vibration, ONE GRADUALLY BECOMES SPIRITUALLY ADVANCED, AND THUS HE OFFERS HIMSELF TO BECOME MY DISCIPLE. In that discipleship also, I do not charge anything. Neither do I offer anything new. I offer the same Hare Krishna beads, but IT BECOMES SPIRITUALLY POWERFUL ON ACCOUNT OF BEING DELIVERED IN DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION. And practically we see that the students who are initiated in this way, they are advancing slowly and surely, and any one of my students can challenge any student of so-called yogis, and that is practical evidence.”

(Letter to Christopher, 7/13/68)

“To chant the holy name of the Lord, one need not depend upon other paraphernalia, for one can immediately get all the desired results of connecting or linking with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It may therefore be questioned WHY THERE IS A NECESSITY FOR INITIATION or further spiritual activities in devotional service for one who engages in the chanting of the holy name of the Lord. The answer is that although it is correct that one who fully engages in chanting the holy name need not depend upon the process of initiation, generally a devotee is addicted to many abominable material habits due to material contamination from his previous life. In order to get quick relief from all these contaminations, it is required that one engage in the worship of the Lord in the temple.

“THE WORSHIP OF THE DEITY IN THE TEMPLE IS ESSENTIAL to reduce one’s restlessness due to the contaminations of conditional life. Thus Narada, in his pancaratrici-vidhi, and other great sages have sometimes stressed that since every conditioned soul has a bodily concept of life aimed at sense enjoyment, to restrict this sense enjoyment the rules and regulations

Q. #2: *Some say that to chant is enough...?*

for worshipping the Deity in the temple are essential. Srila Rupa Gosvami has described that the holy name of the Lord can be chanted by liberated souls, but almost all the souls we have to initiate are conditioned. It is advised that one chant the holy name of the Lord WITHOUT OFFENSES and according to the regulative principles, yet due to their past bad habits they violate these rules and regulations. Thus the regulative principles for worship of the Deity are also simultaneously essential.” (C.c. Adi 7.76 ppt.)

“Somebody may argue that if the holy name of the Lord, or the maha-mantra, is so much powerful, then why there is necessity of formal initiation and other ritualistic function. So in answer to this question, Srila Jiva Gosvami has concluded that although A PERSON [THAT] IS CHANTING WITHOUT ANY OFFENSE THE HOLY NAME OF THE LORD DOES NOT REQUIRE TO BE INITIATED SEPARATELY, still, because the conditioned soul is presently situated within this contaminated body, it is sometimes found that he is addicted to some undesirable bad habits. As such in order to purify from such bad habits, great rsis like Narada and other sages, they have recommended in their books to chant gayatri mantra and bija mantra, although factually, by chanting the holy name of Krsna, everything is completed. In other words, both the processes should be followed side by side. But if the initiation mantra cannot be followed circumstantially, simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord OFFENSELESSLY, one can achieve the highest perfection.” (Lecture, Seattle 10/21/68)

“We should always, therefore, be careful in the matter of being attacked by *Maya*’s influence and the only means of guarantee is to chant Hare Krishna offenselessly. THE GREATEST OFFENSE IS TO DEFY THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND TO ACT SINFULLY, THINKING IN THE STRENGTH OF CHANTING.” (Letter to Woomapati, 11/23/67)

“Actually one who takes to chanting Hare Krsna Mantra OFFENSELESSLY immediately becomes situated transcendently and therefore HE HAS NO NEED OF BEING INITIATED WITH SACRED THREAD, but Guru Maharaj introduced this sacred thread because a Vaisnava was being mistaken as belonging to the material caste. To accept a Vaisnava in material caste system is hellish consideration (naraki buddhi). Therefore, to save the general populace from being offender to a Vaisnava, He persistently introduced this sacred thread ceremony and we must follow His footsteps.”

(Letter to Achyutananda, 11/14/70)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“...[T]he chanting of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra is so powerful that IT DOES NOT DEPEND ON OFFICIAL INITIATION, BUT IF ONE IS INITIATED AND ENGAGES IN PANCARATRA-VIDHI (DEITY WORSHIP), HIS KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS WILL AWAKEN VERY SOON, AND HIS IDENTIFICATION WITH THE MATERIAL WORLD WILL BE VANQUISHED. The more one is freed from material identification, the more one can realize that the spirit soul is qualitatively as good as the Supreme Soul. At such a time, when one is situated on the absolute platform, he can understand that the holy name of the Lord and the Lord Himself are identical. At that stage of realization, the holy name of the Lord, the Hare Krsna mantra, cannot be identified with any material sound. If one accepts the Hare Krsna maha-mantra as a material vibration, he falls down. One should worship and chant the holy name of the Lord by accepting it as the Lord Himself. ONE SHOULD THEREFORE BE INITIATED PROPERLY according to revealed scriptures under the direction of a bona fide spiritual master. Although chanting the holy name is good for both the conditioned and liberated soul, it is especially beneficial to the conditioned soul because by chanting it one is liberated. When a person who chants the holy name is liberated, he attains the ultimate perfection by returning home, back to Godhead. In the words of Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta (Adi 7.73):

krsna-mantra haite habe samsara-mocana

krsna-nama haite pabe krsnera carana

‘Simply by chanting the holy name of Krsna one can obtain freedom from material existence. Indeed, simply by chanting the Hare Krsna mantra one will be able to see the lotus feet of the Lord.’

“The OFFENSELESS chanting of the holy name does not depend on the initiation process. Although initiation may depend on *purascarya* or *purascarana*, the actual chanting of the holy name does not depend on *purascarya-vidhi*, or the regulative principles. If one chants the holy name once WITHOUT COMMITTING AN OFFENSE, he attains all success. During the chanting of the holy name, the tongue must work. Simply by chanting the holy name, one is immediately delivered. The tongue is *sevonmukha-jihva* –it is controlled by service. One whose tongue is engaged in tasting material things and also talking about them cannot use the tongue for absolute realization.

atah sri-krsna-namadi

Q. #2: *Some say that to chant is enough...?*

na bhaved grahyam indriyaih

sevonmukhe hi jihvadau

svayam eva sphuraty adah

“According to *Caitanya-caritamṛta* (Madhya 17.134):

ataeva kṛsnera “nama; “deha; “vilasa,

prakṛtendriya-grahya nahe, haya sva-prakasa

‘With these material senses, one cannot understand the transcendental holy name of the Lord or His form, activities and pastimes. However, when one actually engages in devotional service, utilizing the tongue, the Lord is revealed.’
(C.c. Madhya 15.108 ppt.)

The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)

Question Three

If someone is living in the temple, is there any difference between his being or not initiated?

“YES, THERE IS DEFINITELY A VAST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INITIATED AND NON-INITIATED. ONE WHO IS INITIATED IS AUTHORIZED, AND ONE WHO IS NOT INITIATED IS NOT AUTHORIZED. Just like, for example, Pradyumna is attending class in Sanskrit in a college, he is given chance to learn Sanskrit, but HE IS NOT EQUAL WITH THE REGULAR STUDENTS. One who becomes initiated is channelized to the authorities in the disciplic succession. One who isn't initiated may chant Hare Krishna (and should certainly be encouraged to do so) and serve in his own way, and GRADUALLY BY DOING SO HE MAY WANT TO BE INITIATED. But otherwise he may fall away from following the rules and regulations.” (Letter to Satsvarupa, 11/14/68)



The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)

Question Four

Prila Prabhupada, isn't this knowledge transcendental and, therefore, isn't it enough just to chant Hare Krishna, read your books and listen to your tapes?

“Suppose I have heard something from my spiritual master. So I speak to you the same thing. So this is *parampara* system. You cannot imagine what my spiritual master said. Or EVEN IF YOU READ SOME BOOKS YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND UNLESS YOU UNDERSTAND IT FROM ME. THIS IS CALLED PARAMPARA SYSTEM. YOU CANNOT JUMP OVER TO THE SUPERIOR GURU, NEGLECTING THE NEXT ACARYA, THE IMMEDIATE NEXT ACARYA.” (Lecture, Los Angeles 12/8/73)



“...[I]n order to receive the real message of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* one should approach the CURRENT LINK or spiritual master, in the chain of disciplic succession.” (S.B. 2.9.7)

“I: How does one contact the spiritual master? Through a book can you contact the spiritual master?”

S.PRABHUPADA: NO, YOU HAVE TO ASSOCIATE.

S: ‘Can you associate through a book?’ she asked.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes, through books, and also personal. Because when you make a spiritual master you have got personal touch. NOT THAT IN AIR YOU MAKE A SPIRITUAL MASTER. YOU MAKE A SPIRITUAL MASTER CONCRETE. So as soon as you make a spiritual master, you should be inquisitive.” (Lecture [Q&A], London 9/23/69)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

D1: Is there any way for a Christian to, without the help of a spiritual master, to reach the spiritual sky through believing in the words of Jesus Christ and trying to follow his teachings?

S.PRABHUPADA: I don't follow.

D2: Can a Christian in this age, without a spiritual master, but by reading the Bible and following Jesus's words, reach the...

S.PRABHUPADA: When you read Bible, you follow spiritual master. How can you say without? As soon as you read Bible, that means you are following the instruction of Lord Jesus Christ, that means you are following spiritual master. So where is the opportunity of being without spiritual master?

D1: I was referring to a living spiritual master.

S.PRABHUPADA: Spiritual master is not the question of... Spiritual master is eternal. Spiritual master is eternal. So your question is without spiritual master. WITHOUT SPIRITUAL MASTER YOU CANNOT BE, AT ANY STAGE OF YOUR LIFE. You may accept this spiritual master or that spiritual master. That is a different thing. But you have to accept. As you say that "by reading Bible," WHEN YOU READ BIBLE THAT MEANS YOU ARE FOLLOWING THE SPIRITUAL MASTER REPRESENTED BY SOME PRIEST OR SOME CLERGYMAN IN THE LINE OF LORD JESUS CHRIST. So in any case, you have to follow a spiritual master. There cannot be the question without spiritual master. Is that clear?

D1: I mean, like we couldn't understand the teachings of the *Bhagavad-gita* without your help, without your presentation.

S.PRABHUPADA: SIMILARLY YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND BIBLE WITH THE HELP OF THE PRIEST IN THE CHURCH."

(Lecture, Seattle 10/2/68)

"...[M]ental speculation or dry arguments cannot help lead one to the right path. NOR BY INDEPENDENT STUDY OF BOOKS OF KNOWLEDGE CAN ONE PROGRESS IN SPIRITUAL LIFE. One has to approach a bona fide spiritual master to receive the knowledge. Such a spiritual master should be accepted in full surrender, and one should serve the spiritual master like a menial servant, without false prestige. Satisfaction of the self-realized spiritual master is the secret of advancement in spiritual life." (Bg 4.34 ppt)

Q. #4: *Isn't it enough to chant, read your books and...?*

“Concerning your questions: Yes, it will help to read *Bhagavad-gita* but to have to hear from the realized person. WITHOUT THE HELP OF GURU, IF YOU READ INDEPENDENTLY, YOU MAY BE MISGUIDED.”

(Letter to Punjabi Premanand, 4/16/76)

“*Bhagavad-gita* is the widely read theistic science summarized in the Gita-mahatmya (Glorification of the Gita). There it says that one should read *Bhagavad-gita* very scrutinizingly WITH THE HELP OF A PERSON WHO IS A DEVOTEE OF SRI KRSNA AND TRY TO UNDERSTAND IT WITHOUT PERSONALLY MOTIVATED INTERPRETATIONS.”

(BG 1.1 ppt)

“SO BY STUDY OF SRIMAD BHAGAWATAM UNDER THE BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, one becomes aware of the full value of life, and then he revives his original Krishna consciousness. That is the perfection of life.”

(Letter to Swarupa Damodar, 8/31/75)

"So Suta Gosvami is offering respect to the spiritual master, Sukadeva Gosvami. When we offer respect to the spiritual master or anyone, we glorify his transcendental qualities. That is glorification. Just like we offer respect to Krsna, glorify Him. So this is very important process, glorify the spiritual master by his activities, what he is actually doing. That is glorification.

"So what Sukadeva did? *Svanubhavam*. He first of all heard from his father, Vyasadeva, *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, and realized it. Not a professional Bhagavata reciter. Just like in India now there are a class of men, especially in Vrndavana, the gosvamis. They make a business. Therefore there are many, many very artistic Bhagavata reciters, but they could not turn even one man to Krsna consciousness. Because they are not self-realized, *svanubhavam*. Of course, we have tried our best; so in few years there are so many Krsna conscious persons come out. This is the secret. Unless one is *svanubhavam*, self-realized, life is *bhagavata*, he cannot preach Bhagavata. That is not... That will not be effective. A gramophone will not help. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu's secretary, Svarupa Damodara, recommended, *bhagavata pora giya bhagavata-sthane*, that "IF YOU WANT TO READ SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM, YOU MUST APPROACH A PERSON WHO IS LIFE LIVING BHAGAVATA." *Bhagavata pora giya bhagavata-sthane*. Otherwise, there is no question of Bhagavata realization."

(Lecture, *Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.2.3 -- Rome, May 27, 1974)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“[...]Svarupa Damodara did not approve of the poetry to be presented to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. At that time, he chastised him that "You do not know the conclusion, and you dare to write some poetry. Don't do this." And he said, *bhagavata para giya bhagavata-sthane*:(?) "If you want to understand *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, then you go and study *Srimad-Bhagavatam* from the pure devotee. Then you'll understand. Otherwise, you'll write all these nonsense." *Bhagavata para giya bhagavata-sthane*. So one *bhagavata*... The two *bhagavatas*. YOU STUDY SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM FROM LIVING BHAGAVATA. SO IF ONE DOES NOT TAKE OR DOES NOT SURRENDER UNTO THE LIVING BHAGAVATA, HE CANNOT UNDERSTAND SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM. Many scholarly, learned scholars, Sanskrit scholars, they cannot understand *Bhagavatam*.”

(*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 2.3.23, Los Angeles, June 20, 1972)

“Another important feature in this connection is *anena yogena yathopadesam*. The instructions received from the spiritual master must be followed immediately. One should not deviate from or surpass the instructions of the spiritual master. ONE SHOULD NOT BE SIMPLY INTENT ON CONSULTING BOOKS but should simultaneously execute the spiritual master's order (*yathopadesam*).” (SB 5.5.14 ppt.)

S.PRABHUPADA: ...[Y]ou have to approach the right teacher, who will show you. In order to become a scientist you have to go to the university and find a professor who can instruct you.

DR.BENFORD: I could have done it by reading books.

S.PRABHUPADA: But a teacher is required also, or you cannot get your degree. Is it not?

DR.BENFORD: Yes.

S.PRABHUPADA: So, WHEN YOU WANT TO LEARN SOMETHING, YOU HAVE TO APPROACH A TEACHER...”

(*Consciousness: The Missing Link*, pg. 13)

“*Tarko apratisthah*. If you want to enter into the spiritual world, you cannot get through simply by arguments. Because there is no limit of argument. I place my argument in one way. Another man, who is better arguer, he places his argument in a different way. So if you simply go on arguing, it is not possible. *Tarko apratisthah*. It will never help you. Argument.

Q. #4: *Isn't it enough to chant, read your books and...?*

“*Srutayo vibhinna*. IF YOU THINK THAT ‘I SHALL READ SCRIPTURES AND I SHALL UNDERSTAND GOD,’ NO, THAT IS ALSO NOT POSSIBLE. *Srutayo vibhinna*. Scriptures are also different. Because scriptures are made according to time, circumstances, people. Just like Bible. Bible Lord Jesus Christ preached in the desert, Jerusalem. Or where it is? People who were not so advanced. Therefore his first instruction is ‘Thou shall not kill.’ That means they were very much engaged in killing affairs; otherwise, why is this instruction? And actually, it so happened that they killed Jesus Christ. So that society was not very enlightened society.

“...So IF YOU SIMPLY TRY TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IS GOD BY READING SCRIPTURES, YOU CANNOT ACHIEVE. YOU MUST APPROACH A GURU. Just like a medical book. It can be available in the market. If you purchase one medical book and study and you become doctor, that is not possible. You must hear the medical book from a medical man in the college, medical college. Then you will be qualified. And if you say, ‘Sir, I have read all the medical books. Recognize me as a medical practitioner,’ no, that will be not. So *srutayo vibhinna*. Scriptures are different.

(Lecture, London 9/23/69)

“*Tad-vijnanartham sa gurum eva abhigacchet*. This is Vedic injunction. IF YOU WANT TO BE LEARNED FULLY, ESPECIALLY IF YOU WANT TO LEARN THE TRANSCENDENTAL SCIENCE, GURUM EVA ABHIGACCHET, ONE MUST GO TO A GURU. *Guru*, the spiritual master, as well as the teacher, also *guru*. So HE MUST GO TO A GURU.

“*Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya*. AND GOING TO GURU WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO? PRANIPATENA, YOU HAVE TO FULLY SURRENDER. *Pariprasnena*. After surrendering then you can inquire, you can put question. Otherwise it is illegal. If you do not accept anybody as guru, then don't put question before him to waste his time and your time. This is the process. First of all find out whom you like to accept as guru, then put question.

“But sometimes we have to talk with persons who are not student, outsiders. That is preaching work. But *sastra* says that one should approach a guru, and with surrender ask him, and guru will talk with a person who is surrendered. Otherwise there is no necessity of talk. Because he will not accept. One who

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

has come to challenge the guru, so he will simply waste time. He will not accept. But a disciple who has surrendered, he will accept. Therefore talking is recommended between guru and disciple, not outsider. *Tad-vijnanartham sa gurum eva abhigacchet.* This is essential.” (Lecture, Dallas 7/29/75)

“IF YOU WANT TO KNOW THE TRUTH, then you have to follow these principles, how to know *isvara tattva*. And how to know? *Tad vijnanartham sa gurum eva abhigacchet.* Then you have to go, approach the bona fide guru. He will let you know. *Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya.* No challenge. That is foolishness. No challenge. *Pranipatena.* First of all surrender. YOU DON'T SURRENDER TO A FOOLISH MAN. BUT YOU HAVE TO SURRENDER.

“Now, it is your business to find out where to surrender. But you have to surrender. THIS IS THE PROCESS. WITHOUT SURRENDER, YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND THE TRUTH AS IT IS. THAT IS THE INSTRUCTION OF VEDAS EVERYWHERE. *Tasmad gurum prapadyeta jijnasuh sreya uttamam.* ‘One has to surrender to guru.’ Why? *Jijnasu:* ‘If you are inquisitive to know the Absolute Truth.’ And if you want to know something which is flickering, relative truth, that is another thing. But if you want to know the Absolute Truth, *sreyah uttamam...* Absolute Truth means ultimate benefit, *sreya*. Ultimate... Yes, exactly the word, benefit. If you want ultimate benefit, then *gurum prapadyeta.*

“Who is guru? *Sabde pare ca nisnatam brahmany upasamasrayan.* One who is expert in understanding the Vedic literature, *sabde, pare ca,* especially transcendental. So WE HAVE TO GO THROUGH LIKE THAT.”

(Lecture, Mayapur 4/5/75)

“Therefore our Vedic instruction is *sastra caksusat:* You should see through the *sastra*, not through these useless eyes. These are useless. *Tad-vijnanartham sa gurum evabhigacchet.* IN ORDER TO KNOW PERFECTLY, ONE SHOULD GO TO THE GURU. And *Bhagavad-gita* has said, *tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya, upadeksyanti tad jnanam jnaninas tattva- darsinah:* ‘One who has seen, go there and learn it.’ That is the injunction. DON'T TRY TO SEE YOURSELF. THAT IS FOOLISHNESS. This very word is used, *tattva-darsinah,* ‘one who has seen.’

Q. #4: *Isn't it enough to chant, read your books and...?*

YOU HAVE TO GO THERE AND SEE THROUGH HIS EYES, THROUGH HIS INSTRUCTION. THAT IS REAL SEEING."

(Lecture, Bombay 11/13/75)

"We are not creating anything. It is not a manufactured thing, concocted thing. It is standard. Followed by great acaryas like Caitanya. So we have to accept. That is the way. We have to become Krsna conscious, and follow, as the *sastra* says. Sometimes, as we... The law books are there. As we take help of a lawyer, how to utilize the law book, similarly YOU HAVE TO UTILIZE THE SCRIPTURES BY ACCEPTING A SPIRITUAL MASTER WHO CAN GUIDE YOU. He's a lawyer. This is the process. If you don't accept, then go on suffering. If you accept, then everything is there. That is the way of Krsna consciousness."

(Lecture, New York 11/24/66)

"EVERYTHING MUST BE EXECUTED UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF A GURU, NOT WHIMSICALLY, 'Oh, I have got my own idea, I have got my own God. I can do whatever I like.' This is simply waste of time. *Yah sastra-vidhim utsrjya vartate kama-karatah*. In the *Bhagavad-gita* it is said that 'Anyone who does not follow the instruction of the *sastra*, how things should be done,' *sastra-vidhim utsrjya vartate kama-karatah*, 'does things whimsically,' *na sukham navapnoti*, 'he will never get happiness.' *Yah sastra-vidhim utsrjya vartate kama-karatah, na sukham sa...*

"So everything should be done according to *sastra*. And THE SASTRA SHOULD BE GUIDED BY ACARYA, GURU. Acarya means one who knows what is there in the *sastra*. He practices in his life and teaches the disciple. He is called acarya. Acarya is not a whimsical thing. He must know. Therefore Pariksit Maharaja appointed acarya, *saradvatam*. He is the brother of Dronacarya. Dronacarya was also acarya, but he was military acarya. And here he was acarya for Vedic rituals, acarya. *Tad- vijnanartham sa gurum eva. Gurum krtya*. In order to do things very rightly, you must appoint... Just like if you are going to the court to file some suit, do it very nicely. You have to appoint a very good lawyer. Similarly, THESE VEDIC PRINCIPLES, THE VEDIC RITUALS, THEY SHOULD BE PERFORMED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF ACARYA, GURU, NOT WHIMSICALLY."

(Lecture, Los Angeles 12/31/73)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“Action in Krsna consciousness has to be executed in accord with the examples of previous bona fide devotees. This is recommended in the 15th verse. WHY SUCH ACTION SHOULD NOT BE INDEPENDENT will be explained in the text to follow.

“TO ACT IN KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS, ONE HAS TO FOLLOW THE LEADERSHIP OF AUTHORIZED PERSONS WHO ARE IN A LINE OF DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION as explained in the beginning of this chapter.”

(BG 4.16 ppt.)

“ONE CANNOT BE INDEPENDENT AND AT THE SAME TIME BECOME A DEVOTEE, BECAUSE ALL DEVOTIONAL ACTIVITIES ARE BASED ON SURRENDER. So in the association of devotees we learn this important item –how to surrender, but if we keep our independence and try to become devotees, that is not possible.” (Letter to Rayarama, 10/22/71)

“S.PRABHUPADA: Om tat sat. So the tat knowledge is recommended in the *Bhagavad-gita*, tad-viddhi. Tad viddhi pranipatena. Pranipatena. You understand pranipata? Surrendering.

I: Surrender.

S.PRABHUPADA: So tad viddhi. IF YOU WANT TO UNDERSTAND THAT TRANSCENDENTAL KNOWLEDGE, then you have to accept this process, pranipata. PRANIPATA MEANS SURRENDER, AND SURRENDER MEANS THERE MUST BE SOMEBODY TO WHOM YOU SURRENDER.

I: Whom you surrender, yes.

S.PRABHUPADA: There are two, NOT ALONE. So you cannot alone think of tat knowledge. YOU HAVE TO SURRENDER TO SOMEBODY. That is the process.

[...]

“Just like *Bhagavad-gita* says that *tad viddhi*: ‘You understand that transcendental knowledge by surrender.’ So if you do not surrender, there is no possibility.

I: But I might have surrendered myself to my own...

Q. #4: *Isn't it enough to chant, read your books and...?*

S.PRABHUPADA: That is another foolishness. You are thinking lower level, and how you can surrender to yourself? Then how you can get advance? Your surrender means to a superior person, as soon as you call surrender. And without this, there is no possibility. *Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya, upadeksyanti tad-jnanam jnaninas tattva-darsinam.* We have to accept these principles; otherwise how it can make the... There is no possibility. Just like if you want to be educated. YOU HAVE TO BE ADMITTED TO AN INSTITUTION, IN SCHOOL, IN A COLLEGE. IF YOU SAY, 'I SHALL BE EDUCATED AT HOME,' THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE.

I: Many have...

S.PRABHUPADA: No 'many.' This is the general process.

I: No, general process sometimes have failed.

S.PRABHUPADA: No, why fail? The schools are going on. Colleges are going on.

I: Therefore they are fearing also...

S.PRABHUPADA: Still, they are not closed.

I: Closed... Today they are coming to that.

S.PRABHUPADA: That is another theory. But the process is, our Vedic process, *tad-vijnanartham sa gurum eva abhigacchet*: 'In order to understand that knowledge ONE MUST APPROACH A SPIRITUAL MASTER.' 'Gacchet.' If you don't accept these principles, then how you can make progress? *Tasmad gurum prapadyeta jijnasur sreya uttamam.* If you don't accept this principle, there is no possibility. Then you can go on thinking in your own way. There is no question of going to anyone. You make yourself perfect by thinking, as many others are doing, speculating. That is possible but never to the perfectional point.

I: Perfectly, you see... What is the category of different perfection?

S.PRABHUPADA: That you have to learn. That you have to learn.

I: No, no, learn from whom?

S.PRABHUPADA: From the higher authority.

I: So how we know?

S.PRABHUPADA: That is another thing, who is higher authority. That you have to search out. That you have to search out.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

I: We must understand what is higher person and what is lower and whether Buddha is correct or not.

S.PRABHUPADA: Now, higher authority... Suppose we accept Kṛṣṇa as the higher authority. Our, this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, we accept Kṛṣṇa as the higher authority.

I: I mean, I am shown the form. You see...

S.PRABHUPADA: There is no question of shown. Kṛṣṇa is accepted higher authority not only by us by big acaryas like Sankaracarya, Ramanujacarya, Madhvacharya, those who are guiding our Vedic life in India, Caitanya. So Kṛṣṇa is accepted the highest authority. Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gita* says, *mattah parataram nasti*: 'There is no more higher authority than Me.' Then, if you don't accept Kṛṣṇa as the higher authority, that is your business, but we accept Kṛṣṇa as the higher authority.

[...]

S.PRABHUPADA: ...Therefore the Vedas says, *tad-vijnanartham*: 'In order to know that transcendental science,' *sa gurum evabhiṅgacchet*, 'HE MUST GO TO A GURU. HE MUST APPROACH.' A guru means not bogus guru. One who knows, expert. But one has to do that. THERE IS NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE. That is the injunction of every Vedic *sastra*. And this order is from the Kathopanisad.

"Then, on the *Bhagavad-gita* the same thing is said, *tad viddhi pranipatena*. PRANIPATA MEANS SURRENDER. Surrender where? Where to surrender? To a coolie? No, to a superior person, guru. Similarly, Bhagavata says, *tasmad gurum prapadyeta jijnasur sreya uttamam*: 'One who is inquisitive to understand the spiritual science,' *tasmad*, 'therefore,' *gurum prapadyeta*, 'must surrender to a guru.' Just our, this morning prayer is guru, beginning of life, beginning of day's work, FIRST WORSHIPING GURU. *Samsara-davanala-lidha-loka-tranaya-karunya-ghanaghanatvam, praptasya kalyana-gunarnavasya vande guroh sri-caranaravindam*.

"So in our, this Vedic way of life, TO ACCEPT GURU IS ESSENTIAL. Even big, big acarya... EVEN KṚṢṆA, HE ACCEPTED GURU, SANDIPANI MUNI. Lord Caitanya accepted guru, Isvara Puri. They are perfect, but still They are showing the ways because They are acarya. Kṛṣṇa is teaching, taking the part of the acarya, so he is also accepting, although the fact is as soon as [He] went to..., within a few days He learned everything.

Q. #4: Isn't it enough to chant, read your books and...?

That is stated in our Krsna Book. Within a few days He became expert warrior, expert magician, expert yogi, every..., so many things, all arts. But HE LEARNED FROM A GURU. He is perfect Himself, Krsna. He is called Yogesvara. He knows all the yoga process, but still, in order to teach us, because He is playing the part of a teacher, He shows us that you must learn from guru. 'I am learning from guru.'

“So ANY SCIENCE, YOU CANNOT LEARN IT AUTOMATICALLY BY YOURSELF. No, that is not. THEN WE SHALL CREATE SO MANY MENTAL SPECULATORS, SO MANY THINGS. That will be not a science. Even all scientists, they accept a formula from an authority: 'law of gravitation.' They accept it. Then their physical, so many things they discover. But accept one formula. Just like this formula is given by Sir Isaac Newton. So they accept guru. So from all practical point of view, the things which are unknown to us, we have to accept a guru, for things unknown to us. Now, there is another verse. Parabhavas tavad abodha-jatah. Abodha jatah. We are all born ignorant. Is it not? What do you think? Are we not born fools? Is it not?

[...]

S.PRABHUPADA: That is the process. So how can you deny to understand the supreme science –you can do it independently? No, that is not possible. Therefore it is the verb, the form, *gacchet*. It is called *vidhilin*. You know Sanskrit? Yes. This form of verb is... Perhaps you also know. *Gacchet, kuryat, gadyat*. These are *vidhilin*. *Vidhilin* means that is COMPULSORY. Is it not?

I3: Yes.

S.PRABHUPADA: He knows Sanskrit very well. COMPULSORY. Therefore it is said, *gacchet* –COMPULSORY. *Tad-vijnanartham*... Tat, the transcendental knowledge, *vijnana*, that is science. *Tad-vijnanartham sa gurum eva niscayate*. *Eva* is *niscayate*. EVA MEANS CERTAINLY. AND AGAIN GACCHET, 'MUST GO.' Now, just like to be educated, one must be admitted in a school, must be. Now, what kind of school he has to select, that is another thing, but he must. That's a fact. Similarly, YOU HAVE TO ACCEPT A GURU. NOW, WHOM YOU WILL ACCEPT AS GURU, THAT IS ANOTHER THING. BUT YOU HAVE TO DO IT. That is the injunction of all *sastras*. Vedic process is like that. This *upanayana*, the sacred thread, *upanayana*. *Upa* means 'near', and *nayana* means 'bringing'.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

Anayanam, coming or going, like that, *nayanam*. So 'to go near the spiritual master,' *upanayana*.

13: *Upanayana-samskara*.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. And that sacred thread is the certificate that he has accepted a spiritual master. That is our Vedic system, identity, thread, sacred thread. So the *samskara* is called *upanayana-samskara*. UPANAYANA MEANS HE HAS GONE NEAR THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. Therefore he is now *dvija*, second birth. When a person goes to the spiritual master, that is his second birth because he is born foolish. Take birth by the combination of father, mother—that is material birth—that is birth of ignorance, just like animals. The animals also take their birth in that way. There is no different process, the sex life. So what is the difference between animal and man? Therefore, *upanayana, dvija*.” (Conversation, Allahabad 1/17/71)

“S.PRABHUPADA: ...*Bhagavad-gita* says, *tad viddhi pranipatena*. Is it not? *Tad viddhi pranipatena*. YOU HAVE TO SURRENDER FIRST OF ALL.

V: SURRENDER TO WHOM?

S.PRABHUPADA: ANYONE WHEREFROM YOU ARE SEEKING KNOWLEDGE.

V: Ah! Surrender and...

VI: You lose your identity.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. FIRST OF ALL YOU HAVE TO FIND OUT A PERSON WHERE YOU CAN SURRENDER. THEN you can ask and you can seek knowledge. Otherwise there is no... Simply waste of time. Why should you waste your time? Why shall I waste my time? Are you surrendered to me? If you are not surrendered to me...

V: I, I...

S.PRABHUPADA: No, no. Stop this. Just try to understand. IF YOU ARE NOT SURRENDERED TO ME YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO ASK ME ANYTHING.” (Conversation Allahabad 1/18/71)

The Guru and What Parbhupada Said (I n the Service of Iskcon)

The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)

Question Five

Then, Srila Prabhupada, who is a bona fide, genuine guru?

“D: Then we will ask, how do we know who is really guru?”

S.PRABHUPADA: That is another rascaldom. YOU SEE HOW OTHERS ARE TAKING GURU, *parampara* system. You are rascal. You will place so many questions. But the answers are already there. *Evam parampara-praptam*. GURU IS HE WHO KNOWS KRSNA, WHO EXPLAINS KRSNA. THAT IS GURU. Otherwise he's not guru.

D: *Samit-pani srotriyam brahma-nistam*.

S.PRABHUPADA: Ah. ANYONE WHO IS KRSNA CONSCIOUS, WHO KNOWS KRSNA, HE IS GURU. Otherwise all rascals. Why should you go to a rascal? Immediately you can understand he is guru who has fully surrendered to Krsna. He is guru. Others? They are all rascals. Na mam duskrino mudha prapadyante naradhamah. Who has not surrendered to Krsna, he is under these four groups: duskrina, mudha, naradhama, *mayapahrta-jnana*. They may talk of so much knowledge but they are rascal fools because they have not surrendered to Krsna. All the *Mayavadis*, they are all rascals. They have not surrendered. This is the test.

“Why don't you take lesson from *Bhagavad-gita*? He is guru. ONE WHO HAS SURRENDERED TO KRSNA, ONE [WHO] IS SERVANT OF KRSNA, HE IS GURU. THAT IS THE TEST. If you want to select a guru, you have to see ‘Whether this person is fully surrendered to Krsna?’ Then he is guru. Huh? What is the definition of guru given by..? Why don't you read all these things? Why you remain fools and rascals? Why..? We are following Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, *amara ajnaya guru hana*. You become a guru. How? *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa*. That's a guru.



The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“Why don’t you see all these instructions? And you are presenting yourself as following Caitanya Mahaprabhu? Why? Answer! Why you remain fool and rascal? If you want to remain fool and rascal and question that is not very good. YOU MUST KNOW WHO IS GURU. And you say, ‘I do not know who is guru.’ Why? Hm? What is the answer? Guru is defined by Caitanya Mahaprabhu. We are chanting daily, sri krsna caitanya prabhu nityananda sri advaita gadadhara sri... Take their lesson. Otherwise why you are praying, sri krsna caitanya prabhu nityananda? You rather glorify Hitler or Mussolini. Make them guru. Everything is there. You cannot say that ‘I do not understand.’ Do not understand means you do not take.”

(Conversation, Mayapur 2/3/76)

“...BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER MEANS WHO CARRIES OUT THE ORDER OF HIGHER AUTHORITIES. Otherwise he is not spiritual master. Anyone who manufactures his own process of religion, that is rascaldom. Dharmam tu saksad bhagavat-pranitam. Just like lawyer, representative of the law, means who carries the order of the supreme executive. He is lawyer. Similarly, a spiritual master means who carries the order of superior authority. We are carrying the order of Caitanya Mahaprabhu or Krsna. Krsna taught this *Bhagavad-gita*, and He has said that ‘Anyone who will preach this confidential message of *Bhagavad-gita*, he is very dear to Me.’”

(Conversation Allahabad 1/18/71)

“Anyone who has preached Krsna consciousness, may be little differently according to time, circumstances, but anyone who has tried to preach God consciousness, he is guru. *Yei krsna tattva vetta sei guru haya*. That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s version. ANYONE WHO PREACHES ABOUT THE SUPREME LORD, HE IS GURU. May be in a different way according to time, circumstances.”

(Conversation, Bombay 9/30/75)

“The only stipulation is that the spiritual master be BONA FIDE, i.e., THE SPIRITUAL MASTER MUST BE IN THE PROPER CHAIN OF DISCIPIC SUCCESSION, CALLED THE PARAMPARA SYSTEM.”

(S.B. 3.7.39 ppt.)

“Regarding the Teachings in the temple; everyone of my disciples may become a teacher strictly following my instructions. I AM A BONA FIDE

Q. #5: Who is a bona fide, genuine guru...?

TEACHER AS LONG AS I FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS OF MY SPIRITUAL MASTER. That is the only one qualification for becoming a teacher. As soon as one deviates from this principle one is no longer a teacher.”
(Letter to Nandarani, 10/29/67)

“As I have repeatedly said, that Krishna Consciousness is developed by following two parallel lines, means service of Krishna, and service of the Spiritual Master. This is the secret of success. THE SPIRITUAL MASTER MUST BE BONA FIDE, THAT IS, HE MUST COME DOWN FROM A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND MUST ACT ACCORDING TO THE DIRECTIONS OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, and by doing so he gives proper directions about Krishna and the devotees serve Krishna under the direction of such Spiritual Master, and Krishna accepts service, and in this way the whole thing becomes beautiful and successful.”

(Letter to Brahmananda, 2/20/68)

“THE BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS he who has received the mercy of his guru, who in turn is bona fide because he has received the mercy of his guru. This is called the *parampara* system.”
(SB 8.16.24 ppt.)

“...THE GENUINE GURU IS GOD'S REPRESENTATIVE, AND HE SPEAKS ABOUT GOD AND NOTHING ELSE. THE GENUINE GURU IS HE WHO HAS NO INTEREST IN MATERIALISTIC LIFE. He is after God, and God only. That is one of the tests of a genuine guru: brahma-nistham. He is absorbed in the Absolute Truth. In the Mundaka Upanisad it is stated, *srotriyam brahma-nistham*: ‘The genuine guru is well versed in the scriptures and Vedic knowledge, and is completely dependent on Brahman.’ He should know what Brahman is and how to become situated in Brahman. These signs are given in the Vedic literature.

“As I said before, the real guru is God's representative. He represents the Supreme Lord, just as a viceroy represents a king. THE REAL GURU WILL NOT MANUFACTURE ANYTHING. Everything he says is in accordance with the scriptures and the previous acaryas. He will not give you a mantra and tell you that you will become God in six months. This is not a guru's

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

business. A guru's business is to canvass everyone to become a devotee of God. That is the sum and substance of a real guru's business. Indeed, he has no other business. He tells whomever he sees,

'Please become God conscious.' IF HE CANVASSES SOMEHOW OR OTHER ON BEHALF OF GOD AND TRIES TO GET EVERYONE TO BECOME A DEVOTEE OF GOD, HE IS A GENUINE GURU.

[...]

"What you have to do is simply try to understand what a genuine guru is. THE DEFINITION OF A GENUINE GURU IS THAT HE IS SIMPLY TALKING ABOUT GOD – THAT'S ALL. If he is talking about some other nonsense, then he is not a guru. A GURU CANNOT BE BAD. THERE IS NO QUESTION OF A BAD GURU, any more than a red guru or a white guru. GURU MEANS 'GENUINE GURU.' All we have to know is that the genuine guru is simply talking about God and trying to get people to become God's devotees. IF HE DOES THIS, HE IS GENUINE."

(SSR, II, "Saints and Swindlers", 4th. Printing, pg.71)

"Unfortunately, in this age of Kali there are many bogus gurus who display magic to their disciples, and many foolish disciples want to see such magic for material benefits. These disciples are not interested in pursuing spiritual life to save themselves from the darkness of ignorance. It is said:

*om ajnana-timirandhasya
jnananjanasalakaya
caksur unmilitam yena
tasmai sri-gurave namah*

'I was born in the darkest ignorance, and my spiritual master opened my eyes with the torch of knowledge. I offer my respectful obeisances unto him.' THIS GIVES THE DEFINITION OF THE GURU. Everyone is in the darkness of ignorance. Therefore everyone needs to be enlightened with transcendental knowledge. ONE WHO ENLIGHTENS HIS DISCIPLE AND SAVES HIM FROM ROTTING IN THE DARKNESS OF IGNORANCE IN THIS MATERIAL WORLD IS A TRUE GURU."

(SB 6.15.16 ppt.)

Q. #5: Who is a bona fide, genuine guru...?

“EITHER THE SUPREME LORD OR HIS REPRESENTATIVE CAN BECOME GURU. The Lord says, mam eva ye prapadyante *mayam* etam taranti te: ‘One can get relief from the clutches of *maya* as soon as he surrenders unto Me.’ Therefore it is the guru’s business to instruct his disciple to surrender to the Supreme Personality of Godhead if he wants relief from the material clutches. THIS IS THE SYMPTOM OF THE GURU. This same principle was instructed by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu: yare dekha, tare kaha ‘krsna’- upadesa. In other words, one is advised not to accept a guru who does not follow the path of instruction given by Lord Krsna.” (SB 8.24.50 ppt.)

“So tad viddhi. YOU HAVE TO FIRST OF ALL SEARCH OUT A PERSON. So Krsna recommends that if you want knowledge then first of all... THAT IS THE PROCESS, THE WHOLE VEDIC PROCESS. In the Kathopanisd also it is said that tad-vijnanartham gurum eva *abhigacchet*: ‘If you want to understand the transcendental science, then you have to approach to a spiritual master.’

“And WHO IS SPIRITUAL MASTER? Oh, nowadays everyone wants to be spiritual master. Oh, that is also mentioned, who is spiritual master. Samit-panih srotriyam brahma-nistham: ‘You have to approach a spiritual master who is srotriyam and brahma-nistham.’ Srotriyam means WHO HAS COME DOWN FROM THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, or from the Supreme. Just like we have understood in the Fourth Chapter, in the beginning of the Fourth Chapter, *evam parampara-praptam imam rajarsayo viduh*. There is a *parampara*; there is disciplic succession. So ONE WHO IS COMING INTO THAT DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION AND by coming from that disciplic succession, he IS FIRMLY CONVINCED IN THE ABSOLUTE, he is FIRMLY CONVERSANT IN THE ABSOLUTE TRUTH, HE IS GURU. TWO QUALIFICATIONS.”

(Lecture, BG 4.34, NY 8/12/66)

“Y: Isn’t there some conditioning between the guru and sisya, that, ‘The guru should be like this and a sisya should be like this.’

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

Y: Not that anybody can say, 'I am sisya,' and not anybody can say, 'I am guru.'

S.PRABHUPADA: Samsara-dava. You are singing daily. Samsara-davanala-lidha-loka-tranaya karunya-ghanaghanatvam. One who can deliver from this entanglement of material, miserable condition of life, he is guru. THAT IS THE FIRST DEFINITION OF GURU. Samsara-davanala-lidha-loka-tranaya karunya-ghanaghanatvam, praptasya kalyana—one who has obtained this qualification—vande guroh sri caranara..., he is guru.

Y: 'Cause nowadays...

S.PRABHUPADA: Nowadays... Nowadays let them talk all nonsense. But this is the definition of guru. 'Nowadays the sun is rising on the western side.' If somebody says like that, who is going to accept it? 'Nowadays.' There is no question of 'nowadays' and 'formerly.' The truth is truth always. Hare Krsna. That is Absolute Truth. Jaya." (Lecture Bombay 11/13/75)

"So become authority. That is... We said that. You become guru, authority. BUT YOU LEARN FIRST OF ALL AS CHELA [DISCIPLE] FROM THE GURU. AND THEN YOU BECOME GURU. And without any learning, without any..., how become a guru? That is going on. Everyone is self-made guru. That has to be stopped." (Conversation, Hrisikesa 5/12/77)

"Even though we may not have the fortune to contact the Supreme Lord personally, the Lord's representative is as good as the Lord Himself because such a representative does not say anything unless it is spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu therefore gives a definition of guru. *Yare dekha, tare kaha 'krsna'-upadesa*: the bona fide guru is he who advises his disciples exactly in accordance with the principles spoken by Krsna. THE BONA FIDE GURU IS HE WHO HAS ACCEPTED KRSNA AS GURU. This is the guru-parampara system.

Q. #5: Who is a bona fide, genuine guru...?

“The original guru is Vyasadeva because he is the speaker of *Bhagavad-gita* and *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, wherein everything spoken relates to Kṛṣṇa. Therefore guru-puja is known as Vyasa-puja. In the final analysis, the original guru is Kṛṣṇa, His disciple is Narada, whose disciple is Vyasa, and IN THIS WAY WE GRADUALLY COME IN TOUCH WITH THE GURU-PARAMPARA. One cannot become a guru if he does not know what the Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa or His incarnation wants. THE MISSION OF THE GURU IS THE MISSION OF THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD: TO SPREAD KṚSNA CONSCIOUSNESS ALL OVER THE WORLD.” (SB 8.24.48 ppt.)

“In the Vedic injunction also it is said, *yasya deve para bhaktir yatha deve tatha gurau*. If one has got unflinching faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, *yatha deve*, and similar faith in guru... Of course, we must make guru bona fide. Then it is disciplic succession. And THAT IS ALSO NOT VERY DIFFICULT TO SELECT WHO IS BONA FIDE GURU. BONA FIDE GURU MEANS HE PRESENTS HIMSELF AS SERVANT OF GOD. He does not pose himself falsely that ‘I am God.’ This is bona fide. It is not difficult to find out bona fide. But this is the test. If anyone says that ‘I am guru, I am God,’ then he cannot be guru. Because he has no knowledge. How he is God? But he can cheat some people. That is different thing. You can cheat all people for some time and some people for all time, but not all people for all time. That is not possible. So these kinds of guru, who poses himself that ‘I am God,’ he’s a false guru.

“THE BONA FIDE GURU WILL SAY THAT ‘I AM SERVANT OF THE SERVANT OF THE SERVANT OF KṚSNA,’ OR GOD. SERVANT OF. THAT IS THE BUSINESS OF GURU. He serves Kṛṣṇa as Kṛṣṇa desires; that is his business. That is also not very difficult. Kṛṣṇa says, Kṛṣṇa desires, *sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja*, that ‘You give up all other engagement, just surrender unto Me, and I’ll give you protection.’ Kṛṣṇa says. So guru’s business is that ‘You simply surrender to Kṛṣṇa.’ What is the difficulty? Simply repeat the same thing. Not for himself, but for Kṛṣṇa. He’s bona fide guru.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“So our this Krsna consciousness movement is very bona fide because we say the same thing as Krsna says. We don’t make any addition, alteration. Not like big scholars like, ‘It is not to Krsna...’ Krsna says, *man-mana bhava mad-bhakto mad-yaji mam namaskuru*, and the scholar interprets, ‘It is not to Krsna.’ Just see [the] foolishness. Krsna directly says, ‘unto Me.’ He says, ‘Not to Krsna.’ Misleading. Such misleading guru will not help you. So therefore to find out a BONA FIDE GURU MEANS THAT HE DOES NOT CHANGE THE WORDS OF KRSNA. That is his position. He places everything as it is and he has understood thoroughly the science. *Jijnasuh sreya uttamam*. Guru, what is the symptom of guru? *Tasmad gurum prapadyeta Jijnasuh sreya uttamam.*”
(Lecture, London 9/23/69)

“First of all, you have to know who is guru. If you accept one rascal as guru, how you can be helped? First thing is who is guru. That I have already explained. GURU IS HE WHO REPEATS THE WORDS OF KRSNA. He is guru. Otherwise he’s a rascal. This is the test.

“Krsna says that *Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya, upadeksyanti te jnanam jnaninas tattva darsinah*. So *tattva darsi*, ONE WHO HAS SEEN THE TRUTH, YOU HAVE TO ACCEPT HIM AS GURU. *Tattva darsi*. *Darsi* means who has practical experience.

“Take, for example, just like Arjuna. Arjuna is directly receiving the knowledge from Krsna. He’s guru. What he said, we accept that. But if you accept somebody who wants to kill Krsna and become himself Krsna, he’s a rascal. He’s not guru. Because his policy is to accept the place of Krsna, not to serve Him. That is *maya*. And Krsna has said very freely that *na mam duskrtino mudha prapadyante naradhamah mayayapahrta jnana asuram bhavam asritah*. A person who is imbibed with *asuric* tendency...

“*Asuric* tendency means to refute the Supreme Personality of Godhead. All the *asuras*... Just like Ravana. Ravana is described as *raksasa, asura*. What was his fault? His fault was that he did not care for Rama. ‘What is this Rama? Kidnap his wife, bring her, I shall enjoy.’ This is *raksasa*. So he could not enjoy Sita, but the result was, with his whole family, state, and himself,

Q. #5: Who is a bona fide, genuine guru...?

everything, he was ruined. This is *asura*. So those who are *asurim bhavam asritah*, followers of Ravana, Hiranyakasipu, Kamsa, they do not surrender to Krsna. *Na mam duskrntino mudhah prapadyante naradhamah mayayapahrta jnana asuram bhavam asritah*.

“So our simple method is to see whether somebody is speaking about Krsna or what Krsna has said. If he does not do so, then immediately accept him *asuram bhavam asritah*, a *raksasa*. How you can accept him as guru? A *raksasa*? That is your mistake. How can you accept a person as guru who has imbibed with *raksasa* [tendencies]. So then what is their position? *Duskrntina*. Very sinful. *Mudha*, rascal, ass. *Naradhamah*, lowest of the mankind. ‘No, he’s so educated.’ *Mayayapahrta jnana*. His so-called education has no value because *maya* has taken away the essence of... Because education means...

“Veda means knowledge. So the Vedas are there for education. So *vedais ca sarvair aham eva vedyo*. Ultimately Vedanta, Vedanta means the ultimate knowledge. The end of knowledge. The end of knowledge is to know Krsna. *Vedais ca sarvair aham eva vedyo*. So after studying Vedas, if he does not understand Krsna, then it is to be understood, *mayayapahrta jnana*, his knowledge has been taken away by *maya*. So simple thing is that Krsna is the original guru. *Mattah parataram nanyat kincid asti dhananjaya*. There is no more better guru than Krsna. So ANYONE WHO REPEATS THE WORDS OF KRSNA, TEACH OTHERS, HE IS GURU. Otherwise he’s a rascal.”

(B.G. Lecture, Toronto 6/20/76)

“Here it is stated, ‘It is, it is a fortunate person.’ Not the unfortunate. ‘It is the fortunate person who comes in contact with a bona fide spiritual master.’ This question, we were just discussing before coming to the class, HOW TO SELECT A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER. So THAT IS NOT VERY DIFFICULT. Just like in our ordinary business life, we accept somebody as representative of the firm who has actually come, canvassing for the benefit of the firm. He’s representative. Suppose he’s representing some book seller, publisher, so he should canvass for selling the books published by his firm. Not for anything else. Suppose he has taken the advantage of becoming representative of a business firm, but he’s doing his own business. He’s not bona fide. He’s not bona fide.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“So real guru is Krsna. Krsna... *Aham eva asam agre*. Krsna existed before the creation. Then He made His representative, Brahma. *Tene brahma hrda adi-kavaye*. He instructed the original guru, Brahma. Because there was no other living creature, except Brahma, in the beginning of creation, and He instructed Brahma. *Tene brahma hrda-adi-kavaye*. There are other versions in the Vedas, that He instructed Brahma. So therefore, the original guru is Krsna. The same guru, Krsna, is instructing Arjuna also. Krsna became guru of Arjuna. Arjuna accepted Him as guru. *Sisyas te 'ham*. Arjuna said, ‘Now I am not talking with you as friend, but I accept You as my guru.’ Therefore, by sastraic conclusion, Krsna is the original guru. Who can deny it? Krsna is *jagat-guru*. He’s guru of everyone, because everyone is accepting this authority of Krsna. Anyone who is accepting the authority of *Bhagavad-gita*, he’s accepting, imperceptibly, Krsna as guru. Therefore, BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER MEANS WHO IS REPRESENTING KRSNA. Who can deny it?

“So to find out a bona fide spiritual master is not a very difficult job. Because if one is representing guru, Krsna, then he must speak of Krsna, canvass for Krsna... So that is bona fide guru. Where is the difficulty to find out a bona fide guru. Just like Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, *yare dekha tare keha krsna upadesa*. Caitanya Mahaprabhu says that ‘You preach the words of Krsna.’ Therefore He’s bona fide. Similarly, ANYONE WHO IS REPRESENTING KRSNA, AND CANVASSING FOR KRSNA, HE’S BONA FIDE GURU. Where is the difficulty? Is there any difficulty? Anyone can understand that if Krsna is the original guru, and if somebody’s canvassing for Krsna, he’s bona fide guru. If somebody is canvassing for himself, he’s not bona fide guru.

“So THERE IS NO DIFFICULTY TO FIND OUT A BONA FIDE GURU PROVIDED I AM SERIOUS TO FIND OUT A BONA FIDE GURU. But if I want something else... Because *hrdy antah-stho hy abhadrani*. If in my heart there is something else, then I must be cheated by some, somebody else who is not a bona fide guru. *Ye yatha mam prapadyante tams tathaiva bhajamy aham*.

“So TO FIND OUT A BONA FIDE GURU, SPIRITUAL MASTER, IS NOT VERY DIFFICULT. IT IS VERY EASY. Krsna says explicitly, *evam*

Q. #5: Who is a bona fide, genuine guru...?

parampara-praptam imam rajarsayoh viduh. This knowledge, vedic knowledge, is received by *parampara* system. Just like Krsna said to sun-god, *imam vivasvate yogam proktavan aham avyayam, vivasvan manave praha manur iksvakave 'bravit, evam parampara-praptam imam rajarsayoh viduh.* Krsna said that 'This yoga system, first of all I explained to the sun-god, and he explained to his son, Manu, and Manu explained to his son, Iskvaku. In this way, by the *parampara* system, by the disciplic succession, the knowledge is coming.' *Sa kalena yoga-nastah parantapa.* But as soon as it began to be explained to others without being in the disciplic succession, in the chain of disciplic succession, speaking the same truth, it becomes broken. *Sa kalena yoga-nastah. Yoga-nastah.* It is spoiled. If one does not come in the disciplic succession, he'll spoil the teaching.

"That is being done. So-called commentator, teacher of *Bhagavad-gita*, he does not come in the disciplic succession. He is self-made guru. Therefore he's not guru. SELF-MADE GURU CANNOT BE GURU. HE MUST BE AUTHORIZED BY THE BONA FIDE GURU. THEN HE'S GURU. This is the fact. Nobody can be self-made anything. A medical practitioner, he cannot become self-made, that 'I have studied all the medical books in my home.' No. Have you ever gone to the medical college and taken instruction from the bona fide teachers? Then, if you have got the certificate, then you are medical practitioner. Similarly, bona fide guru means he must be authorized by the superior guru. Just like Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *amara ajnaya guru hane tara ei desa.* He must receive the order from the superior. And the superior must be bona fide. Then he's bona fide. Not self-made. *Tasmad gurum prapadyeta jijnasuh sreyah uttamam.* The direction is that one must go to a guru. But who is guru? *Sabde ca pare ca nisnatam brahmany upasamasrayam.* These are the descriptions."

(NOD Lecture, Vrndavana 10/31/72)

"Then what is... wherefrom I shall get the right information? That Vedas says, *tad-vijnanartham sa gurum eva abhigacchet.* If you want right information then go to the guru. And who is guru? That Caitanya Mahaprabhu explains that, *amara ajnaya guru hana.* He says, 'You just become guru on My order.' Guru means who carries the order of Krsna.

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Caitanya Mahaprabhu is Krsna. Who is Krsna's servant, that is guru. Nobody can become guru unless he carries the order of the Supreme.

“Therefore you will find... Because every one of us is an ass, we do not know what is our self-interest, and somebody comes, ‘I am guru.’ How you become guru? ‘No, I am self-perfected. I don't require to read any book. I have come to bless you.’ [laughter] And the foolish rascals they do not know, ‘How you can become guru?’ If he does not follow the *sastra* or the supreme authority Krsna, how he can become. But they accept guru. So this kind of guru is going on.

“But you should know that guru means who carries the order of the Supreme Lord, That is guru. Any rascal who manufactures some idea is not guru. Immediately kick him out. Immediately. He is a rascal, he is not a guru. Guru is here, as Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *amara ajnaya guru hana*. GURU MEANS THE FAITHFUL SERVANT OF GOD, THAT IS GURU. So you have to first of all test that ‘Are you faithful servant of God?’ If he says, ‘No, I am God,’ oh, kick him on his face immediately. [laughter] Kick him immediately that ‘You are rascal. You have come to cheat us.’ Because test is there that guru means faithful servant of God. Simple. You don't require large definition, what is guru.

“So Vedic knowledge gives you indication that *tad-vijnanartham*. If you want to know the science of spiritual life, *tad-vijnanartham sa gurum eva abhigacchet*, you must approach guru. And who is guru? Guru means who is the faithful servant of God. Very simple. So this is the position. Without guru if he is manufacturing his own way of life, then he is *mudha*, rascal.”

(Lecture, Philadelphia 7/12/75)

“[S]amsara *davanala-lidha-loka*. The whole material world is blazing fire. *Samsara davanala-lidha-loka-tranaya karunya-ghanaghanatvam*. Now, this *davanala*... Just like in the forest, you cannot send your fire brigade. That is not possible. Neither you can go there to help the animals for extinguishing the fire by bucketful of waters. That is also not possible. Helpless. Similarly, this *samsara davanala*, you cannot extinguish it. So how it will be

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extinguished? *Samsara davanalalidha-loka-tranaya karunya-ghanaghanatvam*. You have to beg for the mercy of Krsna; then this blazing fire can be extinguished, not by your arrangement. That is not possible. *Tranaya karunya-ghanaghanatvam*. That cloud is mercy cloud, not this ordinary cloud. Because davanala, the example, personal experience that on the hill of Nainital, some thousand feet high, how this fire will be extinguished? The extinguished it will be when there is cloud on the sky and there is rainfall. Otherwise it is not possible.

"Similarly, the mercy cloud, *karunya, karuna, ghanaghanatvam...* So just like ordinary cloud is made possible by evaporating water from the sea, similarly, Krsna has the sea of mercy, *karunayamaya, karuna-sagara*. Krsna's another name is *Karuna-sagara*. So as the air evaporate or the heat evaporate from the sea, and the cloud is formed in the sky, similarly, ONE WHO HAS CONNECTION OR THE POWER TO EVAPORATE THE MERCY SEA OF KRSNA, HE CAN EXTINGUISH THE SAMSARA DAVANALA. AND THAT IS GURU. GURU IS THE CLOUD OR HE IS THE AGENT OF DRYING WATER FROM THE OCEAN OF MERCY OF KRSNA AND TURN IT INTO A MERCY CLOUD AND POUR WATER ON THE SAMSARA DAVANALA, AND THEN IT IS EXTINGUISHED. *Samsara davanala-lidha-loka-tranaya karunya-ghanaghanatvam, praptasya kalyana*.

"THEREFORE GURU MUST BE AUTHORIZED PERSON, NOT THAT BHUMI-PHALA-GURU(?). NO. "I AM GURU," NO. YOU CANNOT BECOME GURU UNLESS YOU ARE AGENT TO DRAW OUT THE MERCY WATER FROM THE OCEAN OF MERCY OF KRSNA. THAT IS GURU. AND THEREFORE A GURU IS NOT AN ORDINARY PERSON. HE IS THE REPRESENTATIVE, BONA FIDE REPRESENTATIVE OF KRSNA. Bhaktivinoda Thakura has sung, *krsna se tomara, krsna dite para*: "Vaisnava Thakura, Krsna is your property. If you like, you can give." *Vedesu durlabham adurlabham atma-bhaktau* [Bs. 5.33]. You cannot get Krsna by studying Vedas. That is not possible. There is Krsna in the Vedas, but you cannot pick up. It is not possible. But if you go to the Krsna's favorite person... *Kintu prabhor yah priya eva tasya*. KRSNA'S VERY DEAR SERVANT, CONFIDENTIAL SERVANT, IS GURU. NOBODY CAN BECOME GURU UNLESS HE IS IN CONFIDENCE OF KRSNA. NA CA TASMAD MANUSYESU KASCID ME PRIYA-KRTTAMAH.

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THESE THINGS ARE THERE. NOT THAT BY MAGIC ONE CAN BECOME GURU. No. He must be...

“Samsara davanala-lidha-loka-tranaya karunya-ghanaghanatvam, praptasya kalyana. Everything is there in the sastra. WE HAVE TO SEE WHETHER A PERSON IS ACTUALLY BONA FIDE AGENT OF KRSNA. THEN WE ACCEPT HIM AS GURU. OTHERWISE USELESS WASTE OF TIME. Gurur apy avaliptasya karyakaryam ajanatah. Guru is very confidential serv... Saksad-dharitvena samasta-sastrair uktas tatha bhavyata eva sadbhih. Guru is saksad hari; there is no distinction between guru and Krsna. Just like if you have got some business with a very big man, when his representative comes, you treat him as the same person because he is authorized agent. That is natural. Just like in India during British days, the governor general, viceroy his name was viceroy so people treated him exactly like the king, viceroy, in place of the king. Although he was a servant, but still, the honor was given to him just like the king. His dress was like king. He was given honor like king. Wherever he would go, he was received like the king. But he is not king. He does not say that "I am king," but his honor is like the king. Saksad-dharitvena samasta-sastrair, uktah. It is said in our all..., that you sing always, vede gaya yahara carita. You read this verse daily. Guru-mukha..., vede gaya yahara car... What is that? Eh? Who can sing this?

“Gurudasa: Guru-mukha-padma-vakya, cittete kariya... Vede gaya jahara carito.

“Prabhupada: Hm. Vede gaya jahara carito. This is according to, strictly according to the version of the Ve... Saksad-dhari... You'll see. This is... Narottama dasa Thakura is singing, vede gaya yahara carita, and Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura, he is also singing, saksad-dharitvena samasta-sastraih. So there is no difference. NOT THAT ONE ACARYA WILL SAY, "I HAVE SEEN"SO-CALLED ACARYA, NOT REAL ACARYA"I HAVE SEEN IN DREAM." THE OTHER DAY THE LETTER CAME? HE HAS SEEN, REALIZED IN DREAM, NITAI-GAURA RADHE-SYAMA. THIS IS NOT THE PROCESS. PROCESS IS THE SASTRA, AUTHORITY. THAT IS... WE HAVE TO... NOT THAT JUGGLERY: "I HAVE SEEN IN DREAM. I HAVE TO BECOME GURU." No. Whether you are actually in terms of the sastra? Whether actually you are dear to Krsna, you are most confidential servant? That we have to test.

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"And what is the confidential servant of Krsna? Everything is explained. Krsna says, *ya imam paramam guhyam mad-bhaktessv abhidhasyati*. This *paramam guhyam*. What is that *paramam guhyam*? *Sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja* [Bg. 18.66]. This is *paramam guhyam*, Krsna said. *Guhyad guhyatamam*. What is that verse? Who can say? Just before saying, *sarva-dharman parityajya*, Krsna said that "You are My very dear friend. Therefore I am talking to you the most confidential part of knowledge." Is it not? What is that confidential part? *Sarva-dharman parityajya*: "Give up everything. Simply surrender unto Me." This is confidential knowledge. *Jnana, karma, yoga*, this will not help. It will take some time. You can waste your time in that way, you are at liberty, but real *dharma* is that "You fully surrender unto Me. Don't talk nonsense." Arjuna was talking so many nonsense things. So Krsna ultimately said, "My dear Arjuna, you are My confidential friend. Therefore I am asking you. You do this. Don't waste your time. It will not help." It will *help bahunam janmanam ante* [Bg. 7.19]. You can go on with your learning, with your study of Vedas, with your practice of yoga or ritualistic ceremonies, *karma-kanda, jnana-kanda*, but unless you come to this point *sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja* [Bg. 18.66] there is no happiness. That is not possible. This is the confidential...

"So if this confidential knowledge, one who preaches without any compromise, he is the confidential servant of Krsna. There is no compromise. This is real religion. The Krsna says, *na ca tasmad manusyessu kascid me priya-krttamah*. So this is the person who has received the authority to draw mercy water from the ocean of mercy of Krsna. *Saksad-dharitvena samasta-sastraih*. And what Krsna said five thousand years ago, the same thing Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, same thing. There was no change, as there was no change between the statement of Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura and Narottama dasa Thakura. *Sadhu sastra*. As *sastra*, there is no change. Not that "Modernize. The *sastra* should be changed." No. That is nonsense. That is not *sastra*. *Sastra* cannot be changed. "Circumstantially, it will be changed, seasonal changes." No. That is not *sastra*. *Sastra* means it is perpetual.

"What Krsna said five thousand years ago or Krsna said some forty millions of years ago to the sun god... Imam vivasvate yogam proktavan aham avyayam [Bg. 4.1]. He says, "I am talking to you that puratanam yogam." Not that "Because it has passed millions of years and now it is a different time, so I will

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have to change." No. He said, "I am talking to you that very old system." Is it not? Just see. THE SASTRA CANNOT BE CHANGED. GOD'S WORD CANNOT BE CHANGED. Then what will be the difference between God and ourself? He is always perfect. He is always perfect. What He said forty millions of years ago, what He said five thousand years ago, that is also correct up to date. THAT IS SASTRA. NOT THAT "SO MANY YEARS HAVE PASSED AND IT HAS BECOME OLD. NOW LET US REFORM IT AND PUT IT INTO NEW WAY." No. You can put the same thing in a new way, but you cannot change the principle. *Sadhu sastra guru-vakya, tinete kariya aikya. Sastra is never changed. And the sadhu... Sadhu means who follows the sastras. He is sadhu. He also does not change. Sadhu, sastra. And guru? Guru means who follows the sastra and sadhu. So there are three, the same. A GURU WILL NOT CHANGE, THAT "IT WAS SPOKEN FIVE THOUSAND YEARS AGO. THAT IS NOT APPLICABLE NOW. NOW I AM GIVING YOU SOMETHING NEW, JUGGLERY." HE IS USELESS. Sadhu sastra guru-vakya tinete kariya aikya. Yah sastra-vidhim utsrjya vartate kama karatah, na siddhim avapnoti [Bg. 16.23]."*

(Srimad-Bhagavatam 5.6.8 Vrndavana, November 30, 1976)

Question Six

Srila Prabhupada, couldn't I just surrender unto you or Paramatma within my heart?

“As already stated, Brahma is the original spiritual master for the universe, and since he was initiated by the Lord Himself, the message of *Srimad-Bhagavatam* is coming down by disciplic succession, and IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE REAL MESSAGE OF SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM ONE SHOULD APPROACH THE CURRENT LINK OR SPIRITUAL MASTER, IN THE CHAIN OF DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION. After being initiated by the proper spiritual master in that chain of succession, one should engage himself in the discharge of tapasya in the execution of devotional service.

“ONE SHOULD NOT, HOWEVER, THINK HIMSELF ON THE LEVEL OF BRAHMA TO BE INITIATED DIRECTLY BY THE LORD FROM INSIDE because in the present age no one can be accepted to be as pure as Brahma. The post of Brahma to officiate in the creation of the universe is offered to the most pure living being, and unless one is so qualified one cannot expect to be treated like Brahmaji directly. But one can have the same facility through unalloyed devotees of the Lord, through scriptural instructions (as revealed in the *Bhagavad-gita* and *Srimad-Bhagavatam* especially), and also through the bona fide spiritual master available to the sincere soul. The Lord Himself appears as the spiritual master to a person who is sincere in heart about serving the Lord. Therefore the bona fide spiritual master who happens to meet the sincere devotee should be accepted as the most confidential and beloved representative of the Lord. If a person is posted under the guidance of such a bona fide spiritual master, it may be accepted without any doubt that the desiring person has achieved the grace of the Lord.”



(SB 2.9.7 ppt.)

“This is called *parampara* system. The person who heard *Bhagavad-gita* directly from Krsna, whatever he says that is to be accepted. You cannot interpret. This is the *parampara* system. So if you want to understand

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Bhagavad-gita then we must understand in the same way as the person who directly heard from. This is called *parampara* system. Suppose I have heard something from my spiritual master. So I speak to you the same thing. So this is *parampara* system. You cannot imagine what my spiritual master said. OR EVEN IF YOU READ SOME BOOKS YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND UNLESS YOU UNDERSTAND IT FROM ME. THIS IS CALLED PARAMPARA SYSTEM. YOU CANNOT JUMP OVER TO THE SUPERIOR GURU, NEGLECTING THE NEXT ACARYA, THE IMMEDIATE NEXT ACARYA.” (Lecture, Los Angeles 12/8/73)

“It requires Kṛṣṇa’s grace to understand Him. So try to receive Kṛṣṇa’s grace through the disciplic succession, Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Then you will understand everything. *Yasya deve para bhaktir yatha deve tatha gurau*. This is the process, Vedic process. One should have unflinching faith in God and spiritual master. DON’T JUMP OVER [TO] GOD, CROSSING THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. THEN IT WILL BE FAILURE. YOU MUST GO THROUGH.

“We are observing Vyasa Puja ceremony, the birth anniversary of our Guru Maharaja. Why? We cannot understand Kṛṣṇa without spiritual master. That is bogus. IF ANYONE WANTS TO UNDERSTAND KṚṢṆA, JUMPING OVER THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, THEN IMMEDIATELY HE BECOMES A BOGUS. Therefore Caitanya Mahāprabhu says, *guru kṛṣṇa kṛpaya paya bhakti-lata bija*. That is Vedic injunction. *Tad viddhi pranīpatena pariprasnena sevaya*. Nobody can understand Kṛṣṇa without going through His most confidential servant.

“This is the meaning of this Vyasa Puja. YOU CANNOT SURPASS. IF YOU THINK THAT YOU HAVE BECOME VERY LEARNED AND VERY ADVANCED, NOW YOU CAN AVOID THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND YOU UNDERSTAND KṚṢṆA, THAT IS THE BOGUS. That is the meaning of this Vyasa Puja ceremony. We should always pray, *yasya prasada bhagavat-prasada*. *Yasya prasada*, only by the grace of spiritual master we can achieve the grace or mercy of Kṛṣṇa. This is the meaning of this Vyasa Puja, offering obeisances by *parampara* system.”

(S.Bhaktisiddhanta’s App. Day, 3/2/75)

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“One who has unflinching devotion for the Supreme Lord and is directed by the spiritual master can see the Supreme Personality of Godhead by revelation. FOR ONE WHO DOES NOT TAKE PERSONAL TRAINING UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO EVEN BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND KRSNA. The word tu is specifically used here to indicate that no other process can be used, can be recommended, or can be successful in understanding Krsna.”

(Bg. 11.54 ppt.)

D1: I remember one time Karttikeya Maharaja was chanting to a picture of Bhaktisiddhanta. You chastised him and said, ‘What is your connection with Bhaktisiddhanta? Your connection is with me.’

S.PRABHUPADA: Who said?

D1: You did.

D2: You did. I remember.

D1: When Karttikeya Maharaja was chanting to your guru maharaja’s picture, you said, ‘How you can connect with him? Your connection is with me.’”
(Conversation, Mayapur 2/3/76)

“D: Srila Prabhupada, there’s also a question of reciprocation. You have so many disciples –thousands–, and one devotee was asking me yesterday, ‘How does... I WANT TO PLEASE SRILA PRABHUPADA. How does he know my progress and my service, because I’m..., when I’m so far away from him and if I don’t write him?’

S.PRABHUPADA: So HIS REPRESENTATIVES ARE THERE, the president, the GBC. They will see.”
(Morning Walk, Mayapur 4/8/75)

“...THROUGH Caitanya Mahaprabhu you will understand what is the position of Krsna, what is your relationship with Krsna, what is the ultimate goal of life. These things will be clearly exhibited. And Sri *Caitanya-caritamrta* is written for this purpose, so that a person who is serious about Krsna consciousness may understand Krsna THROUGH the mercy of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. This is wanted. YOU CANNOT JUMP OVER Krsna consciousness without going THROUGH the mercy of Sri

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Caitanya Mahaprabhu. And to go THROUGH Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu means to go THROUGH the six Gosvamis. THIS IS PARAMPARA SYSTEM.

“Therefore Narottama Dasa Thakura says, *ei chay gosai jar – tar mui das, ta-sabara pada-renu mora panca-gras*. THIS IS PARAMPARA SYSTEM. YOU CANNOT JUMP OVER. YOU MUST GO THROUGH THE PARAMPARA SYSTEM. YOU HAVE TO APPROACH THROUGH YOUR SPIRITUAL MASTER to the Gosvamis, and THROUGH the Gosvamis you will have to approach Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, and THROUGH Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu you have to approach Krsna. THAT IS THE WAY.

“Therefore Narottama Dasa Thakura said, *ei chay gosai jar – tar mui das*. WE ARE SERVANT OF SERVANT. That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s instruction, *gopi-bhartuh pada-kamalayor dasa-dasanudasah*. THE MORE YOU BECOME SERVANT OF THE SERVANT, the more you are perfect. And if you all of a sudden want to become master, then you go to hell. That’s all. DON’T DO THAT. This is the teaching of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. IF YOU GO THROUGH THE SERVANT, SERVANT, SERVANT, THEN YOU ARE ADVANCED. And if you think that you have now become master, then you are going to hell. This is the process. *Dasa-dasanudasah*. Caitanya Mahaprabhu said.

“So SERVANT, SERVANT, SERVANT, A HUNDRED TIMES SERVANT NOW, that means he is advanced. He is advanced. And one who is becoming directly master, then he is in the hell.”

(Lecture, Cc Adi 1.4, Mayapur 3/28/75)

“Yes, whoever you tell the chant to, it is effective. You have heard it from me and my disciples, similarly I have heard it from my Guru Maharaj, and so on, and on. Because you have heard it from a pure devotee of the Lord, therefore it is transmitted from you to another. Just as an aerial message is transmitted from one place to another, similarly, this Guru *parampara* system is working. MY DISCIPLES ARE MY AGENTS, MY REPRESENTATIVES, SO BY

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HEARING IT FROM THEM, YOU ARE RECEIVING IT FROM ME. And because you are a sincere soul, those who are hearing the Mantra from you are receiving it in DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, FROM LORD CAITANYA AND FROM LORD KRISHNA.” (Letter to Andrea Temple, 3/6/68)

“Regarding your question, this surrender to Supersoul is in the advanced stage of Krishna Consciousness. SO LONG ONE IS NOT ADVANCED, HE HAS TO TAKE INFORMATION AND DIRECTION FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE OF SUPERSOUL OR THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. The spiritual master is external manifestation of the Super Soul. Thus the Lord helps the living entity, helps both from inside & outside.”

(Letter to Rupanuga, 2/22/72)

“Regarding your question of Paramatma: you are fortunate enough for your sincere service, Krishna as Paramatma Who is sitting within your heart is now dictating. Krishna is so kind that He wants to help us as Spiritual Master in two ways. He helps us from within as Chaitta Guru and He expands Himself externally as Siksha Guru (as instructor) and Diksha Guru (initiator). SO THE PRINCIPLE IS THAT WHATEVER YOU ARE INSTRUCTED BY THE CHAITTA GURU INTERNALLY MAY BE CONFIRMED BY THE INSTRUCTOR OR INITIATOR EXTERNALLY. Then your progress will be complete.” (Letter to Shivananda, 5/21/69)

“I am glad to learn that you are realizing about Krishna’s providing us with more and more facilities and that you are appreciating for my following purely the instructions of my Spiritual Master. Yes, that is the secret of success. In the Chaitanya Charitamrita it is said that one is successful in Krishna consciousness by the combined Mercy of the Spiritual Master and Krishna. By the Mercy of Krishna we come in contact with a bona fide Spiritual Master and by the Mercy of a bona fide Spiritual Master we can approach Krishna.

“So, BOTH OF THEM ARE CAUSE AND EFFECT OF EITHER OF THEM. Krishna is the original Spiritual Master known as Chaitya Guru and He manifests Himself as the Instructor Spiritual Master. So this principle of

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following Krishna and Guru simultaneously is the secret of success, and if you follow this policy in the chain of disciplic succession than there is no doubt about your final achievement.” (Letter to Jaya Pataka, 1/21/70)

“*Bhagavad-gita* was spoken directly by the Supreme Lord, and Arjuna accepted Krsna as guru, or spiritual master. Similarly, WE SHOULD ACCEPT ONLY KRSNA AS THE SUPREME SPIRITUAL MASTER. KRSNA, OF COURSE, MEANS KRSNA AND HIS CONFIDENTIAL DEVOTEES; KRSNA IS NOT ALONE. When we speak of Krsna, ‘Krsna’ means Krsna in His name, in His form, in His qualities, in His abode and in His associates. Krsna is never alone, for the devotees of Krsna are not impersonalists. For example, a king is always associated with his secretaries, his commander, his servant and so much paraphernalia. AS SOON AS WE ACCEPT KRSNA AND HIS ASSOCIATES AS OUR PRECEPTORS, NO ILL EFFECTS CAN DESTROY OUR KNOWLEDGE.” (SB 3.25.38)

“Even though we may not have the fortune to contact the Supreme Lord personally, THE LORD’S REPRESENTATIVE IS AS GOOD AS THE LORD HIMSELF because such a representative does not say anything unless it is spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu therefore gives a definition of guru. *Yare dekha, tare kaha ‘krsna’-upadesa*: the bona fide guru is he who advises his disciples exactly in accordance with the principles spoken by Krsna. THE BONA FIDE GURU IS HE WHO HAS ACCEPTED KRSNA AS GURU. This is the *guru-parampara* system.” (SB 8.24.48 ppt.)

“ONE CAN ACHIEVE THE ULTIMATE SUCCESS OF GOING BACK TO GODHEAD IF HE IS FAVORED BY THE LORD’S SENDING HIS TRUE REPRESENTATIVE. As soon as a true representative of the Lord is met by a devotee of the Lord, the devotee is assured a guarantee for going back to Godhead just after leaving the present body. This, however, depends on the sincerity of the devotee himself. THE LORD IS SEATED IN THE HEART of all living beings, and thus he knows very well the movements of all individual persons. As soon as the Lord finds that a particular soul is very eager to go back to Godhead, the Lord at once sends his bona fide representative. The sincere devotee is thus assured by the Lord of going back

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to Godhead. THE CONCLUSION IS THAT TO GET THE ASSISTANCE AND HELP OF A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER MEANS TO RECEIVE THE DIRECT HELP OF THE LORD HIMSELF.” (SB 1.19.36)

“There is a verse in the Bhagavad gita, tenth chapter, that anyone who serves the Lord sincerely with love and affection is certainly instructed by the Lord from within. THE LORD HELPS US IN TWO WAYS: INTERNALLY AS PARAMATMAN, AND EXTERNALLY AS SPIRITUAL MASTER. So I think your sincere activities are being appreciated by the Lord from within and He is dictating you all for advancement of Krishna Consciousness.”

(Letter to Janardan et al, 6/28/67)

“My sincere blessings are for you for your nice prosecution of Krishna Consciousness. Whatever you are doing at the present moment is approved by me and I think on account of your becoming a sincere soul, Krishna is dictating from within and you are doing things so nicely. There are two gurus—one internal and the other external. The internal Guru is Krishna Himself seated in everyone’s heart, and the external Guru is the Spiritual Master. So a sincere devotee is helped both externally and internally. To the sincere devotee the internal Guru Krishna dictates, but THE THING HAS TO BE CONFORMED BY THE EXTERNAL GURU THEN IT IS ALL RIGHT.”

(Letter to Kanchanbala, 1/14/68)

“So the idea is—you work sincerely on behalf of Krsna according to instructions of Lord Krsna in His great magnanimous form as Lord Caitanya. I know you are very intelligent and sincere servant of Krsna, so try to serve His Lordship to your best capacity and He shall give you proper intelligence. YOU KNOW THAT KRSNA IS SPIRITUAL MASTER FROM WITHIN AND SPIRITUAL MASTER IS MANIFESTATION OF KRSNA WITHOUT. That is the position; both ways a sincere student is instructed, which is called Guru-Krsna kripa. Simply you have to receive it properly and execute it orderly.”

(Letter to Jagadisha, 7/29/70)

“Regarding utilizing intelligence in devotional service, INTELLIGENCE SHOULD BE CONFIRMED BY THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. Therefore we accept the Spiritual Master for guidance. You should not depend on your

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own intelligence. Just like a child requires a parent to tell him the correct thing to do, similarly, a strict disciple should always use his intelligence in conformity with the instructions of the Spiritual Master.”

(Letter to Shivananda, 2/13/69)

“This knowledge cannot be imparted by anyone other than the Supreme Lord or His representative. In the *Caitanya-caritamṛta* Lord Caitanya instructs Rupa Gosvami that the living entities wander in life after life, undergoing the miserable conditions of material existence. But WHEN ONE IS VERY ANXIOUS TO GET FREE FROM THE MATERIAL ENTANGLEMENT, HE GETS ENLIGHTENMENT THROUGH A SPIRITUAL MASTER AND KRSNA. This means that Kṛṣṇa as the Supersoul is seated within the heart of the living entity, and WHEN THE LIVING ENTITY IS SERIOUS, THE LORD DIRECTS HIM TO TAKE SHELTER OF HIS REPRESENTATIVE, A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER. Directed from within and guided externally by the spiritual master, one attains the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which is the way out of the material clutches.

“Therefore there is no possibility of one’s being situated in his own position unless he is blessed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Unless he is enlightened with the supreme knowledge, one has to undergo the severe penalties of the hard struggle for existence in the material nature. THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS THEREFORE THE MERCY MANIFESTATION OF THE SUPREME PERSON. The conditioned soul has to take direct instruction from the spiritual master, and thus he gradually becomes enlightened to the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The seed of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is sown within the heart of the conditioned soul, and when one hears instruction from the spiritual master, the seed fructifies, and one’s life is blessed.” (SB 3.31.16)

“A VAISNAVA NEVER THINKS THAT HE HAS A DIRECT RELATIONSHIP WITH KRSNA. Lord Caitanya says, ‘I am the servant of the the servant of the servant –a hundred times the servant of the servant of Kṛṣṇa.’ We have to agree to become the servant of the servant

Q. #6: Couldn't I just surrender unto you or...?

of the servant. THIS IS THE PROCESS OF DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, and if one wants real transcendental love of God, then he has to adopt this process. Because people do not accept this process, they do not develop real love of God. They speak of God, but actually they do not love God; because there is no cultivation of pure devotional service, they love dog.”

(SSR, Ch.VIII, Approaching Krsna With Love, 1st. Prtng., pg.286)

“In regard to praying to Lord Nityananda Prabhu I have written to you in my last letter that such prayer is quite appropriate. Our only prayer should be in the matter of desiring further development of devotional service and SUCH SINCERE PRAYER SHOULD BE SUBMITTED NOT DIRECTLY TO THE LORD BUT THROUGH THE VIA-MEDIA OF HIS BONA FIDE SERVITOR OR REPRESENTATIVE.” (Letter to Madhudvisa, 2/14/70)

“[...]KRISHNA IS NEVER APPROACHED DIRECTLY. KRISHNA IS APPROACHED THROUGH HIS BONAFIDE SERVITORS. He says that, ‘Carrying out the order of My pure devotee is greater than carrying out that directly given by Me.’ In this connection, I may inform you that you try your best to serve Krishna under the direction of your Spiritual Master and Krishna will surely help you in all respects.” (Letter to Sudama, 1/8/70)

“I am feeling well here because the climate is warmer. I thank you very much for your acceptance of my guidance. My guidance means Krishna’s guidance. I am very poor and therefore I can pray only to Krishna for your guidance. Krishna is Absolute and we are all under His guidance, but the bona fide Spiritual Master is accepted as guidance because he is transparent via media between Krishna and the devotee. THE DEVOTEE HAS NO ACCESS TO KRISHNA WITHOUT THE VIA MEDIA.”

(Letter to Woomapati, 1/14/68)

“The pure devotee never attempts to reach the Supreme Lord directly. THE MOST IMPORTANT WAY TO WORSHIP THE LORD IS TO GO THROUGH THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION OF DEVOTEES.”

(SB 4.30.3)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“Your next question is, should we love Krishna or love the spiritual master: You cannot go to Krishna directly, loving Him. It is common sense that if Krishna is the object of your love, His pet dog is also the object of your love. Friends meet friends and if the friend is with his dog the gentleman pats his dog first, is it not? So the man becomes automatically pleased, his dog being patted. I have seen it in your country. THE CONCLUSION IS THIS: WITHOUT PLEASING THE SPIRITUAL MASTER HE CANNOT PLEASE KRISHNA. IF ANYONE TRIES TO PLEASE KRISNA DIRECTLY, HE’S FOOL NUMBER ONE.”

(Letter to Tusta Krishna, 12/14/72)

Question Seven

But, Srila Prabhupada, can just anyone be guru?

“THE GURU MUST BE SITUATED ON THE TOPMOST PLATFORM OF DEVOTIONAL SERVICE. There are three classes of devotees, and the guru must be accepted from the topmost class.... The *maha-bhagavata* is one who decorates his body with tilaka and whose name indicates him to be a servant of Krsna by the word *dasa*. He is also initiated by a bona fide spiritual master and is expert in worshipping the Deity, chanting mantras correctly, performing sacrifices, offering prayers to the Lord, and performing sankirtana. He knows how to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead and how to respect a Vaisnava. WHEN ONE HAS ATTAINED THE TOPMOST POSITION OF MAHA-BHAGAVATA, HE IS TO BE ACCEPTED AS A GURU AND WORSHIPED EXACTLY LIKE HARI, THE PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD. ONLY SUCH A PERSON IS ELIGIBLE TO OCCUPY THE POST OF A GURU.” (C.c. Madhya 24.330 ppt.)



“In this verse Srila Rupa Gosvami advises the devotee to be intelligent enough to distinguish between the *kanistha-adhikari*, *madhyama-adhikari* and *uttama-adhikari*. The devotee should also know his own position and should not try to imitate a devotee situated on a higher platform. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura has given some practical hints to the effect that an *uttama-adhikari* Vaisnava can be recognized by his ability to convert many fallen souls to Vaisnavism. ONE SHOULD NOT BECOME A SPIRITUAL MASTER UNLESS HE HAS ATTAINED THE PLATFORM OF UTTAMA-ADHIKARI. A neophyte Vaisnava or a Vaisnava situated on the intermediate platform can also accept disciples, but such disciples must be on the same platform, and it should be understood that they cannot advance very well toward the ultimate goal of life under his insufficient guidance.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

Therefore a disciple should be careful to accept an *uttama-adhikari* a spiritual master.

[...]“The *uttama-adhikari*, or highest devotee, is one who is very advanced in devotional service. An *uttama-adhikari* is not interested in blaspheming others, his heart is completely clean, and he has attained the realized state of unalloyed Krsna consciousness. According to Srila Rupa Gosvami, THE ASSOCIATION AND SERVICE OF SUCH A MAHA-BHAGAVATA, OR PERFECT VAISNAVA, ARE MOST DESIRABLE. ...When a neophyte devotee is actually initiated and engaged in devotional service by the orders of the spiritual master, he should be accepted immediately as a bona fide Vaisnava, and obeisances should be offered unto him. Out of many such Vaisnavas, one may be found to be very seriously engaged in the service of the Lord and strictly following all the regulative principles, chanting the prescribed number of rounds on japa beads and always thinking of how to expand the Krsna consciousness movement. Such a Vaisnava should be accepted as an *uttama-adhikari*, a highly advanced devotee, and his association should always be sought.” (NOI Text 5 ppt.)

“UNLESS ONE IS A RESIDENT OF KRISHNA LOKA, ONE CANNOT BE A SPIRITUAL MASTER. That is the first proposition. A layman cannot be a Spiritual Master, and if he becomes so then he will simply create disturbance. And who is a liberated person? One who knows Krishna. It is stated in BG, fourth chapter, anyone who knows Krishna in truth is immediately liberated, and after quitting the present body, he immediately goes to Krishna. That means he becomes a resident of Krishna Loka. As soon as one is liberated he is immediately a resident of Krishna Loka, and anyone who knows the truth of Krishna can become Spiritual Master. That is the version of Lord Caitanya. So to summarize the whole thing, it is to be understood that a bona fide Spiritual Master is a resident of Krishna Loka.

“Your next question, whether the Spiritual Master was formerly a conditioned soul, actually A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS NEVER A CONDITIONED SOUL. There are three kinds of liberated persons. They are called 1)sadhan siddha, 2)kripa siddha, and 3)nitya siddha. Sadhan siddha means one who has attained perfection by executing the regulative principles of devotional service. Kripa siddha means one who has

Q. #7: *Can just anyone be guru?*

attained perfection by the special mercy of Krishna and the Spiritual Master, and nitya siddha means one who was never contaminated. The symptoms of nitya siddha is that from the beginning of his life he is attached to Krishna, and he is never tired of rendering service to Krishna.

“So we have to know what is what by these symptoms. But when one is actually on the siddha platform there is no such distinction as to who is sadhan, kripa, or nitya siddha. When one is siddha, there is no distinction what is what. Just like when the river water glides down to the Atlantic Ocean nobody can distinguish which portion was the Hudson River or some other river. Neither is there any necessity to make any such distinction.

“Actually, every living entity is eternally uncontaminated, although he may be in the material touch. This is the version of the Vedas. *Asanga ayam purusha* –the living entity is uncontaminated. Just like when there is a drop of oil in water you can immediately distinguish the oil from the water, and the water never mixes with the oil. Similarly, a living entity, although in material contact, is always distinct from matter.

“You are correct when you say that when the Spiritual Master speaks it should be taken that Krishna is speaking. That is a fact. A SPIRITUAL MASTER MUST BE LIBERATED. It does not matter if he has come from Krishna Loka or he is liberated from here. But he must be liberated. The science of how one is liberated is explained above, but when one is liberated, there is no need of distinction whether he has come directly from Krishna Loka or from the material world. But in the broader sense everyone comes from Krishna Loka. When one forgets Krishna he is conditioned, when one remembers Krishna he is liberated. I hope this will clear up these points.”

(Letter to Mukunda 6/10/69)

“If Arjuna is on the same level with Krsna, and Krsna is not superior to Arjuna, then their relationship of instructor and instructed becomes meaningless. If both of them are deluded by the illusory energy (*maya*), then there is no need of one being the instructor and the other the instructed.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

Such instruction would be useless because, IN THE CLUTCHES OF MAYA, NO ONE CAN BE AN AUTHORITATIVE INSTRUCTOR.”

(BG 2.13 ppt.)

D1: I was recently told by one devotee that the acarya does not have to be a pure devotee.

S.PRABHUPADA: What?

D1: That the acarya does not have to be a pure devotee.

S.PRABHUPADA: Who is that rascal? Who said? ...Who is that rascal? The acarya does not require to be a pure devotee?

D1: Nitai said it. He said it in this context. He said that Lord Brahma is the acarya in the Brahma-sampradaya, but yet he is sometimes afflicted by passion. So therefore he is saying that it appears that the acarya does not have to be a pure devotee. So it does not seem right.

S.PRABHUPADA: So who is that rascal? I want to know who has said.

D1: Nitai. Nitai dasa.

D2: Our Nitai.

S.PRABHUPADA: Oh, our Nitai? Oh.

D1: He said he couldn't understand it, but he thought, he said that he thought...

S.PRABHUPADA: He manufactured his idea. Therefore he's a rascal. Therefore he's a rascal. Nitai has become an authority?

D1: No, actually he said that he thought...

S.PRABHUPADA: He thought something rascaldom, and he is expressing that. Therefore he is more rascal. These things are going on. As soon as he reads some books, he becomes an acarya, whatever rascal he may be.

D1: So there's no doubt that Lord Brahma is a pure devotee?

S.PRABHUPADA: Whatever he may be, he is acarya. So you... Then Krsna is also passionate. Krsna is also passionate. Krsna danced with so many gopis; therefore He is passionate. They... These things are to be seen in this way, that 'Such exalted person, he sometimes become passionate, so how much we shall be careful.' This is the instruction. Then we, petty things, petty persons,

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how much we shall be careful. It is not that ‘Acarya has become passionate, therefore I shall become passionate. I am strict follower of acarya.’ These rascals say.

D3: So Lord Brahma’s being attracted to his daughter, that is just as an example...

S.PRABHUPADA: So why you discuss this? Therefore you shall be attracted with your daughter, mother? Do you think so, like that?

D1: No.

I: In this world this is our disease. This is our disease.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. That disease... Brahma... Lord Siva also, he was attracted to the Mohini. So they are isvara. They are controllers. So the instruction is that even such personalities may be sexually attracted, so how much we shall remain careful. This is the instruction.”

(Morning Walk, Vrndavana 12/10/75)

“As for your next question, can only a few pure devotees deliver others, anyone, if he is a pure devotee he can deliver others, he can become spiritual master. But UNLESS HE IS ON THAT PLATFORM HE SHOULD NOT ATTEMPT IT. Then both of them will go to hell, like blind men leading the blind.”

(Letter to Tusta Krishna, 12/14/72)

“The spiritual master outside and the spiritual master within are both representations of the Lord. UNLESS ONE HAS CONTACT WITH SUCH BONA FIDE REPRESENTATIONS, ONE CANNOT CLAIM TO BE A SPIRITUAL MASTER.”

(SB 3.9.2)

“UNLESS ONE IS SELF-REALIZED AND KNOWS WHAT HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SUPERSOUL IS, HE CANNOT BE A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER.”

(SB 3.28.2)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“S.PRABHUPADA: Now, our point is that if you are not liberated how you can become leader? That is cheating.

D.P.: This is the... The political, socio-political... I don't know the sort of...

S.PRABHUPADA: Our point is that IF YOU DO NOT GET KNOWLEDGE FROM LIBERATED PERSON, THAT KNOWLEDGE IS USELESS. THAT IS CHEATING.

[...]

THUS, WITHOUT BEING LIBERATED, NOBODY CAN GUIDE ANYONE. THAT IS USELESS. That is andha yathandhair upaniyamana. If you have no eyes, then how can you lead others? You are blind and they are blind, what is the use of becoming their leaders? Actually all the so-called leaders and scholar, they are blind themselves and they have become big, big leader. That is the misfortune of the present life. And, therefore our proposition is you take direction from Krsna and His representative. That's all. That will help you. Try to understand this point.”

(Morning Walk, Bombay 1/4/77)

Question Eight

But then, Srila Prabhupada, who were you expecting would be guru after your departure?

“ONE WHO IS NOW THE DISCIPLE IS THE NEXT SPIRITUAL MASTER. And one cannot be a bona fide and authorized spiritual master unless one has been strictly obedient to his spiritual master.” (SB 2.9.43)

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“ALL OF MY DISCIPLES WILL TAKE THE LEGACY. If you want, you can also take it. Sacrifice everything. I –one– may soon pass away. But they are hundreds, and this movement will increase. It’s not that I’ll give an order: ‘Here is the next leader.’ Anyone who follows the previous leadership is a leader. I don’t make any distinction between Indian and European. All my disciples are leaders... as much as they follow purely. If you want to follow, then you can also lead. But you don’t want to follow. ‘Leader’ means one who is a first-class disciple. Evam *parampara*-praptam. One who is perfectly following. Our instruction is, *guru-mukha-padma-vakya*. *Do you know this? Ara na kariha mane asa* [‘My only wish is to have my consciousness purified by the words emanating from the lotus mouth of my spiritual master’]. To become a leader is not very difficult, provided one is prepared to follow the instructions of the bona fide guru.”



(BTG Vol.13, No.1-2, 1978)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

THE LAST MENTION OF THE TOPIC OF INITIATIONS --
VRNDAVANA, OCTOBER 18, 1977 (*Commented in the Introduction*)

Prabhupada: Hare Krsna. One Bengali gentleman has come from New York?

Tamala Krsna: Yes. Mr. Sukamal Roy Chowdury.

Prabhupada: SO I HAVE DEPUTED SOME OF YOU TO INITIATE. Hm?

Tamala Krsna: Yes. Actually... Yes, Srila Prabhupada.

Prabhupada: So I think Jayapataka can do that if he likes. I HAVE ALREADY DEPUTED. Tell him.

Tamala Krsna: Yes.

Prabhupada: So, DEPUTIES, Jayapataka's name was there?

Bhagavan: It is already on there, Srila Prabhupada. His name was on THAT LIST.

Prabhupada: So I DEPUTE HIM to do this at Mayapura, and you may go with him. I STOP FOR THE TIME BEING. Is that all right?

Tamala Krsna: STOPPED DOING WHAT, SRILA PRABHUPADA?

Prabhupada: THIS INITIATION. I HAVE DEPUTED THE, MY DISCIPLES. IS IT CLEAR OR NOT?

Giriraja: It's clear.

Prabhupada: You have got THE LIST OF THE NAMES?

Tamala Krsna: Yes, Srila Prabhupada.

Prabhupada: And IF BY KRSNA'S GRACE I RECOVER FROM THIS CONDITION, THEN I SHALL BEGIN AGAIN, OR I MAY NOT BE PRESSED IN THIS CONDITION TO INITIATE. IT IS NOT GOOD.

(Room Conversation – October 18, 1977, Vrndavana)

THE LIST OF NAMES OF THOSE DEPUTED – VRNDAVANA, July 7,
1977 (*Commented in the Introduction*)

Prabhupada: You can note down these names.

Tamala Krsna: Yes, I have them.

Q. #8: Who were you expecting to be guru after you?

Prabhupada: Who are they?

Tamala Krsna: Kirtanananda Maharaja, Satsvarupa Maharaja, Jayatirtha Prabhu, Bhagavan Prabhu, Harikesa Maharaja, Jayapataka Maharaja and Tamala Krsna Maharaja.

Prabhupada: That's nice. Now you distribute.

Tamala Krsna: Seven. There's seven names.

Prabhupada: For the time being, seven names, sufficient. You can make Ramesvara.

Tamala Krsna: Ramesvara Maharaja.

Prabhupada: And Hrdayananda.

Tamala Krsna: Oh, yeah. South America.

Prabhupada: So without waiting for me, wherever you consider it is right... That will depend on discretion.

Tamala Krsna: On discretion.

Prabhupada: Yes.

Tamala Krsna: That's for first and second initiations.

Prabhupada: Hm.

(Room Conversations, July 7, 1977, Vrndavana)

“THIS IS VERY EASY. So I am not a scholar. I am simply...Whatever is said there, I am trying to distribute in a palatable way. That's all. It is not my manufacture. And that is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's... *Amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa*. YOU ALL BECOME GURU. 'How can I become guru? I have no education. I have no knowledge.' No, you haven't got to acquire all these things. That is already...*Yare dekha tare kaha*. Finished. So I never tried to become a scholar. But I tried. Whatever is spoken by Krsna, deliver. That's all. And that is guru.”
(Conversation, Vrndavana 6/26/77)

THE OFFICIAL MEETING WITH GBCS -- VRINDAVANA, MAY 28,
1977 (Commented in the Introduction)

“GBCI:...Then our next question concerns initiations in the future, particularly at that time when you're no longer with us. We want to know how first and second initiation would be conducted.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. I SHALL RECOMMEND SOME OF YOU. After this is settled up, I shall recommend some of you to act as officiating acaryas.

GBC2: Is that called rtvik acarya?

S.PRABHUPADA: Rtvik, yes.

GBC1: Then what is the relationship of that person who gives the initiation and the...

S.PRABHUPADA: HE'S GURU. HE'S GURU.

GBC1: But he does it on your behalf.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. That is formality. Because in my presence one should not become guru, so ON MY BEHALF, ON MY ORDER... *Amara ajnana guru hana*. HE'S ACTUALLY GURU, BUT BY MY ORDER.

GBC1: So they may also be considered your disciples.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes, they are disciples. Why consider? Who?

GBC2: No, he's asking that these rtvik acaryas, they're officiating, giving diksa. Their... The people who they give diksa to, whose disciple are they?

S.PRABHUPADA: THEY'RE HIS DISCIPLE.

GBC2: They're his disciple.

S.PRABHUPADA: WHO IS INITIATING. He's GRANDDISCIPLE.

GBC1: Yes.

GBC2: That's clear.

GBC1: Then we have a question concer...

S.PRABHUPADA: When I order, 'You become guru,' he becomes REGULAR guru. THAT'S ALL. HE BECOMES DISCIPLE OF MY DISCIPLE. THAT'S IT.

[..]And Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *amara ajnaya guru hana*. One who can understand the order of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, he can become guru. Or ONE WHO UNDERSTANDS HIS GURU'S ORDER, the same *parampara*, HE CAN BECOME GURU. And therefore I SHALL SELECT SOME OF YOU." (Meeting with GBCs, Vrindavana 5/28/77)

"D: How can we be happy when you're not well?"

S.PRABHUPADA: Hm? Hm?

Q. #8: *Who were you expecting to be guru after you?*

D: We can't be happy if you're not well.

S.PRABHUPADA: I am always well.

D: Why can't you give us your old age?

S.PRABHUPADA: When I see that things are going on nicely, I am happy. What is this with this body? Body is body. We are not body.

D: Wasn't it Purudasa that gave his father his youth?

S.PRABHUPADA: Hm?

D1: Yayati. King Yayati traded his old age.

D: With his son. You can do that.

S.PRABHUPADA: (Laughs) Who did?

D1: King Yayati.

S.PRABHUPADA: Ah. Yayati. No, why? YOU ARE MY BODY. SO YOU LIVE ON. THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE. Just like I am working, so my guru maharaja is there, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati. Physically he may not be, but in every action he is there. I think actually I have written that.

D2: Yeah, it's in the *Bhagavatam*, that 'He who lives with him, he lives eternally. He who remembers his words lives eternally.'

S.PRABHUPADA: So I am not going to die. *Kirtir yasya sa jivati*: 'One who has done something substantial, he lives forever.' He doesn't die. Even in our practical life... Of course, this is material, *karma-phala*. One has to accept another body according to his karma. But for devotee there is no such thing. He always accepts a body for serving Krsna. So there is no *karma-phala*."

(Conversation, Vrndavana 5/27/77)

"We simply repeat. That is our business. We are not learned scholars, but our mission is to repeat the words of Krsna. That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's order. He says, *amara ajnaya guru hana tara' ei desa* [Cc. Madhya 7.128]: "You become guru." "Now, how shall I become guru? I am neither learned nor Vedantist, neither *sannyasi*. How can I become guru?" "No, no, you have no difficulty. You, on My order, become guru simply..." *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa*. Bas. "You become guru. Whomever you meet, you simply try to convince him what Krsna has spoken. Then you become guru." So we request everyone the same thing. And BECOME GURU. IT IS VERY URGENTLY NECESSARY. People are becoming godless, atheist,

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

nonbelievers, and they are suffering. So every village, every home, every neighborhood, they require guru. But who will be guru? One who repeats the instruction of Krsna. *Yare dekha tare kaha*. IT IS VERY EASY.”

(Evening Darsana -- May 12, 1977, Hrishikesh)

“We repeat. We don’t manufacture. What is the use of manufacturing? I am imperfect. Whatever I manufacture, that is imperfect. So better to repeat the words of the perfect. That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s mission. HE SAID, ‘EVERY ONE OF YOU BECOME GURU AND DELIVER YOUR SURROUNDING PERSONS, EITHER YOU ARE IN FAMILY OR IN NEIGHBORHOOD OR IN SOCIETY OR IN NATION, AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.’ *Amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa*. So whatever limited circle, YOU JUST BECOME GURU AND DELIVER THEM.”

(Conversation, Hrisikesa 5/11/77)

“That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission, that "You become guru, everyone." [break] You simply repeat. Don't misinterpret. Boliye. THIS IS CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU'S... EVERY ONE OF YOU BECOME A GURU, NOT A BLUFFER, BUT A GURU, REAL GURU. "How real guru? I can become? I have no qualification." *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa* [Cc. Madhya 7.128]: "You simply take the words of Krsna and preach." Krsna says, *mattah parataram nanyat* [Bg. 7.7]. You simply repeat, "Sir, Krsna is the Supreme Being, God." What is the difficulty? Krsna says, "There is no superior authority than Me." You simply say, "Krsna is the supreme authority." That's all. Krsna says, *man-mana bhava mad-bhaktto mad-yaji mam...* You preach, "Come here in the temple. See Krsna's Deity and always think of Him." Where is the difficulty?" (Evening Darsana -- May 9, 1977, Hrishikesh)

“OUR CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU’S MISSION IS THAT ‘YOU BECOME GURU,’ as I was telling, ‘AND TEACH, DELIVER PERSONS WHERE YOU ARE.’ If you say, ‘How can I become guru?,’ there is no difficulty. SIMPLY REPEAT THE WORDS OF BHAGAVAD-GITA. THAT’S ALL. YOU BECOME GURU. SO OUR MISSION IS TO CREATE REAL GURU, NOT THESE JUGGLERS. AND REAL GURU IS HE WHO SPEAKS ON BEHALF OF KRSNA. And that is wan... IT IS VERY SIMPLE.

“...This is our mission. Everything is there. Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *yare dekha tare kaha krsna upade...* ‘YOU SIMPLY MAKE YOUR LIFE

Q. #8: *Who were you expecting to be guru after you?*

SUCCESSFUL BY UNDERSTANDING BHAGAVAD-GITA AND PREACH THIS. YOU BECOME GURU.' So where is the difficulty? WHY DON'T YOU DO THAT?" (Conversation, Bombay 4/24/77)

"*Amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa.* Suppose you are living in that village. Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, 'You become a guru here.' Here. You haven't got to go out. *Ei desa*, 'where you are living.' Just see how nice it is. *Amara ajnaya*: 'By My order, you become a guru and deliver the people of this place.' This is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's.... 'So I am not a guru. I do not know. How I shall become?' NO, YOU HAVEN'T GOT TO BOTHER. *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa*: 'SIMPLY YOU REPEAT WHAT KRSNA HAS SAID.' YOU BECOME GURU. THAT'S ALL. Everyone can do that. Gita is there. You sit down in your place and preach *Bhagavad-gita* and try to induce them to take it. YOU BECOME GURU."

(Conversation, Bombay 4/23/77)

S.PRABHUPADA: ...[Y]ou become guru, but you must be qualified first of all. Then you become. [...] What is the use of producing some rascal guru?

D: Well, I have studied myself and all of your disciples, and it's clear fact that we are all conditioned souls, so we cannot be guru. Maybe one day it may be possible...

S.PRABHUPADA: Hm.

D: ...but not now.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. I SHALL CHOOSE SOME GURU. I SHALL SAY, 'NOW YOU BECOME ACARYA. YOU BECOME AUTHORIZED.' I AM WAITING FOR THAT. YOU BECOME ALL ACARYA. I RETIRE COMPLETELY. BUT THE TRAINING MUST BE COMPLETE.

D: The process of purification must be there.

S.PRABHUPADA: Oh, yes, must be there. CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU WANTS THAT. AMARA AJNANA GURU HANA. YOU BECOME GURU. But be qualified. Little thing, strictly follower...

D: Not rubber stamp.

S.PRABHUPADA: Then you'll not be effective. You can cheat, but it will not be effective.

[...] "Stick to our principle, and see our GBC is very alert. Then everything will be all right, even I am not present. Do that. That is my request. Whatever

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

little I have taught you, follow that, and nobody will be aggrieved. No *maya* will touch you. Now Krsna has given us, and there will be no scarcity of money. You print book and sell. So everything is there. We have got good shelter all over the world. We have got income. You stick to our principles, follow the... Even if I die suddenly, you'll be able to manage. That's all. That I want. Manage nicely and let the movement go forward. Now arrange. Don't go backward. Be careful. *Apani acari prabhu jiveri siksaya* [one should teach by his own example]."
(Conversation, Bombay 4/22/77)

"Prabhupada: Every one of us messiah. Anyone Krsna conscious, he's the messiah. Every one. Why one? All of us. *Gaurangera bhakta-gane, jane jane sakti dhari, brahmanda tari saksi*: "The devotee of Lord Caitanya, every one has so immense power that every one, they can deliver the whole universe." *Gaurangera bhakta-jane, jane jane sakti...*, *brahmanda tari...* That is Gauranga's men.

Tamala Krsna: Only you are that powerful, Srila Prabhupada. We're like...

Prabhupada: Why you are not?

Tamala Krsna: We're like the bugs.

Prabhupada: You are my disciples. "Like father, like son." You should be. *Gaurangera bhakta-jane*. Everyone. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, *amara ajnaya guru hana tara' ei desa* [Cc. Madhya 7.128]. He asked everyone, "Just become guru." Follow His instruction, you become guru. *Amara ajnaya*. Don't manufacture ideas. *Amara ajnaya*. "What I say, you do. You become a guru." Where is the difficulty? "And what is Your *ajna*?" *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa*. Bas. Everything is there in the *Bhagavad-gita*. You simply repeat. That's all. YOU BECOME GURU. TO BECOME A GURU IS NOT DIFFICULT JOB. FOLLOW CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU AND SPEAK WHAT KRSNA HAS SAID. BAS. YOU BECOME GURU."

(Room Conversation, April 15, 1977, Bombay)

My Guru Maharaja, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, he was not that type of Vaisnava. You should remember. That is his special gift. He wanted every one of his disciples to go and preach the cult of Krsna consciousness. Caitanya Mahaprabhu wanted. Here we are in the Caitanya Mahaprabhu's country, birthplace. We should remember. Caitanya Mahaprabhu of course asked every Indian to take His mission. At least Bengalis should take

Q. #8: Who were you expecting to be guru after you?

Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission. So Caitanya Mahaprabhu...What is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission?

*amara ajnaya guru hana, tara ei desa
yare dekha, tare kaha 'krsna'-upadesa*

[Cc. Madhya 7.128]

Even if you cannot go outside, it doesn't matter. Wherever you are, either you are here in Nabadwip or in Calcutta, anywhere, so YOU JUST BECOME A GURU. DON'T REMAIN A RASCAL. YOU BECOME A GURU. "Now, how can I become a guru? I am not very educated." No! You don't require to be very highly educated rascal. SIMPLY REPEAT KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS AS KRSNA SAID -- YOU BECOME GURU." (Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Prabhupada's Appearance Day, Lecture -- February 8, 1977, Mayapur)

"Ramananda Raya, he belonged to the karana caste of Orissa, and he was *grhastha*, at the same time in government service. So he was feeling little shameful like that, that "I am teaching Caitanya Mahaprabhu." So when he was feeling like that, Caitanya Mahaprabhu encouraged him,

*kiba vipra kiba sudra nyasi kene naya
yei krsna-tattva-vetta sei guru haya*

[Cc. Madhya 8.128]

"You become a *sannyasi* or you become a *grhastha* or you are a *brahmana* or a *sudra*, the Krsna consciousness has nothing to do with these material things. IF YOU KNOW ACTUALLY WHAT IS KRSNA, THEN YOU CAN BECOME GURU."

"[...]So Krsna *bhajana* is so magnanimous, so exalted, in any position YOU CAN BECOME THE GREATEST GURU, PROVIDED YOU FOLLOW THE FOOTSTEPS OF SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU."

(Evening Lecture -- January 23, 1977, Bhuvanesvara)

"Guru, Caitanya Mahaprabhu has said, *amara ajnaya guru hana tara' ei desa* [Cc. Madhya 7.128]. He says that "I ORDER YOU THAT YOU BECOME GURU. So., and your business is to deliver this country." "This country" means wherever you are living, you can become guru and deliver them. And one may say that "You are asking me to become guru, but I have no qualification." A sincere man will say like that: "How can I become guru, and how can I deliver this country?" Caitanya Mahaprabhu says it is not difficult:

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yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa [Cc. Madhya 7.128]. *Krsna-upadesa*, there are two *krsna-upadesa*. One *krsna-upadesa* is what Krsna is speaking personally, Bhagavad-gita; and the other *krsna-upadesa*, what Vyasadeva is speaking about Krsna. *Krsna sa upadesa* or *krsnena upadesa*. *Krsnena upadesa* -- *Bhagavad-gita*. And instruction about Krsna is *Srimad-Bhagavatam*.

“So my request is that you people of Orissa, you are ordinarily Vaisnava, so take this seriously. Don't be misguided by rascals who is not guru. There is no difficulty. Suppose, as Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, *yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa* [Cc. Madhya 7.128]: YOU BECOME GURU. Whomever you meet, you simply speak what Krsna has spoken. That's all. It is already there. YOU HAVE TO REPEAT ONLY, AND YOU BECOME GURU.”

(Lecture Bg 7.1 -- January 22, 1977, Bhuvaneshvara)

“Caitanya Mahaprabhu said that you become a guru. *Amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa*. You become a guru and deliver them. So I am a fool, I have no education. How can I become a guru? The answer is ‘No no, *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa*.’ IF YOU SIMPLY ADVISE PEOPLE WHAT KRSNA HAS SAID, THEN YOU BECOME GURU. But if you manufacture your ideas, then you are not a guru.” (Conversation, Bombay 1/7/77)

1976

"So we got this information from His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, and that knowledge is still going on. You are receiving through his servant. And in future the same knowledge will go to your students. This is called *parampara* system. *Evam parampara prap...* IT IS NOT THAT YOU HAVE BECOME A STUDENT AND YOU'LL REMAIN STUDENT. NO. ONE DAY YOU SHALL BECOME ALSO GURU AND MAKE MORE STUDENTS, MORE STUDENTS, MORE. That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission, not that perpetually... Yes, ONE SHOULD REMAIN PERPETUALLY A STUDENT, BUT HE HAS TO ACT AS GURU. That is the mission of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. It is not that because I am acting as guru, I am no longer student. No, I am still student. Caitanya Mahaprabhu taught us this instruction that we shall always remain a foolish student before our Guru Maharaja. That is the Vedic culture. I may be very big man, but

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still, I should remain a foolish student to my guru. That is the qualification. *Guru more murkha dekhi' karila sasana* [Cc. Adi 7.71]. We should be always prepared to be controlled by the guru. That is very good qualification. *Yasya prasada bhagavat-prasada. Ara na kariha mane asa.* So we should become always a very obedient student to our guru. That is the qualification. That is the spiritual qualification." (Lecture, Hyderabad 12/10/76)

"I am very pleased that you have taken up this mission of spreading the Krsna consciousness movement all over the world. This is the wish of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu that, *yare dakho tare kaho krsna upadesa*, everyone you see or meet, tell him about Krsna; *amara ajnaya guru haya tara ei desa*, and by My command YOU BECOME A GURU AND SAVE THIS LAND. This was also the mission of my guru maharaj and IT IS MY MISSION. YOU WILL PERFECT YOUR LIFE IF YOU MAKE IT ALSO YOUR MISSION.

"People everywhere are suffering on account of being led by blind leaders who are devoid of all knowledge of the soul. Such foolish men lead other foolish men and all concerned suffer. *Andha yathandhair upaniyamana*, when one blind man leads another, the result is that both of them fall into the ditch. Therefore THERE IS A REQUIREMENT FOR A SECTION OF SOCIETY TO BECOME FIRST CLASS MEN, FREE OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE MODES OF MATERIAL NATURE, WHO CAN UNDERSTAND THE MISSION OF THIS HUMAN FORM OF LIFE AND WHO CAN TEACH IT TO OTHERS. I AM TRYING TO CREATE THESE MEN, but it is hard, for people have become lost of all intelligence due to the coverings of the three modes of material nature. So I AM ONE MAN ALONE, YET NOW THERE ARE SO MANY NICE BOYS AND GIRLS LIKE YOU TO HELP ME PUSH ON THIS MOVEMENT IN MY OLD AGE. I thank you very much for your sincere efforts and you have my blessings that you will without a doubt be successful if you stick to the regulative principles and chant at least 16 rounds a day. Surely Krsna will recognize your service, and as soon as you are recognized by Krsna, then your life immediately becomes perfect." (Letter to Jagajivan, 9/1/76)

"I: ...Do you have a successor to take your place when you die?"

S.PRABHUPADA: Not yet settled up. Not yet settled up.

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I: So what process would the Hare Krsnas...?

S.PRABHUPADA: We have got secretaries. They are managing.

D: He has appointed from all the disciples a group of secretaries. Each one is in charge of a different sector of the world.

I: How many secretaries?

D: Presently there's eighteen.

I: And so that group of eighteen secretaries will choose another leader?

S.PRABHUPADA: I AM TRAINING EACH ONE OF THEM AS LEADER SO THAT THEY CAN SPREAD EXTENSIVELY. THAT IS MY IDEA.”
(Newsweek Interview, New York 7/14/76)

I: What happens when that inevitable time comes when a successor is needed?

D: He is asking about the future, who will guide the movement in the future.

S.PRABHUPADA: They will guide. I am training them.

I: Will there be one spiritual leader though?

S.PRABHUPADA: NO, I AM TRAINING GBC, EIGHTEEN ALL OVER THE WORLD.

D: His personal secretaries.

I: I see.” (Magazine Interview, Los Angeles 6/10/76)

“I: Is there anyone who is designated to succeed you as the primary teacher of the movement?

S.PRABHUPADA: I am training some, I mean to say, advanced students so that they may very easily take up the charge. I have made them GBC. They are under my direct training, and I think they will be able to conduct this movement.

I: Do you expect to name one person as your successor or have you already?

S.PRABHUPADA: That I am not contemplating now. But there is no need of one person. As other things are managed, but by committee, so this can also be managed, and the committee may elect one person as chief. As, just like in the democracy there are senators and there is president, so it may be I may nominate or they can nominate.” (Interview, Los Angeles 6/4/76)

Q. #8: *Who were you expecting to be guru after you?*

“So that is our mission. ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE COME TO KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT, THAT IS OUR REQUEST, THAT YOU, ALL OF YOU, BECOME GURU. But don’t speak nonsense. That is our request. Simply speak what Krsna has said. Then you become *brahmana*. You’ll be guru, and everything. Thank you very much.”

(Lecture, Honolulu 5/21/76)

“He said that all his disciples should become gurus and each make THOUSANDS OF DISCIPLES, JUST AS HE HAD, THUS SPREADING KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS EVERYWHERE.

“...YOU EACH BE GURU ,” he said. “As I have five thousand disciples or ten thousand, so you have ten thousand each. In this way, create branches and branches of the Caitanya tree. But you have to be spiritually strong. This means chanting your rounds and following the four rules. It is not an artificial show. It is not a material thing. Chant and follow the four rules and pray to Krsna in helplessness.”

(Lilamrta VI, pg.167-9)

“So, so nice movement, everyone should take part in it and dedicate to the mission of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. And it is not at all difficult. It is very easy. Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, *amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa, yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa*. Anywhere, either you are in this district or that district, it doesn’t matter. Either you are at home or outside home, it doesn’t matter. YOU BECOME A GURU –EVERYONE.”

(Sannyasa Initiation, Mayapur 3/16/76)

1975

“EVERY STUDENT IS EXPECTED TO BECOME ACARYA. Acarya means one who knows the scriptural injunctions and follows them practically in life, and teaches them to his disciples... Keep trained up very rigidly and then you are bona fide Guru, and you can accept disciples on the same principle. But as a matter of etiquette it is the custom that during the lifetime of your Spiritual Master you bring the prospective disciples to him, and IN HIS ABSENCE OR DISSAPEARANCE YOU CAN ACCEPT DISCIPLES WITHOUT ANY LIMITATION. THIS IS THE LAW OF DISCIPLIC

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SUCCESSION. I want to see my disciples become bonafide Spiritual Master and spread Krishna consciousness very widely; THAT WILL MAKE ME AND KRISHNA VERY HAPPY.” (Letter to Tusta Krishna, 12/2/75)

“So I thank you very much because I see you are doing very good. Now you are doing something. So you should continue in this way. Do practical solid work. This is required. You are an old experienced devotee and I have personally trained you in so many things, so NOW IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO TRAIN OTHERS OTHERWISE WHAT IS THE MEANING OF MY TRAINING YOU? So do it with sincerity and know that Caitanya Mahaprabhu, He will give you all facility and you will be a success.” (Letter to Gurudasa Swami, 11/12/75)

“ALL OF OUR STUDENTS WILL HAVE TO BECOME GURU, but they are not qualified. This is the difficulty.” (Letter to Alanath, 11/10/75)

[T]O BECOME ACARYA IS NOT VERY DIFFICULT. First of all, to become very faithful servant of your acarya, follow strictly what he says. Try to please him and spread Krsna consciousness. That's all. It is not at all difficult. Try to follow the instruction of your Guru Maharaja and spread Krsna consciousness. That is the order of Lord Caitanya.

*amara ajnaya guru hana tara' ei desa
yare dekha tare kaha 'krsna'-upadesa*

[Cc. Madhya 7.128]

"By following My order, you become guru." And if we strictly follow the acarya system and try our best to spread the instruction of Krsna... *Yare dekha tare kaha 'krsna'-upadesa*. There are two kinds of krsna-upadesa. Upadesa means instruction. Instruction given by Krsna, that is also 'krsna'-upadesa, and instruction received about Krsna, that is also 'krsna'-upadesa. *Krsnasya upadesa iti krsna upadesa. Samasa, sasti-tat-purusasamasa*. And *Krsna visaya upadesa*, that is also *Krsna upadesa. Bahu-vrihi-samasa*. This is the way of analyzing Sanskrit grammar. So Krsna's upadesa is Bhagavad-gita. He's directly giving instruction. So one who is spreading krsna-upadesa, simply repeat what is said by Krsna, then you become acarya. Not difficult at all. Everything is stated there. We have to simply repeat like parrot. Not exactly parrot. Parrot does not understand the meaning; he simply vibrates. But you

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should understand the meaning also; otherwise how you can explain? So, so we want to spread Krsna consciousness. Simply prepare yourself how to repeat Krsna's instructions very nicely, without any malinterpretation. Then, in future... Suppose you have got now ten thousand. We shall expand to hundred thousand. That is required. Then hundred thousand to million, and million to ten million. [...]SO THERE WILL BE NO SCARCITY OF ACARYA, and people will understand Krsna consciousness very easily. SO MAKE THAT ORGANIZATION.”

(Lecture, Cc Adi-lila 1.13 -- Mayapur, April 6, 1975)

“So this movement [is] especially meant to establish the cult of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. THE CULT OF SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU IS THAT YOU BECOME, EVERY ONE OF YOU, YOU BECOME A GURU. How to become guru? Now, *yare dekha, tare kaha krsna-upadesa*. Simply that qualification is sufficient. Don't adulterate the *krsna-upadesa*. You simply present what Krsna says as it is. THEN EVERY ONE OF YOU WILL BECOME A GURU. Don't adulterate.” (Lecture Cc 1.4, Mayapur 3/28/75)

“V: What do you see as the future of your movement and are you planning to...

S.PRABHUPADA: My movement is genuine.

V: ...TO CHOOSE A SUCCESSOR.

S.PRABHUPADA: It is already successful.

V: ...SUCCESSOR...

S.PRABHUPADA: Genuine thing is always successful.

V: ...AFTER ...AFTER YOU...

S.PRABHUPADA: Gold is gold. If somebody is fortunate, he can purchase gold, but gold remains gold. If somebody purchases and somebody does not, it doesn't matter. Gold is gold. So future, gold future is always the same... [Laughter]...as it is at present –if it is gold. If it is something glittering, that is another thing.

V: BUT THERE MUST BE SOMEBODY, YOU KNOW, NEEDED TO HANDLE THE THING...

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S.PRABHUPADA: Yes, therefore we are preaching, WE ARE CREATING THESE DEVOTEES WHO WILL HANDLE.”

(Conversation, Mexico 2/12/75)

1974

“I have come here to *Mayapur* and my health has improved much but still I am suffering from high blood pressure. After all, it is old age. As far as possible Krishna will keep me to work, and when He desires I will go. So I WISH ALL MY DISCIPLES TO PUSH ON THIS MOVEMENT FOR THE REHABILITATION OF SUFFERING HUMANITY.”

(Letter to *Tusta Krishna Swami*, 10/14/74)

“I AM TRAINING SOME OF MY EXPERIENCED DISCIPLES HOW TO MANAGE AFTER MY DEPARTURE.” (Letter to *Karandhara*, 10/8/74)

“From *Madhavananda* I have heard that there is some worship of yourself by the other devotees. Of course it is proper to offer obeisances to a *Vaishnava*, but not in the presence of the spiritual master. AFTER THE DEPARTURE OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, IT WILL COME TO THAT STAGE, but now wait. Otherwise it will create factions.” (Letter to *Hansadutta*, 10/1/74)

“I feel happy that even after my departure, things will go on. I AM HAPPY THAT I HAVE GOT SO MANY SINCERE DEVOTEES WHO WILL CARRY ON. That is my happiness.” (Letter to *Madhudvisa*, 9/18/74)

1973

“Yes, I remember the old days in *San Francisco*. *Krsna* has been so kind upon me to have sent so many sincere disciples to help me push on this Movement on behalf of my *Guru Maharaj*. You continue with your program there in *San*

Q. #8: *Who were you expecting to be guru after you?*

Francisco, always strictly keeping our principles and Krsna will bless you with greater and greater realization of the importance of this Movement. I AM DEPENDENT UPON YOU, MY OLDER DISCIPLES, TO CARRY IT ON.”
(Letter to Jayananda, 12/1/73)

“[...I AM VERY MUCH HOPEFUL THAT MY DISCIPLES WHO ARE NOW PARTICIPATING TODAY, even if I die, my movement will not stop, I am very much hopeful, yes. All these nice boys and girls who have taken so seriously...”

“YOU WILL HAVE TO become spiritual master... you... ALL MY DISCIPLES...”

“...I HOPE THAT ALL OF YOU, MEN, WOMEN, BOYS AND GIRLS, BECOME SPIRITUAL MASTER AND FOLLOW THIS PRINCIPLE. Spiritual master, simply, sincerely, follow the principles and speak to the general public. Then Krsna becomes your favorite. Krsna does not become your favorite; you become Krsna’s favorite. Krsna says in the *Bhagavad-gita*, *na ca tasmad manusyesu kascin me priya-krttamah*. ‘One who is doing this humble service of preaching work, Krsna consciousness, nobody is dearer than him to Me.’ SO IF YOU WANT TO BECOME RECOGNIZED BY KRSNA VERY QUICKLY, YOU TAKE UP THIS PROCESS OF BECOMING SPIRITUAL MASTER, present the *Bhagavad-gita* as it is, your life is perfect.”
(Vyasa-puja Address, London 8/21/73)

“You are asking me to advise what should be your program, but now I [am] wanting to leave these matters in the hands of my disciples. I have created GBC specifically for this purpose. IF YOU THE ELDER DISCIPLES CANNOT MANAGE THINGS, THEN WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF THE SOCIETY?”
(Letter to Amarendra, 4/19/73)

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1972

“Now I am old man and a little inclined for retirement, but now our organization is expanding more and more and I simply want to see that the things get done, therefore I AM RELYING ON YOU, MY SENIOR DISCIPLES, TO DO EVERYTHING NICELY FOR KRSNA. Thank you very much for helping me in this way.” (Letter to Rebatinandan, 9/25/72)

“So you GBC men are my selected few for insuring that what I am doing will be carried on very nicely for the pleasure of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. SO NOW YOU MUST ALL MY SENIOR DISCIPLES AND LEADERS BECOME VERY, VERY MUCH AWARE OF YOUR GRAVE RESPONSIBILITY TO THE HUMAN SOCIETY for delivering them from the clutches of catastrophe, and be always cool-headed and utilize every moment in the best manner possible. I am successful only because I am following strictly the orders of my Guru Maharaja and do not deviate. Therefore people respect what I am saying and they listen, because I do not say one thing and do another. So now you are doing my work and YOU SHALL BE LIKE ME AND BE YOURSELVES THE WORTHY REPRESENTATIVES OF OUR DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION.”

(Letter to Madhudvisa, 6/16/72)

“I am feeling the tendency more and more to retire behind the scenes for translating work, and I WANT TO TURN OVER THE MANAGEMENT OF EVERYTHING TO THE GBC AND OTHER SENIOR LEADERS AMONGST MY DISCIPLES, so if you have in future any more matters for discussing you may assist me in training these leaders and managers by placing your questions before them.” (Letter to Bhargava, 6/13/72)

“I am feeling more and more the urge to retire behind the scenes and translate these Vedic literatures for the greatest benefit for mankind in general. So I have given you my all senior disciples and leaders everything so IF YOU WILL KINDLY TAKE THIS MATTER VERY SERIOUSLY AND DO MY WORK FOR ME I SHALL BE VERY MUCH THANKFUL TO YOU ALWAYS.” (Letter to Stoka Krsna, 6/13/72)

Q. #8: Who were you expecting to be guru after you?

"As I am old man, I am traveling all over the world. Now to give me relief, the GBC members... I shall expand into twelve more so that they can exactly work like me. GRADUALLY THEY WILL BE INITIATORS. AT LEAST FIRST INITIATION."

(Conversation with the GBC – May 25, 1972, Los Angeles)

"So we have got this message from Krsna, from Caitanya Mahaprabhu, from the six Gosvamis, later on, Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Bhaktisiddhanta Thakura. And we are trying our bit also to distribute this knowledge. NOW, TENTH, ELEVENTH, TWELFTH... MY GURU MAHARAJA IS TENTH FROM CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU, I AM ELEVENTH, YOU ARE THE TWELFTH. So distribute this knowledge. People are suffering."

(Arrival Lecture -- Los Angeles, May 18, 1972)

"Some time ago you asked my permission for accepting some disciples, NOW THE TIME IS APPROACHING VERY SOON WHEN YOU WILL HAVE MANY DISCIPLES BY YOUR STRONG PREACHING WORK. Stick to the line of our strong preaching method and many misguided persons will be blessed by your proper guiding." (Letter to Achyutananda, 5/16/72)

"[...T]his Krsna consciousness movement is very, very essential, very, very essential. I am very glad to inform you that this movement is being especially received in the Western countries by the younger generation. I AM VERY MUCH HOPEFUL. I AM OLD MAN OF SEVENTY-SIX YEARS AGE. NOW, I CAN PASS AWAY AT ANY MOMENT, BUT I AM CONFIDENT THAT MY DISCIPLES, WHO ARE MOSTLY EUROPEANS AND AMERICANS, THEY WILL CONTINUE THIS MOVEMENT, and I wish there will be considerable change on the face of the globe." (Lecture -- Bombay, March 18, 1972)

"[...]I am very much pleased that you are making such nice advancement in Krishna Consciousness and that you are always thinking in so many ways how to best serve the Lord. By fixing your attention in this way, worrying how He will be pleased with me, you will naturally very soon reach the

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supreme highest perfection of life which is pure Krishna Consciousness. You should be very serious for trying for it, as I think that you are one of my senior disciples and I AM VERY MUCH RELYING ON YOU NOW TO CARRY ON THIS MISSION WITH FULL RESPONSIBIITY.

“We must become so responsible for seriously practicing this art of of Krishna Consciousness, because this world is so full of degrading elements of life for dragging everyone down and down, and if just a few men can perfect the art, they can save the rest of all the people from the greatest dangers. So I count you and your godbrothers among those few men who are treading seriously on the path back to Home, back to Godhead, and now we must maintain such exalted position and not fall back by neglecting our highest standards of devotional practices. In this way, what I have introduced into your Western countries, the pure love for Godhead process of Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, will go on increasing more and more to have effect by saving others; OTHERWISE, IT WILL GRADUALLY BECOME MECHANICAL AND FADE AWAY LIKE EVERY OTHER SO-CALLED RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT. SO YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THAT I AM VERY MUCH DEPENDING ON YOU TO BECOME VERY MUCH CONVINCED YOURSELF OF OUR KRISHNA PHILOSOPHY AND TO TAKE FULL RESPONSIBILITY FOR TEACHING OTHERS PURELY.”

(Letter to Ranadhir, 1/17/72)

“PRACTICALLY THE LEADERSHIP OF THIS KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS SOCIETY IS NOW IN THE HANDS OF YOU MY OLDER DISCIPLES AND I AM VERY PLEASED THAT YOU ARE TAKING SUCH HUGE RESPONSIBILITY VERY SERIOUSLY. In this way remain very sober and cool-headed and always think of Krishna somehow or other, and there is no doubt this Movement will one day conquer all over the world.”

(Letter to Makhanlal, 1/5/72)

1971

“Now you must guide them very nicely in Krishna Consciousness, because you are a veteran devotee and PRACTICALLY SPEAKING THE FUTURE

Q. #8: Who were you expecting to be guru after you?

OF OUR KRISHNA CONSCIOUS SOCIETY RESTS IN THE HANDS OF MY OLDER DISCIPLES. Give them all facility to perfect their lives by protecting them and instructing them nicely, that is now the duty of my senior disciples.” (Letter to Karandhar, 12/3/71)

“So far naming your child is concerned, you as her parents should give her a suitable name and you can add the prefix bhakta dasi, or servant of the devotee, as are we all. THEN WHEN SHE GROWS UP AND TAKES INITIATION FROM A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, SHE MAY BE GIVEN A NEW NAME AT THAT TIME.”

(Letter to David R. Schomaker – London 9 August, 1971)

“So far as your taking initiation from Brahmananda Maharaja, I HAVE NO OBJECTION, but it is the etiquette that in the presence of one’s Spiritual Master one does not accept disciples.” (Letter to John Milner, 3/24/71)

1970

“So my advice to you, I am old man. So EVEN I MAY NOT RETURN, YOU SHALL CONTINUE THIS KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT.”

(Departure Address, Los Angeles 8/2/70)

“Srla Bhaktinoda Thakur entrusted the responsibility to my Guru Maharaj, and He also in His turn empowered us to do the work. SIMILARLY, I AM REQUESTING YOU, ALL MY EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN STUDENTS, to spread this movement city to city and village to village and make all people of the world happy.” (Letter to Hansadutta, 3/12/70)

1969

“So today is a very auspicious day, Thakura Bhaktinoda’s birthday. Here is the picture of Thakura Sac-cid-ananda Bhaktinoda. He was one of the acaryas of this disciplic succession from Krsna. We have got a succession

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table from Kṛṣṇa, genealogical table. There are two kinds of genealogical tables, one by the semina. Father, his son, his son, like that. That is material genealogical table. And there is one spiritual genealogical table, disciplic succession. Just like Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa, the original father, Supreme Personality of Godhead, He spoke the Vedic knowledge to Brahma, Lord Brahma. He spoke to Narada. Narada spoke to Vyasa. Vyasa spoke to Madhvacharya. So in this disciplic succession, Lord Caitanya, from Lord Caitanya, the six Gosvamis, and similarly, coming down, down, Bhaktivinoda Thakura, then Gaurakisora Dasa Babaji Maharaja, then my spiritual master, then WE ARE NEXT GENERATION, MY DISCIPLES. So there is a disciplic succession.”

(Lecture, London 9/23/69)

“Every one of us should become spiritual master because the world is in blazing fire... SPIRITUAL MASTER IS NOT A NEW INVENTION. It is simply following the orders of the spiritual master. So ALL MY STUDENTS PRESENT HERE who are feeling so much obliged... I am also obliged to them because they are helping me in this missionary work. At the same time, I SHALL REQUEST THEM ALL TO BECOME SPIRITUAL MASTER. EVERY ONE OF YOU SHOULD BE SPIRITUAL MASTER NEXT. And what is their duty? Whatever you are hearing from me, whatever you are learning from me, you have to distribute the same in toto without any addition or alteration. Then all of you become the spiritual master. That is the science of becoming spiritual master.

“...[D]on't be satisfied that you have understood [and] that's all. No. This should be distributed. Just like in my old age I have come to your country carrying the order of my spiritual master to distribute it, YOU ARE ALL YOUNG BOYS AND GIRLS, TAKE THIS MESSAGE AND DISTRIBUTE IT. The whole suffering humanity will be happy. THAT IS OUR MISSION. Thank you very much.”

(Vyasa-puja Address, Hamburg 9/5/69)

“Regarding your question about the disciplic succession coming down from Arjuna, it is just like I HAVE GOT MY DISCIPLES, SO IN THE FUTURE THESE MANY DISCIPLES MAY HAVE MANY BRANCHES OF DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION. So in one line of disciples we may not see

Q. #8: *Who were you expecting to be guru after you?*

another name coming from a different line. But this does not mean that [that] person whose name does not appear was not in the discipic succession.”
(Letter to Kirtanananda, 1/25/69)

“A first examination will be held sometime next January on Bhagavad Gita As It Is, and those passing will have the degree of Bhaktishastri. Next year we will hold an examination on *Srimad Bhagavatam*, and the person who passes will have the title Bhaktibaibhava. And the next year we shall hold an examination on Teachings of Lord Caitanya, Nectar of Devotion and Vedanta Sutra, and those who will successfully pass will be awarded with the title of Bhaktivedanta. BY 1975, ALL OF THOSE WHO HAVE PASSED ALL OF THE ABOVE EXAMINATIONS WILL BE SPECIFICALLY EMPOWERED TO INITIATE AND INCREASE THE NUMBER OF THE KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS POPULATION.”

(Letter to Kirtanananda, 1/12/69)

1968

“He, [in] 1896, Bhaktivinoda Thakura wanted to introduce this Krsna consciousness movement by sending this book, ‘Shree Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, His Life and Precepts.’ Fortunately, that year was my birth year, and by Krsna’s arrangement, we came in contact. I was born in a different family, my Guru Maharaja was born in a different family. Who knew that I will come to his protection? Who knew that I would come in America? Who knew that you American boys will come to me? These are all Krsna’s arrangement. We cannot understand how things are taking place.

“In 1936... Today is ninth December, 1938[68]. That means thirty-two years ago. In Bombay, I was then doing some business. All of a sudden, perhaps on this date, sometimes between 9 or 10 December. At that time, Guru Maharaja was indisposed little, and he was staying at Jagannath Puri, on the seashore. So I wrote him [a] letter, ‘My dear master, your other disciples, *brahmacari*, *sannyasi*, they are rendering you direct service. And I am a householder. I

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cannot live with you, I cannot serve you nicely. So I do not know. How can I serve you?" Simply an idea, I was thinking of serving him, how can I serve him seriously?

"So the reply was dated 13th December, 1936. In that letter he wrote, 'My dear such and such, I am very glad to receive your letter. I think you should try to push our movement in English.' That was his writing. 'And that will [do] good to you and to the people who will help you.' That was his instruction. And then in 1936, on the 31st December—that means just after writing this letter a fortnight before his departure—he passed away.

"But I took that order of my spiritual master very seriously, but I did not think that I'll have to do such and such thing. I was at that time a householder. But this is the arrangement of Kṛṣṇa. If we strictly try to serve the spiritual master, his order, then Kṛṣṇa will give us all facilities. That is the secret. Although there was no possibility, I never thought, but I took it little seriously by studying a commentary by Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura on the *Bhagavad-gīta*. In the *Bhagavad-gīta* the verse, *vyavasayatmika-buddhih ekeha kuru-nandana*, in connection with that verse Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura gives his commentary that we should take up the words from the spiritual master as our life and soul. We should try to carry out the instruction, the specific instruction of the spiritual master very rigidly without caring for our personal benefit or loss. So I tried a little bit in that spirit. So he has given me all facilities to serve him.

"Things have come to this stage, that in this old age I have come to your country, and you are also taking this movement seriously, trying to understand it. We have got some books now. So there is little foothold of this movement. SO ON THIS OCCASION OF MY SPIRITUAL MASTER'S DEPARTURE, AS I AM TRYING TO EXECUTE HIS WILL, SIMILARLY, I SHALL ALSO REQUEST YOU TO EXECUTE THE SAME ORDER THROUGH MY WILL. I am an old man, I can also pass away at any moment. That is nature's law. Nobody can check it. So that is not very astonishing, but my appeal to you on this auspicious day of the departure of my Guru Maharaja, that at least to some extent you have understood the essence of Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. You should try to push it on. People are suffering for want of this consciousness.

[...]“So this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is authorized, very important. NOW, YOU AMERICAN BOYS AND GIRLS WHO HAVE TAKEN TO

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THIS MOVEMENT, PLEASE TAKE IT MORE SERIOUSLY and... That is the mission of Lord Caitanya and my Guru Maharaja, and we are also trying to execute the will by disciplic succession. You have come forward to help me. I SHALL REQUEST YOU ALL THAT I SHALL GO AWAY, BUT YOU SHALL LIVE. Don't give up pushing on this movement, and you'll be blessed by Lord Caitanya and His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Goswami Prabhupada. Thank you very much.” (Lecture, Los Angeles 12/9/68)

“Next January there will be an examination on this *Bhagavad-gita*. Papers will be sent by me to all centers, and those securing the minimum passing grade will be given the title as Bhaktishastrī. Similarly, another examination will be held on Lord Caitanya's Appearance Day in February, 1970, and it will be upon *Srimad-Bhagavatam* and *Bhagavad-gita*. Those passing will get the title of Bhaktibaibhava. Another examination will be held sometime in 1971 on the four books, *Bhagavad-gita*, *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, Teachings of Lord Caitanya and Nectar of Devotion. One who will pass this examination will be awarded with the title of Bhaktivedanta. I want that all of my spiritual sons and daughters will inherit this title of Bhaktivedanta, so that the family transcendental diploma will continue through the generations. Those possessing the title of Bhaktivedanta will be allowed to initiate disciples. MAYBE BY 1975 ALL OF MY DISCIPLES WILL BE ALLOWED TO INITIATE AND INCREASE THE NUMBERS OF THE GENERATIONS. THAT IS MY PROGRAM.” (Letter to Hansadutta, 12/3/68)

“I am getting gradually older, therefore even if I remain in your country, I shall restrain my moving and MY MAIN BUSINESS WILL BE HENCEFORWARD TO TRAIN YOU ALL MY DISCIPLES FOR PREACHING WORK.” (Letter to Satsvarupa, 11/1/68)

“I AM TRAINING YOU ALL TO BECOME FUTURE SPIRITUAL MASTERS, but do not be in a hurry. [...]Don't be allured by cheap disciples. Go on steadfastly to render service first. If you immediately become Guru, then the service activities will be stopped; and as there are many cheap gurus and cheap disciples, without any substantial knowledge, and manufacturing new *sampradayas*, and with service activities stopped, and all spiritual progress choked up.” (Letter to Achyutananda and Jaya Govinda, 8/21/68)

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“[...]I am getting more and more enthused that my spiritual children are growing to Krishna consciousness, and I CAN HOPE EACH ONE OF YOU IN FUTURE WILL BE ABLE TO PROPAGATE THIS TRANSCENDENTAL MESSAGE.” (Letter to Rupanuga, 7/3/68)

“Personally I have no credit for myself, but I am trying to act as faithful servant of my predecessors and just presenting without any adulteration the message which I have received from my Spiritual Master. SIMILARLY, IF THIS MESSAGE IS PRESENTED BY YOU ALL who have accepted me as the Spiritual Master, then all the people of the world may be benefitted by receiving this transcendent message of Krishna Consciousness. Try to execute this mission wholeheartedly and faithfully, and all of you try to broadcast the message to your best capacity.” (Letter to Krsnadas, 6/1/68)

“[...]If things go on nicely, we can prepare some preachers so that EVEN IF I RETIRE, THE MISSIONARY WORK WILL GO ON UNDER THE ABLE GUIDANCE OF SOME OF MY SELECTED DISCIPLES, LIKE YOU, BRAHMANANDA, RUPANUGA, ETC.” (Letter to Rayrama, 2/17/68)

“[...]I am so happy to hear that you are finding strength to be determined to spread Krishna Consciousness all over the world; my Guru Maharaj wanted like that, especially the Western world, and MY ONLY REQUEST IS THAT YOU ALL SINCERE BOYS AND GIRLS, TO SPREAD THIS KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS TO EVERY HOME, TO EVERY VILLAGE AND TOWN, AND TO TAKE THIS MISSION VERY SERIOUSLY.” (Letter to Hansadutta, 2/17/68)

1967

“Lord Chaitanya wanted everyone should be a spiritual master provided he follows the order of Lord Chaitanya. The Lord’s mission was to defeat the *Mayavada* philosophy and establish in the philosophy of Krishna consciousness because Krishna is the Supreme Lord the Personality of

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Godhead. Anyone following the order of Lord Chaitanya under the guidance of His bonafide representative, can become a spiritual master and I WISH THAT IN MY ABSENCE ALL MY DISCIPLES BECOME THE BONAFIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER TO SPREAD KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE WORLD. I WANT IT..."

(Letter to Madhusudan, 11/2/67)

"When I return to India my ambition is to construct an American House at Vrindaban and get some of you boys and girls there to train for our preaching work in this part of the world. After all, I am an old man. There is no certainty of my life, and at any moment I can collapse and it will not be surprising. BUT I WISH TO LEAVE SOME OF MY SPIRITUAL CHILDREN who have so kindly joined me in faith and respect so that they may work, and this philosophy of Krishna Consciousness may be broadcast all over the world. You are all educated, cultured, young boys and girls, and if you understand the philosophy it will be a great help for the suffering humanity."

(Letter to Jadurany, Book of Letters, #67-7-9)

"[...T]here is a program for construction of an American house for training preachers at Vrindaban. Vrindaban is the only solitary transcendental abode within this universe where Krishna Consciousness automatically reveals. Therefore I HAVE A GREAT HOPE TO TRAIN SOME OF MY DISCIPLES FOR PREACHING WORK, EVEN IN MY ABSENCE. I am now old man, and attacked with serious disease; I may be overcome by death at any moment. Therefore I WISH TO LEAVE SOME TRAINED PREACHERS so that they can do the work of Krishna Consciousness in the western world. That is my ambition. I hope you all pray to Krishna so I may be able to execute my duty properly."

(Letter to Janardan et al, 6/28/67)

The Guru and What Parbhupada Said (I n the Service of Iskcon)

Question Nine

Didn't you say that the guru had to be a pure devotee, an uttama-adhikari, a liberated person?

“AND WHO IS A LIBERATED PERSON? ONE WHO KNOWS KRISHNA. It is stated in BG, fourth chapter, anyone who knows Krishna in truth is immediately liberated, and after quitting the present body, he immediately goes to Krishna. That means he becomes a resident of Krishna Loka. As soon as one is liberated he is immediately a resident of Krishna Loka, and anyone who knows the truth of Krishna can become Spiritual Master. That is the version of Lord Caitanya.” (Letter to Mukunda 6/10/69)



“Generally the spiritual master comes from the group of such eternal associates of the Lord; but ANYONE WHO FOLLOWS THE PRINCIPLES OF SUCH EVER LIBERATED PERSONS IS AS GOOD AS ONE IN THE ABOVE MENTIONED GROUP. The gurus from nature's study are accepted as such on the principle that an elevated person in Krishna Consciousness does not accept anyone as disciple, but he accepts everyone as an expansion of his guru. That is very high position, called Maha-bhagavat. Just like Radharani, sometimes thinks a subordinate of hers as her teacher, to understand devotion of Krishna. A person who is liberated acharya and guru cannot commit any mistake, but THERE ARE PERSONS WHO ARE LESS QUALIFIED OR NOT LIBERATED, BUT STILL CAN ACT AS GURU AND ACHARYA BY STRICTLY FOLLOWING THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION. It is the injunction of the shastras that anyone who sees the Deity in the Temple as made of wood or stone, or considers the acharyas and gurus as ordinary common men, and discriminates Vaisnavas or devotees as belonging to a certain group or caste, are called hellish.”

(Letter to Janardana 4/26/68)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

"TRANSLATION

"A foolish person who manufactures his own ways and means through mental speculation and does not recognize the authority of the sages who lay down unimpeachable directions is simply unsuccessful again and again in his attempts.

"PURPORT

"At the present moment it has become fashionable to disobey the unimpeachable directions given by the acaryas and liberated souls of the past. Presently people are so fallen that they cannot distinguish between a liberated soul and a conditioned soul. A conditioned soul is hampered by four defects: he is sure to commit mistakes, he is sure to become illusioned, he has a tendency to cheat others, and his senses are imperfect. Consequently we have to take direction from liberated persons.

"This Krsna consciousness movement directly receives instructions from the Supreme personality of Godhead via persons who are strictly following His instructions. **ALTHOUGH A FOLLOWER MAY NOT BE A LIBERATED PERSON, IF HE FOLLOWS the supreme, liberated Personality of Godhead, his actions are naturally liberated from the contamination of the material nature. Lord Caitanya therefore says: 'By My order you may become a spiritual master.' ONE CAN IMMEDIATELY BECOME A SPIRITUAL MASTER by having full faith in the transcendental words of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and by following His instructions.**" (SB 4.18.5 ppt.)

"S.PRABHUPADA: Now, our point is that if you are not liberated how you can become leader? That is cheating.

D.P.: This is the... The political, socio-political... I don't know the sort of...

S.PRABHUPADA: Our point is that if you do not get knowledge from liberated person, that knowledge is useless. That is cheating. [...] It is very easy. Just like a child. If he takes your direction, he is liberated, and if he acts according to his childish nature, then he's conditioned. If you take Krsna's instruction, then you are liberated. If you manufacture your own idea then

Q. #9: *Doesn't the guru have to be a pure devotee?*

you are conditioned. Two things. Child is not actually liberated. He is child. But because he takes blindly the direction of the father, he's liberated. That is *mam eva ye prapadyante*. ANYONE WHO HAS SURRENDERED TO KRSNA AND STRICTLY FOLLOWS WHAT KRSNA SAYS, THEN HE IS LIBERATED. Otherwise not. If he manufactures idea then he's conditioned.

D.P.: It is what? *Sarva dharman parityajya?*

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes, and it is very easy: 'Henceforward I shall simply follow what Krsna says.' That's all. You become liberated immediately. IT IS ONE MINUTE'S TASK, SIMPLY TO DECIDE THAT 'NO MORE MY CONCOCTION, MY IMAGINATION.' THEN HE IS LIBERATED.

D.P.: But this decision, all these things [sic:] is done by the mind which has got all the *varṁas* of the past births.

S.PRABHUPADA: Mind may be, but if I ask the mind that 'You cannot do anything except what Krsna says,' then you are liberated. Very easy. You see? We are doing the same thing. We are not liberated. I am not liberated. But I am presenting *Bhagavad-gita* as it is. That's all. That's my doing.

D.P.: You mean *sve sve karmany abhiratah samsiddhim labhate narah*. That is your duty you have. That is what...

S.PRABHUPADA: So that verse is very important, that *mam eva prapadyante mayam etan taranti te*. AS SOON AS YOU BECOME FULLY SURRENDERED TO KRSNA, YOU ARE LIBERATED, NOT THAT LIBERATED MEANS ONE HAS TO GROW FOUR HANDS AND EIGHT LEGS. No. Simply you have to change the consciousness that 'Henceforward I shall act only as directed by Krsna.' That's all. You are liberated. It is one minute....

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

D.P.: How do you get that direction moment by moment, hour by hour?

S.PRABHUPADA: By His representative, by His words, they are present. Where is the difficulty to get His direction? *Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena*. One who has seen, one who has understood Kṛṣṇa, take direction from him. 'He's my representative.' *Yasya prasada bhagavat prasadah*. If you get right guru, then you are liberated. If you follow the direction, if you want to please him, *yasya prasada bhagavat prasadah*, then you are liberated. Otherwise, what is the meaning of this? *Mam eva ye prapadyante*. THERE IS NO NEED OF WAITING FOR LIBERATION. 'As soon as one surrenders to Me, he is immediately above the platform of *maya*.' *Aham tvam sarva papebhyo mokṣayisyami*. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

[...]

"Our system, *parampara* system, is that, for example, I am just a disciple of Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati. I don't say that I am liberated. I am conditioned. But because I am following the instruction of Bhaktisiddhanta, I'm liberated. This is the distinction between conditioned and liberated. WHEN ONE IS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF A LIBERATED PERSON... The same thing: Electricity. The copper is not electricity, but when it is charged with electricity if it is touched, that is electricity. And, similarly, this *parampara* system, the electricity is going. If you cut the *parampara* system, then there is no electricity. Therefore it is stressed so much. *Sa kalena mahata yogo nastah parantapa* [Bg 4.2: 'In course of time the succession was broken, and therefore the science as it appears to be lost']. The electricity is lost."

(Morning Walk, Bombay 1/4/77)

"Yes, [those who follow] they're also pure devotees because they're following my instruction. Just like a technician, he is expert, but somebody is assisting him. So the assistants, because they are following the instruction of the expert, therefore their work is also complete. So IT IS NOT NECESSARILY THAT ONE HAS TO BECOME PURE DEVOTEE IMMEDIATELY. Just like we are also following the instruction of our spiritual master. I DON'T CLAIM THAT I AM PURE DEVOTEE OR PERFECT, BUT MY ONLY QUALIFICATION IS THAT I AM TRYING TO FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTION OF THE PERFECT. Similarly... This is called disciplic

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succession. Just like here it is stated that Kṛṣṇa is the original spiritual master and Arjuna is the original student.

“[...I]f we follow Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa, then we get the perfect knowledge. We may not be cent percent perfect, but as far as possible, if we follow the instruction as it is, that much perfect. In this way one will get perfection. So one has to follow. The same example, try to understand, that a perfect, expert technologist or technician or mechanic is working, and somebody is working under his instruction. So this somebody, because he is strictly working under the instruction of the expert, he's also expert. He may not be cent percent expert, but his work is expert. Is that clear? Because he is working under the expert. Do you follow? So IF YOU FOLLOW PURE DEVOTEE, THEN YOU ARE ALSO PURE DEVOTEE. It may not be one is cent percent pure. Because we are trying to raise ourself from the conditional life. But IF WE STRICTLY FOLLOW THE PURE DEVOTEE, THEN WE ARE ALSO PURE DEVOTEE. So far we do, that is pure. So pure devotee does not mean one has to become immediately cent percent pure. But IF HE STICKS TO THE PRINCIPLE THAT 'WE'LL FOLLOW A PURE DEVOTEE,' THEN HIS ACTIONS ARE... HE IS AS GOOD AS A PURE DEVOTEE. It is not I am explaining in my own way. It is the explanation of *Bhagavat. Mahajana yena gatah sa panthah*. We have to follow the footprints of pure devotees.”

(Lecture, Los Angeles 11/25/68)

“THE INFLUENCE OF THE HOLY NAME IS EXHIBITED BY THE POWER DELEGATED TO THE DISCIPLE. That means if a disciple, by chanting the holy name in pursuance of the direction of the spiritual master, comes to the perfectional stage, [then] at that time, he is eligible to distribute the holy name to the world and is able to make disciples also. SIMPLY BY CHANTING THE HOLY NAME OF THE LORD, AND BECAUSE HE IS EMPOWERED NOW BY THE SPIRITUAL POTENCY OF THE LORD, HE CAN MAKE DISCIPLES ALL OVER THE WORLD. [By] such propaganda work, the whole world begins to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. Because in the form of the holy name, Kṛṣṇa Himself controls the whole world in that way.”

(Lecture, Seattle 10/21/68)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

D1: I remember over five years ago you telling me about, 'If you read the first nine cantos of *Srimad-Bhagavatam*, you become fully Krsna conscious.' Would you kindly tell me what does it mean to be fully Krsna conscious?

S.PRABHUPADA: What do you understand, fully Krsna conscious?

D1: What does it mean to be fully Krsna conscious?

S.PRABHUPADA: No, what you mean, first of all let me know.

D2: What do you think fully Krsna conscious means? You tell Prabhupada.

D1: It's to see Krsna face to face?

S.PRABHUPADA: That means Krsna conscious? Everyone is seeing Krsna face to face. When you go to the temple Krsna is there, and you are seeing. Does it mean everyone is Krsna conscious?

D1: No.

S.PRABHUPADA: Then what is the meaning of Krsna conscious?

D3: *Brahma-bhuta prasannatma na socati na kanksati.*

S.PRABHUPADA: Hm, that is part of Krsna consciousness, *brahma bhuta*. REAL KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS IS: 'KRSNA IS MASTER, I AM SERVANT.' This Is Krsna Consciousness.

D1: To understand that you're the servant and Krsna is the master. I see.

S.PRABHUPADA: When you fully understand, that is your Krsna... That is Krsna conscious. ...So long you think that 'I can also become like Krsna,' then you are not Krsna conscious.

D1: In other words, if you still have material desires you can't be fully Krsna conscious.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. That is the beginning of Krsna consciousness, *anyabhilasita-sunyam*. Make all your material desires zero.

D1: Thank you very much.

S.PRABHUPADA: That is Krsna conscious. You should only desire to serve Krsna. ...Clear or not?

D1: Very clear. Thank you very much.

D2: What if a person doesn't desire material enjoyment, but still, there is so much dirt?

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S.PRABHUPADA: Hm? Who is that person who has no material desires?

D2: A person really wants to be Kṛṣṇa conscious, but somehow or another, so much dirt gets in the way.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. Dirt means it is not yet zero. I said that all material desires should be made zero. *Anyabhilasita-sunyam*.

D2: As soon as the desires completely change, then everything else is purified.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. As Arjuna said, *karisyē vacanam tava nasto mohah*: 'Now my illusion is over. I agree to act as you say.' This is Kṛṣṇa conscious. *Nastah mohah smrtir labdha tvat prasadan madhusudana*. [...]The moha is there. *Moha* means these desires are illusion, like dreaming. In dream we see so many things. They are all false. In dreaming I am seeing that somebody is coming to kill me but there is nobody, but still, I am dreaming. This is called moha. So when one is free from *moha*, then he's Kṛṣṇa conscious."

(Morning Walk, Vrndavana 12/10/75)

"A conditioned soul in the material world has the disqualification of cheating. He has four disqualifications: he is sure to commit mistakes, he is sure to be illusioned, he is prone to cheat others, and his senses are imperfect. BUT IF ONE CARRIES OUT THE ORDER OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER BY DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, OR THE PARAMPARA SYSTEM, HE OVERCOMES THE FOUR DEFECTS." (SB 3.24.12)

"Liberated soul never says that 'I am liberated.' As soon as he says 'liberated' he's a rascal. A liberated soul will never say that, 'I am liberated.' Caitanya Mahaprabhu, He is God [still, He said] –*guru more murkha dekhi karila sasan*. 'My Guru Maharaja saw me a fool number one and he has chastised Me.' He's God. This is the example. IF ONE REMAINS ALWAYS A SERVANT EVERLASTINGLY OF GURU, THEN HE'S LIBERATED. And as soon as he thinks that he is liberated, he's a rascal. That is the teaching of Caitanya Mahaprabhu." (Conversation, Bombay 8/16/76)

"Kṛṣṇa Consciousness is itself Brahma platform, so all our students who are engaged in the service of God, they are not on the material platform. THEY ARE ALREADY LIBERATED..." (Letter to Sachisuta, 9/19/69)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“S.PRABHUPADA: So, when you want to learn something, you have to approach a teacher, and if the teacher is perfect, then you get perfect knowledge. This is the process. If the teacher is only another rascal like you, then whatever knowledge he may give you is useless. The teacher must be perfect; he must have real knowledge. Then he can teach. Therefore, the process is that you have to find out a perfect teacher. If you are fortunate, and you get such a perfect teacher, then you can learn everything. But if you approach a teacher who is blind as you are, then you don't learn anything.

DR.BENFORD: Are there many perfect teachers?

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. Otherwise, there is no question of accepting a teacher. The first perfect teacher is Krsna, and others are those who have learned from Him. For example, you are a scientist. Suppose I learn something from you. Even if I am not a scientist, because I have learned from you my knowledge is perfectly scientific.

DR.BENFORD: I don't understand.

S.PRABHUPADA: Suppose a child goes to a mathematics teacher, and he says, 'Two plus two equals four.' The child is not a mathematician, but if he accepts the teacher's teaching, 'Two plus two equals four,' and repeats that, then his knowledge is perfect.

DR.BENFORD: But how does one know when the teacher is perfect? It seems to be very difficult.

S.PRABHUPADA: No, it is not difficult. A TEACHER IS PERFECT WHO HAS LEARNED FROM A PERFECT TEACHER.

DR.BENFORD: But that merely removes the problem a step.

S.PRABHUPADA: No, it is not a problem. There is a perfect teacher, Krsna,

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who is accepted by all classes of teachers as their teacher. In India, the Vedic civilization is conducted by Vedic teachers. All these Vedic teachers accept Krsna as the supreme teacher. They take lessons from Krsna, and they teach the same message. That is the process.

DR.BENFORD: So everyone I might meet who accepts Krsna as the perfect teacher is the perfect teacher?

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes, because he is teaching only Krsna's teachings, that's all. It is the same as the example we gave before: they may not be personally perfect, but whatever they are speaking is perfect because it is taught by Krsna.

DR.BENFORD: Then you are not perfect.

S.PRABHUPADA: No, I am not perfect. None of us claims to be perfect; we have so many faults. But because we don't speak anything beyond Krsna's teachings, our teaching is therefore perfect..."

(Consciousness: The Missing Link, pgs. 13-14)

"J: Krsna says in *Bhagavad-gita* that one who knows Him knows everything.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. But IF HE KNOWS THAT KRSNA IS THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD, THEN HE KNOWS EVERYTHING. THAT'S ALL. Not that he should know as Krsna. If he... Yasmin vijnate sarvam eva vijnatam... If he accepts Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Absolute Truth, then he knows everything. That is finish."

(Morning Walk, Mayapur 4/8/75)

"As stated hereinbefore, there are three kinds of devotees of the Lord. The first-class devotee does not see anyone who is not in the service of the Lord, but the second-class devotee makes distinctions between devotees and

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

nondevotees. The second-class devotees are therefore meant for preaching work, and as referred to in the above verse, they must loudly preach the glories of the Lord. THE SECOND-CLASS DEVOTEE ACCEPTS DISCIPLES FROM THE SECTION OF THIRD-CLASS DEVOTEES OR NONDEVOTEES.

“SOMETIMES the first-class devotee also comes down to the category of the second-class devotee for preaching work. But the common man, who is expected to become at least a third-class devotee, is advised herein to visit the temple of the Lord and bow down before the Deity, even though he may be a very rich man or even a king with a silk turban or crown.” (SB 2.3.21 ppt.)

“13. He [the serious candidate for going back to Godhead] must not take on unlimited disciples. THIS MEANS THAT A CANDIDATE WHO HAS SUCCESSFULLY FOLLOWED THE FIRST TWELVE ITEMS CAN ALSO BECOME A SPIRITUAL MASTER HIMSELF, just as a student becomes a monitor in class with a limited number of disciples.”

(EJTOP, 7th Printing, pg.34)

“There are three divisions of devotees –first-class, second-class and third-class. EVEN THE THIRD-CLASS DEVOTEES ARE LIBERATED SOULS. It is explained in this verse that although they do not have knowledge, simply by seeing the beautiful decoration of the Deity in the temple, the devotee is absorbed in thought of Him and loses all other consciousness. Simply by fixing oneself in Krsna consciousness, engaging the senses in the service of the Lord, one is imperceptibly liberated. This is also confirmed in *Bhagavad-gita*. Simply by discharging uncontaminated devotional service as prescribed in the scriptures, one becomes equal to Brahman. In *Bhagavad-gita* it is said, brahma-bhuyaya kalpate.”

(SB 3.25.36 ppt.)

“One can thus conclude that when a person shows love for God and friendship for devotees, displays mercy towards the innocent and is reluctant to associate with nondevotees, HE MAY BE CONSIDERED A PURE DEVOTEE.”

(TLC Ch.11, 1974 Ed., pg.119)

Q. #9: *Doesn't the guru have to be a pure devotee?*

“Anyone from any part of the world who becomes well conversant in the science of Kṛṣṇa BECOMES A PURE DEVOTEE AND A SPIRITUAL MASTER FOR THE GENERAL MASS OF PEOPLE and may reclaim them by purification of heart.” (SB 2.4.18 ppt.)

“EVERY VAISNAVA IS A SPIRITUAL MASTER, and a spiritual master is automatically expert in brahminical behavior.” (C.c. Madhya 24.330 ppt.)

“SRILA BHAKTIVINODA THAKURA SAID THAT THE POSITION OF A VAISNAVA CAN BE TESTED BY SEEING HOW GOOD A TOUCHSTONE HE IS –that is, by seeing how many Vaisnavas he has made during his life. A Vaisnava should be a touchstone so that he can convert others to Vaisnavism by his preaching. [...] Kanistha-adhikari devotees cannot turn others into Vaisnavas, BUT A MADHYAMA-ADHIKARI VAISNAVA CAN DO SO BY PREACHING. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu advised His followers to increase the numbers of Vaisnavas.”

(C.c. M.24.277 purp. ppt.)

“Anyone who is coming to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he's not ordinary living being. ANYONE WHO IS CONNECTED WITH OUR MOVEMENT, HE'S NOT ORDINARY LIVING BEING. ACTUALLY HE'S LIBERATED SOUL.” (Vyasa Puja Lecture, London 8/21/73)

“You speak of pure devotee, that he is *saktavesha avatar*, that we should obey him only –these things are the wrong idea. IF ANYONE THINKS LIKE THAT, THAT A PURE DEVOTEE SHOULD BE OBEYED AND NO ONE ELSE, THAT MEANS HE IS A NONSENSE. We advise everyone to address one another as Prabhu. Prabhu means master, so how the master should be disobeyed? Others, they are also pure devotees. ALL OF MY DISCIPLES ARE PURE DEVOTEES. ANYONE SINCERELY SERVING THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS A PURE DEVOTEE, it may be Siddhaswarup or others, a-Siddhaswarup. This must be very clearly stated. It is not only that your Siddhaswarup is a pure devotee and not others. Do not try to make a faction. Siddhaswarup is a good soul. But others should not be misled. ANYONE WHO IS SURRENDERED TO THE SPIRITUAL

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MASTER IS A PURE DEVOTEE, it doesn't matter if Siddhaswarup or non-Siddhaswarup. Amongst ourselves one should respect others as Prabhu, master, one another. As soon as we distinguish here is a pure devotee, here is a non-pure devotee, that means I am a nonsense. Why you only want to be in the spiritual sky with Siddhaswarup? Why not all? If Siddhaswarup can go, why not everyone? Siddhaswarup will go, you will go, Shyamasundar will go, all others will go. We will have another ISKCON there."

(Letter to Tusta Krishna, 12/14/72)

The Guru and What Prabhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)

The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)

Question Ten

But, then, Srila Prabhupada, why do we see discrepancies?

J: ...But sometimes, from our material viewpoint, we see some discrepancies. Just like we think that...

S.PRABHUPADA: Because material viewpoint. The viewpoint is wrong, therefore you find discrepancies.

J: So we should think that we have the defect.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. Acarya is explained, *bhakti-samsanah*: 'ONE WHO'S PREACHING THE CULT OF DEVOTIONAL SERVICE, HE'S ACARYA.' Then why should you find any discrepancy?

J: Because we see... For instance, sometimes the acarya may seem to forget something or not to know something, so from our point of view, if someone has forgotten, that is...

S.PRABHUPADA: No, no, no. Then...

J: ...an imperfection.

S.PRABHUPADA: That is not the... Then you do not understand. ACARYA IS NOT GOD, OMNISCIENT. HE IS SERVANT OF GOD. HIS BUSINESS IS TO PREACH BHAKTI CULT. THAT IS ACARYA.

J: And that is the perfection.

S.PRABHUPADA: THAT IS THE PERFECTION. Hare Krsna.

J: So we have a misunderstanding about what perfection is?

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. PERFECTION IS HERE, HOW IS HE PREACHING BHAKTI CULT. THAT'S ALL.

[...]S: Prabhupada, in one purport in the *Bhagavad-gita* you write that a disciple of a bona fide spiritual master is supposed to know everything.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes, if he follows the spiritual master.



The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

S: But how could he know...? What does that mean, 'everything'?

S.PRABHUPADA: 'Everything' means whatever his guru knows, he should know. That much. Not like God, everything. Within his limits. That's all. If he tries to understand whatever his guru has said, that much is 'everything.' Otherwise, 'everything' does not mean that we know everything like God, like Krsna. That is not possible. IF HE REGULARLY CHANTS AND FOLLOWS THE REGULATIVE PRINCIPLES, FOLLOWS THE ORDER OF GURU, THEN HE KNOWS EVERYTHING. THAT'S ALL. NOT VERY MUCH. Knows everything... Then what is the use of reading books when he knows everything? [Break]

"...[E]verything... except Krsna. *Aham... Sarvasya caham hr̥di sannivistho*. He knows past, present, future, everything. You cannot expect anyone to know like Krsna everything.

J: Krsna says in *Bhagavad-gita* that one who knows Him knows everything.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. But IF HE KNOWS THAT KRSNA IS THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD, THEN HE KNOWS EVERYTHING. THAT'S ALL. Not that he should know as Krsna. If he... *Yasmin vijñate sarvam eva vijñatam...* If he accepts Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Absolute Truth, then he knows everything. That is finish." (Morning Walk, Mayapur 4/8/75)

Question Eleven

Srila Prabhupada, what if my guru is a monitor (quickly being turned into a janitor by some devotees who think he should get a job)?

“Thank you for your nice appreciation of the Spiritual Master. UNLESS ONE HAS GOT UTMOST CONFIDENCE IN BOTH SPIRITUAL MASTER AND KRSNA HE CANNOT ADVANCE ON THE PATH OF BHAKTI YOGA OF KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS. Please keep up this nice attitude and render service sincerely and your life will come to perfection, love of Krsna.” (Letter to Danavir, 2/11/71)



“GURUS CANNOT BE OF DIFFERENT TYPES. ALL GURUS ARE OF ONE TYPE.” (PQPA, Ch.3, pg. 28)

“Guru is only one. Guru means, as you explained, *ajnana-timirandhasya jnananjana-salakaya, caksur unmilitam yena tasmai sri-gurave namah*. One who eradicates the *ajnana, andhakara*, darkness. In the darkness, if somebody brings lamp, *ajnana-timirandhasya jnananjana-salakaya...*, the *jnana-rupa*, torchlight, he’s guru. SO MAYBE OF DIFFERENT DEGREES, BUT ANYONE WHO OPENS THE SPIRITUAL EYES, HE’S GURU.

“So..., but in the *sastras* it is said, *gurur api karyakaryakam ajanatah*, IF I ACCEPT SOME GURU, BUT IF LATER ON IT APPEARS THAT HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT IS TO BE DONE, WHAT IS NOT TO BE DONE, THEN SRILA JIVA GOSVAMI SAYS THAT SUCH GURU: *PARITYAGO VIDHIYATE*, SUCH GURU SHOULD BE REJECTED.

“BUT IT DOESN’T MATTER THAT DEGREE. ACTUALLY, IF THE GURU TEACHES KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS, THEN HE MAY BE IN LESSER DEGREE, BUT HE’S ACCEPTED AS GURU. THERE IS NO

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QUESTION OF REJECTION. Because Krsna is actually *jnana*, one who teaches Krsna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, “one has to know Krsna, one has to surrender to Krsna,” this kind of teaching is required.

[...] So the real test is whether the guru is a Vaisnava, whether he knows the science of Krsna. That is also confirmed by Caitanya Mahaprabhu: *kiba vipra kiba sudra nyasi kene naya, yei krsna-tattva vettha sei guru haya*. A... IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT HE IS, whether he's a *sannyasi* or a *grhastha* or a *brahmana* or a su..., born in *brahmana* family or.... It doesn't matter. *Yei krsna-tattva*, anyone who knows Krsna, he can become guru, not others. So that is the statement of the *sastras*. A *avaisnava* cannot become guru.”

(Lecture, Ahmedabad 12/13/72)

“What you have to do is simply try to understand what a genuine guru is. The definition of a genuine guru is that he is simply talking about God –that's all. If he is talking about some other nonsense, then he is not a guru. A GURU CANNOT BE BAD. THERE IS NO QUESTION OF A BAD GURU, any more than a red guru or a white guru. GURU MEANS 'GENUINE GURU.' All we have to know is that the genuine guru is simply talking about God and trying to get people to become God's devotees. IF HE DOES THIS, HE IS GENUINE.”

(SSR, 4th.Printing, pg.71)

“II: If one has accepted a bona fide spiritual master and he did not receive much knowledge from him, can he change his spiritual master at later...

S.PRABHUPADA: A bona fide spiritual master, where is the necessity of changing?

II: No, he has not got the knowledge from him, but... can I change..?

S.PRABHUPADA: No, no, bona fide spiritual means he must get knowledge. He must get knowledge. He must inquire from the... The student must inquire from the spiritual master. If he remains dumb, then what bona fide spiritual master can do? Adau gurv-asrayam sad-dharma-prcchat, jijnasuh. He must be jijnasuh. He must be jijnasuh. We get so many letters daily. So

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many inquiries. The student must be very inquisitive. Otherwise how he shall make progress? If he remains dumb, then what the bona fide spiritual master can do?

"If you go to a very nice school but if you do not study, if you do not inquire, then what is the use of going to the nice school? You must be also very alert to inquire, to understand, to make progress. Then it will be all right. If you do not utilize the benefit of having a bona fide spiritual master, then that is your fault. You must utilize the opportunity. We are publishing so many books, so many literatures, magazines, why? Just to enlighten more and more. But if you don't take advantage of this, then how can you make progress? CHANGE OF SPIRITUAL MASTER [sic:] REQUIRES WHEN THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS NOT BONA FIDE. OTHERWISE THERE IS NO NECESSITY OF CHANGING. (Lecture [Q&A], London 9/23/69)

"TRANSLATION

The spiritual master should be considered to be directly the Supreme Lord because he gives transcendental knowledge for enlightenment. Consequently, FOR ONE WHO MAINTAINS THE MATERIAL CONCEPTION THAT THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS AN ORDINARY HUMAN BEING, EVERYTHING IS FRUSTRATED. His enlightenment and his Vedic studies and knowledge are like the bathing of an elephant.

PURPORT

"IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT ONE HONOR THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AS BEING ON AN EQUAL STATUS WITH THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD. Saksad dharitvena samasta-sastraih. This is enjoined in every scripture. Acaryam mam vijaniyat. One should consider the acarya to be as good as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In spite of all these instructions, IF ONE CONSIDERS THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AN ORDINARY HUMAN BEING, ONE IS DOOMED. His study of the Vedas and his austerities and penances for enlightenment are all useless, like the bathing of an elephant. An elephant bathes in a lake quite thoroughly, but as soon as he comes on the shore it takes some dust from the ground and

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strews it over its body. Thus there is no meaning to the elephant's bath. One may argue by saying that since the spiritual master's relatives and the men of his neighborhood consider him an ordinary human being, what is the fault on the part of the disciple who considers the spiritual master an ordinary human being? This will be answered in the next verse, but THE INJUNCTION IS THAT THE SPIRITUAL MASTER SHOULD NEVER BE CONSIDERED AN ORDINARY MAN. One should strictly adhere to the instructions of the spiritual master, for if he is pleased, certainly the Supreme Personality of Godhead is pleased. *Yasya prasadam bhagavat-prasadam yasyaprasadan na gatih kuto'pi*.

"TRANSLATION

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, is the master of all other living entities and of the material nature. His lotus feet are sought and worshiped by great saintly persons like Vyasa. Nonetheless, there are fools who consider Lord Kṛṣṇa an ordinary human being.

PURPORT "The example of Lord Kṛṣṇa's being the Supreme Personality of Godhead is appropriate in regard to understanding the spiritual master. THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS CALLED SEVAKA-BHAGAVAN, THE SERVITOR PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD, and Kṛṣṇa is called sevya-bhagavan, the Supreme Personality of Godhead who is to be worshiped. THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS THE WORSHIPER GOD, whereas the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, is the worshipable God. This is the difference between the spiritual master and the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

"Another point: *Bhagavad-gita*, which constitutes the instructions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is presented by the spiritual master as it is, without deviation. Therefore the Absolute Truth is present in the spiritual master. As clearly stated in Text 26, *jvana-dipa-prade*. The Supreme Personality of Godhead gives real knowledge to the entire world, and the spiritual master, as the representative of the Supreme Godhead, carries the message throughout the world. THEREFORE, ON THE ABSOLUTE PLATFORM, THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD. If someone considers the Supreme Personality –Kṛṣṇa or Lord Rāmacandra– to

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be an ordinary human being, this does not mean that the Lord becomes an ordinary human being. Similarly, if the family members of the spiritual master, who is the bona fide representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, consider the spiritual master an ordinary human being, this does not mean that he becomes an ordinary human being. THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS AS GOOD AS THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD, AND THEREFORE ONE WHO IS VERY SERIOUS ABOUT SPIRITUAL ADVANCEMENT MUST REGARD THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IN THIS WAY. EVEN A SLIGHT DEVIATION FROM THIS UNDERSTANDING CAN CREATE DISASTER IN THE DISCIPLE'S VEDIC STUDIES AND AUSTERITIES.” (SB 7.15.26-27)

“Damodara pandita was a great devotee of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Sometimes, however, a person in such a position becomes impudent, being influenced by the external energy and material considerations. Thus a devotee mistakenly dares to criticize the activities of the spiritual master or the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Despite the logic that ‘Caesar’s wife must be above suspicion,’ a devotee should not be disturbed by the activities of his spiritual master and should not try to criticize him. A DEVOTEE SHOULD BE FIXED IN THE CONCLUSION THAT THE SPIRITUAL MASTER CANNOT BE SUBJECT TO CRITICISM AND SHOULD NEVER BE CONSIDERED EQUAL TO A COMMON MAN. Even if there appears to be some discrepancy according to an imperfect devotee’s estimation, the devotee should be fixed in the conviction that even if his spiritual master goes to a liquor shop, he is not a drunkard; rather, he must have some purpose in going there. it is said in a Bengali poem:

yadyapi nityananda sura-badi yaya

tathapio haya nityananda-raya

‘Even if I see that Lord Nityananda has entered a liquor shop, I shall not be diverted from my conclusion that Nityananda Raya is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.’” (Cc Antya 3.11)

“D: The spiritual master gives knowledge, and then a disciple is eternally indebted to the spiritual master.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes.

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D: It is not that, like Mayavadis, they serve the spiritual master in the beginning and then they...

S.PRABHUPADA: Then they...

D: ...themselves become...

S.PRABHUPADA: ...throw him away, 'Go away. I have now learned.' *Guru-mara-vidya*, the knowledge of how to kill guru. *Guru-mara-vidya*. Their, the philosophy is that you cannot rise up. You take a ladder. But AS SOON AS YOU RISE, THROW AWAY THE LADDER. NO MORE. NO MORE NEEDED. THAT IS MAYAVADA PHILOSOPHY. Our philosophy is *dhyayam stuvams tasya yasyas tri-sandhyam*. [I should always remember and praise the spiritual master. At least three times a day I should offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master.]

D: Three...

S.PRABHUPADA: Eternally. [...]We should always remain servant of the servant. NEVER WE SHALL THINK THAT 'I AM BETTER THAN MY GURU MAHARAJA. THAT IS FALL DOWN.'"

(Morning Walk, Los Angeles 12/5/73)

"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 Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

(Cc Madhya 24.330)

"A Spiritual Master is always liberated. In any condition of His life He should not be mistaken as ordinary human being. This position of a Spiritual Master

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is achieved by three processes. One is called *saddhan siddha*. That means one who is liberated by executing the regulative principle of devotional service. Another is *kripa siddha*, one who is liberated by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa or His devotee. And another is *nitya siddha* who is never forgetful of Kṛṣṇa throughout his whole life. These are the three features of the perfection of life.

“So far Narada Muni is concerned, in His previous life He was a maidservant’s son, but by the mercy of the devotees He later on became *siddha* and next life He appeared as Narada with complete freedom to move anywhere by the grace of the Lord. So even though He was in his previous life a maidservant’s son there was no impediment in the achievement of His perfect spiritual life. Similarly any living entity who is conditioned can achieve the perfectional stage of life by the above mentioned processes and the vivid example is Narada Muni. So I do not know why you have asked about my previous life. Whether I was subjected to the laws of material nature? So, even though accepting that I was subjected to the laws of material nature, does it hamper in my becoming Spiritual Master? What is your opinion?”

“From the life of Narada Muni it is distinct that although He was a conditioned soul in His previous life, there was no impediment of His becoming the Spiritual Master. This law is applicable not only to the Spiritual Master, but to every living entity. There are thousands of examples explained in our books that the conditioned soul is never affected with the material body. It is said in the Vedas *asanga ayam purusa* which means the living entity is always unaffected with matter. Another example is given that the reflection of the moon on water appears to be moving, but actually the moon is not moving, it is fixed up. So any living entity is like that. His reflection on the material body appears to be changing, but the spirit soul is fixed up, therefore this movement is called illusion.

“Liberation means liberation from this changing condition.”

(Letter to Tamal Krishna, 6/21/70)

The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)

Question Twelve

The problem is that he may fall down in the future, isn't that right?

S.PRABHUPADA: No, this argument is not very strong. Just like one foodstuff, freshly made, it is fresh. But if somebody argues that if it remains four days more it will become bad, that is surmisation. Now it is fresh. We take it fresh. What will happen in future, that is no consideration. In future, everyone may fall and everyone may become elevated. But WE HAVE TO TAKE HIS PRESENT SITUATION, WHAT HE IS AT PRESENT.

F: But couldn't it be the difference between appearance and reality?

S.PRABHUPADA: This is reality. If at the present moment he is free from all sinful activities, that is reality. In future, everyone is susceptible to fall down. If he does not carry the principles strictly. That proneness is there. But THAT IS NOT CONSIDERATION. WHAT HE IS AT PRESENT, THAT IS CONSIDERATION.

F: But what he is at present may be an accident.

S.PRABHUPADA: Why accident? Which is actually happening, why it is accident?

F: Well, for instance, if you take a man shipwrecked on an island alone, he is not in any sense taking part in impure love, or illicit love. But it doesn't mean to say that he is free from all desire for illicit love.

S.PRABHUPADA: No. Nobody's free. But SO LONG HE ACTS NICELY, HE'S NICE." (Conversation with Father Tanner, London 7/11/73)

"Originally, pure Krsna consciousness exists, but because of misuse of marginal independence there is a chance of forgetting Krsna. This is exhibited in actual life; THERE ARE MANY INSTANCES IN WHICH



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SOMEONE ACTING IN KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS SUDDENLY CHANGES. In the Upanisads it is stated, therefore, that the path of spiritual realization is just like the sharp edge of a razor. The example is very appropriate. One shaves his cheeks with a sharp razor very nicely, but as soon as his attention is diverted from the activity, he immediately cuts his cheek because he mishandles the razor.

“NOT ONLY MUST ONE COME TO THE STAGE OF PURE KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS, BUT ONE MUST ALSO BE VERY CAREFUL. ANY INATTENTIVENESS OR CARELESSNESS MAY CAUSE FALLDOWN. This falldown is due to false ego. From the status of pure consciousness, the false ego is born because of misuse of independence. WE CANNOT ARGUE about why false ego arises from pure consciousness. FACTUALLY, THERE IS ALWAYS THE CHANCE THAT THIS WILL HAPPEN, AND THEREFORE ONE HAS TO BE VERY CAREFUL.” (SB 3.26.23-24 ppt.)

“In this regard, there is the example of Bilvamangala Thakura, who, in his previous life, WAS ELEVATED ALMOST TO PREMA-BHAKTI, the highest platform of devotional service. However, SINCE THERE IS ALWAYS A CHANCE FOR A FALLDOWN, somehow or other he fell down. In his next life, he was born in a very rich *brahmana* family, in accordance with the principle enunciated in the Sixth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gita* (6.41): *sucinam srimatam gehe.*” (POP Ch.8, pg. 118)

“[S]O LONG YOU DO NOT FIND THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS DOING AGAINST THE PRINCIPLES OF SASTRA OR GURU, THEN IF YOU GIVE UP THE COMPANY OF SPIRITUAL MASTER, THAT IS NOT GOOD FOR YOU. THAT IS YOUR DOWNFALL.”

(*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 1.16.36, Tokyo, January 30, 1974)

“Not only does the illusory energy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead act on the conditioned soul within this material world, but sometimes it also acts on the most advanced learned scholars, who factually know the constitutional position of this material world through realization.

“As soon as someone thinks, ‘I am this material body (*aham mameti*) and everything in relationship with this material body is mine,’ he is in illusion

Q. #12: *Couldn't he fall down in the future?*

(moha). THIS ILLUSION CAUSED BY THE MATERIAL ENERGY ACTS ESPECIALLY ON THE CONDITIONED SOULS, BUT IT SOMETIMES ALSO ACTS ON LIBERATED SOULS AS WELL.

“A liberated soul is a person who has sufficient knowledge of this material world and is therefore unattached to the bodily conception of life. But because of association with the modes of material nature for a very long time, EVEN LIBERATED SOULS SOMETIMES BECOME CAPTIVATED BY THE ILLUSORY ENERGY DUE TO INATTENTIVENESS IN THE TRANSCENDENTAL POSITION. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa says in *Bhagavad-gīta* (7.14), *mam eva ye prapa-dyante mayam etam taranti te*: ‘Only those who surrender unto Me can overcome the influence of the material energy.’

“Therefore NO ONE SHOULD THINK OF HIMSELF AS A LIBERATED PERSON IMMUNE TO THE INFLUENCE OF MAYA. Everyone should very cautiously execute devotional service by rigidly following regulative principles. Thus he will remain fixed at the lotus feet of the Lord. Otherwise, a little inattention will create havoc. We have already seen an example of this in the case of Maharaja Bharata. Maharaja Bharata was undoubtedly a great devotee, but because he turned his attention slightly toward a small deer, he had to suffer two more births, one as a deer and another as the *brahmana* Jada Bharata. Afterward he was liberated and went back home, back to Godhead.

“The Lord is always prepared to excuse His devotee, but if a devotee takes advantage of the Lord’s leniency and purposefully commits mistakes again and again, the Lord will certainly punish him by letting him fall down into the clutches of the illusory energy. In other words, theoretical knowledge acquired by studying the Vedas is insufficient to protect one from the clutches of *maya*. One must strongly adhere to the lotus feet of the Lord in devotional service. Then one’s position is secure.” (SB 5.18.4 ppt.)

“EVERY PERSON ENGAGED IN THE TRANSCENDENTAL LOVING SERVICE OF THE LORD IN THIS MATERIAL WORLD IS PRONE TO SO MANY MATERIAL ACTIVITIES, and if one is not strong enough to protect himself against the onslaught of material affection, he may be diverted from the spiritual energy. In the material creation Brahma has to

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create all kinds of living entities with bodies suitable to their material conditions. Brahma wants to be protected by the Lord because he has to contact many, many vicious living entities. An ordinary *brahmana* may fall from the brahma-tejas, or the power of brahminical excellence, due to his association with many fallen, conditioned souls. BRAHMA, AS THE SUPERMOST BRAHMANA, IS AFRAID OF SUCH A FALLDOWN, AND THEREFORE HE PRAYS TO THE LORD FOR PROTECTION.

“THIS IS A WARNING FOR ONE AND ALL IN THE SPIRITUAL ADVANCEMENT OF LIFE. Unless one is sufficiently protected by the lord, he may fall down from his spiritual position; therefore one has to pray constantly to the Lord for protection and the blessing to carry out one’s duty. LORD CAITANYA ALSO ENTRUSTED HIS MISSIONARY WORK TO HIS DEVOTEES AND ASSURED THEM OF HIS PROTECTION AGAINST THE ONSLAUGHT OF MATERIAL AFFECTION. The path of spiritual life is stated in the Vedas to be like the edge of a sharpened razor. A little inattentiveness may at once create havoc and bloodshed, but ONE WHO IS A COMPLETELY SURRENDERED SOUL, ALWAYS SEEKING PROTECTION FROM THE LORD IN THE DISCHARGE OF HIS ENTRUSTED DUTIES, HAS NO FEAR OF FALLING INTO MATERIAL CONTAMINATION.” (SB 3.9.24)

“So these two things are always side by side—*Maya* and *Krsna*—*Krsna* is service and *Maya* is sense gratification, so EVERY MOMENT WE ARE PRONE TO BE SUBJUGATED BY EITHER OF THEM. Our duty is therefore to be very, very careful. The poison is personal ambition. So everyone has the chance, therefore one should not be complacent. DOUBTS MAY COME ABOUT, BUT ONE SHOULD BE FIRMLY FIXED UP THAT THERE CANNOT BE ANY DOUBT ON THE SPIRITUAL MASTER OR KRSNA.” (Letter to Satyabhama, 11/1/70)

“ANYWAY, MY DEAR BOY, PLEASE REMEMBER THAT MAYA IS VERY STRONG. ANY ONE OF US CAN BE ARRESTED BY HER AT ANY MOMENT IF WE ARE NOT STRONGLY ATTACHED TO KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS. So my request to you and all others is to follow the principles of Krishna Consciousness adherently and there is no danger however the *Maya* may be strong.” (Letter to Woomapati, 1/14/68)

The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)

The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)

Question Thirteen

And if the guru does fall down...?

"...[I]n the sastras it is said, *gurur api karyakaryakam ajanatah*, IF I ACCEPT SOME GURU, BUT IF LATER ON IT APPEARS THAT HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT IS TO BE DONE, WHAT IS NOT TO BE DONE, THEN SRILA JIVA GOSVAMI SAYS THAT SUCH GURU: *PARITYAGO VIDHIYATE*, SUCH GURU SHOULD BE REJECTED." (Lecture, Ahmedabad 12/13/72)



"So *gurun ahatva*. A devotee of Kṛṣṇa, if need be, if he's unqualified guru... Unqualified guru means who does not know how to guide the disciple. Guru's duty is to guide.

So such kind of guru can be at least rejected. That is Jiva Goswami's... *Karya-karyam ajanatah*. A GURU WHO DOES NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO AND WHAT NOT TO DO, BUT BY MISTAKE, BY MISTAKENLY I HAVE ACCEPTED SOMEBODY AS GURU, HE CAN BE REJECTED. BY REJECTING HIM, YOU CAN ACCEPT AN ACTUAL BONA FIDE GURU. SO GURU IS NOT KILLED, BUT HE CAN BE REJECTED. THAT IS THE INJUNCTION OF THE SASTRA. So Bhismadeva or Dronacarya, certainly they were gurus, but Kṛṣṇa indirectly giving indication to Arjuna, that "Although they are in the position of guru, you can reject them." *Karya-karyam ajanatah*. "They do not know factually." (Lecture, London 08/05/73)

"[W]hen one leaves a spiritual master, the spiritual master, there may be some reason. That reason is also given in the *sastra*, *gurur api avaliptasya karyakaryam ajanatah*. *Karya akarya*. IF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER DOES NOT KNOW WHAT IS ACTUALLY TO BE DONE, WHAT IS ACTUALLY NOT TO BE DONE, AND HE ACTS AGAINST THE RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE SASTRA, THEN SUCH SPIRITUAL MASTER MAY BE GIVEN UP. But so long you do not find

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

the spiritual master is doing against the principles of *sastra* or guru, then if you give up the company of spiritual master, that is not good for you. That is your downfall." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.16.36, Tokyo, January 30, 1974)

“Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura remarks that Bali Maharaja remained silent at a critical point. How could he disobey the instruction of Sukracarya, his spiritual master? It is the duty of such a sober personality as Bali Maharaja to abide by the orders of his spiritual master immediately, as his spiritual master had advised. But Bali Maharaja also considered that SUKRACARYA WAS NO LONGER TO BE ACCEPTED AS A SPIRITUAL MASTER, FOR HE HAD DEVIATED FROM THE DUTY OF A SPIRITUAL MASTER.

“According to *sastra*, the duty of the guru is to take the disciple back home, back to Godhead. If he is unable to do so and instead hinders the disciple in going back to Godhead, he should not be a guru. *Gurur na sa syat* (Bhag. 5.5.18). ONE SHOULD NOT BECOME A GURU IF HE CANNOT ENABLE HIS DISCIPLE TO ADVANCE IN KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS. The goal of life is to become a devotee of Lord Krsna so that one may be freed from the bondage of material existence (*tyaktva deham punar janma naiti mam eti so'rajuna*). The spiritual master helps the disciple attain this stage by developing Krsna consciousness.

“Now Sukracarya has advised Bali Maharaja to deny the promise to Vamanadeva. Under the circumstances, therefore, Bali Maharaja thought that there would be no fault if he disobeyed the order of his spiritual master. He deliberated on this point –should he refuse to accept the advise of his spiritual master, or should he independently do everything to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead? He took some time. Therefore it is said, *tusnim bhutva ksanam rajann uvacavahito gurum*. After deliberating on this point, he decided that Lord Visnu should be pleased in all circumstances, even at the risk of ignoring the guru’s advice to the contrary.

“ANYONE WHO IS SUPPOSED TO BE A GURU BUT WHO GOES AGAINST THE PRINCIPLE OF VISNU-BHAKTI CANNOT BE

Q. #13: *And if the guru does fall down...?*

ACCEPTED AS GURU. If one has falsely accepted such a guru, ONE SHOULD REJECT HIM. Such a guru is described as follows (Mahabharata, Udyoga 179.25):

*guror apy avaliptasya
karyamkaryam ajanatah
utpatha-pratipannasya
parityago vidhiyate*

"Srila Jiva Gosvami has advised that such a useless guru, a family priest acting as guru, should be given up, and that THE PROPER, BONA FIDE GURU SHOULD BE ACCEPTED."

*sat-karma-nipuno vipro
mantra-tantra-visaradah
avaisnavo gurur na syad
vaisnavah svapaco guruh*

"A scholarly *brahmana* expert in all subjects of Vedic knowledge is unfit to become a spiritual master without being a Vaisnava, but if a person born in a family of a lower caste is a Vaisnava, he can become a spiritual master."
(Padma Purana) (SB 8.20.1 ppt.)

The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)

Question Fourteen

Srila Prabhupada, it really seems that only someone like you can do it.

Shouldn't people just wait until such a vaisnava messiah appears?

“S.PRABHUPADA: EVERY ONE OF US [IS] MESSIAH. Anyone Krsna conscious, he's the messiah. Everyone. Why...? All of us. *Gaurangera bhakta-gane, jane jane sakti dhari, brahmando tari saksi:* 'The devotee of Lord Caitanya, everyone has so immense power that every one, they can deliver the whole universe.' *Gaurangera bhakta-jane, jane jane sakti..., brahmando tari...* That is Gauranga's men.

D: Only you are that powerful, Srila Prabhupada. We're like ...

S.PRABHUPADA: Why you are not? You are my disciples.

D: We're like the bugs.

S.PRABHUPADA: 'Like father, like son.' You should be. *Gaurangera bhakta... jane.* Everyone. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, *amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa.* HE ASKED EVERYONE, 'JUST BECOME GURU.' Follow His instruction. You become guru. *Amara ajnaya.* 'What I say, you do. You become a guru.' Where is the difficulty? 'And what is Your ajna?' *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa.* Bas. Everything is there in the *Bhagavad-gita.* You simply repeat. That's all. You become guru. To become a guru is not difficult job. Follow Caitanya Mahaprabhu and speak what Krsna has said. Bas. You become guru." (Morning Walk, Bombay 4/13/77)



The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“Just as an aerial message is transmitted from one place to another, similarly, this Guru *parampara* system is working. MY DISCIPLES ARE MY AGENTS, MY REPRESENTATIVES, SO BY HEARING IT FROM THEM, YOU ARE RECEIVING IT FROM ME. And because you are a sincere soul, those who are hearing the Mantra from you are receiving it in DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION, FROM LORD CAITANYA AND FROM LORD KRISHNA.”

(Letter to Andrea Temple, 3/6/68)

The Guru and What Prabhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)

The Guru and What Parbhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)

Question Fifteen

*Prabhupada, it seems so difficult
to become a spiritual master.*

How can anyone these days...?

“YOU WILL HAVE TO BECOME SPIRITUAL MASTER... you... all my disciples... you... everyone should become spiritual master. IT IS NOT DIFFICULT. It is difficult when you manufacture something, but if you simply present whatever you have heard from your spiritual master, IT IS VERY EASY. If you want to become over-intelligent... to present something, to interpret something... whatever you have heard from your spiritual master you can make some further addition or alteration, then you will spoil the whole thing; then you spoil everything... Remain always a servant of your spiritual master and present the thing as you have heard –you will be spiritual master. This is the secret.



“...SO CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU SAYS *amara ajnaya guru hana tara' ei desa, yare dekha, tare kaha 'krsna'-upadesa...* He says *amara ajnaya...* ‘by My order you become a spiritual master....’ So one may be very illiterate, no education, no scholarship, may not be born in a *brahmana* family, OR MAY NOT BE A SANNYASI –there are so many qualifications. But one may not have all these qualifications. HE MAY BE RASCAL NUMBER ONE. But still he can become spiritual master. ...How? *Amara ajnaya!!!* As Krsna says, as Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, if you follow, then you become spiritual

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

master. ONE MAY BE RASCAL NUMBER ONE FROM MATERIAL ESTIMATION, BUT IF HE SIMPLY STRICTLY FOLLOWS WHATEVER IS SAID BY CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU OR HIS REPRESENTATIVE SPIRITUAL MASTER, THEN HE BECOMES A GURU.

[...]“SO IT IS NOT VERY DIFFICULT. ONE MAY NOT THINK THAT, ‘I AM NOT QUALIFIED TO BECOME GURU.’ No! you are qualified! ...if you follow strictly the *parampara* system, then you are qualified. That’s all. Amara Ajnaya guru. And what is the difficulty? Caitanya Mahaprabhu says don’t feel any difficulty. Because as spiritual master what you have to do? *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa*. Whomever you meet you simply speak to him the instruction which Krsna gives.

[...]“So if you simply preach this cult, “My dear friend, my dear brother, you surrender to Krsna.” You become spiritual master. You become spiritual master. You go door to door. No other talks.

[...]“Just adhere yourself to the lotus feet of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Then you become spiritual master. That’s all. SO I HOPE THAT ALL OF YOU, MEN, WOMEN, BOYS AND GIRLS, BECOME SPIRITUAL MASTER AND FOLLOW THIS PRINCIPLE. Spiritual master, simply, sincerely, follow the principles and speak to the general public. Then Krsna becomes your favorite. Krsna does not become your favorite; you become Krsna’s favorite. Krsna says in the *Bhagavad-gita*, na ca tasmad manusyesu kascin me priya-krttamah. “One who is doing this humble service of preaching work, Krsna consciousness, nobody is dearer than him to Me.” SO IF YOU WANT TO BECOME RECOGNIZED BY KRSNA VERY QUICKLY, YOU TAKE UP THIS PROCESS OF BECOMING SPIRITUAL MASTER, present the *Bhagavad-gita* as it is, your life is perfect. Thank you very much.” (Vyasa-puja Address, London 8/22/73)

"So we got this information from His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura, and that knowledge is still going on. You are receiving through his servant. And IN FUTURE THE SAME KNOWLEDGE WILL GO TO YOUR STUDENTS. THIS IS CALLED PARAMPARA SYSTEM. Evam *parampara* prap... IT IS NOT THAT YOU HAVE BECOME A STUDENT AND YOU'LL REMAIN STUDENT. NO. ONE DAY YOU SHALL BECOME ALSO GURU AND MAKE MORE STUDENTS, MORE STUDENTS, MORE. THAT IS CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU'S

Q. #15: *Isn't it very difficult to become a guru?*

MISSION, not that perpetually... Yes, ONE SHOULD REMAIN PERPETUALLY A STUDENT, BUT HE HAS TO ACT AS GURU. THAT IS THE MISSION OF CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU. It is not that because I am acting as guru, I am no longer student. No, I am still student. Caitanya Mahaprabhu taught us this instruction that we shall always remain a foolish student before our Guru Maharaja. That is the Vedic culture. I may be very big man, but still, I should remain a foolish student to my guru. That is the qualification. *Guru more murkha dekhi' karila sasana [Cc. Adi 7.71]*. We should be always prepared to be controlled by the guru. That is very good qualification. *Yasya prasada bhagavat-prasada. Ara na kariha mane asa*. So we should become always a very obedient student to our guru. That is the qualification. That is the spiritual qualification.

(Lecture, Hyderabad 12/10/76)

“IT IS SRI CAITANYA’S WISH THAT EVERYONE SHOULD BECOME A VAISNAVA AND GURU. Following the instructions of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His disciplic succession, one can become a spiritual master, for THE PROCESS IS VERY EASY. One can go everywhere and anywhere to preach the instructions of Krsna. [...]The DUTY of every Vaisnava is to travel and preach *Bhagavad-gita*, either in his country or a foreign country.”

(C.c. M. 24.277 ppt.)

“‘HOW SHALL I BECOME GURU? I have no qualification.’ CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU SAID, ‘YOU DON’T REQUIRE ANY QUALIFICATION. YOU SIMPLY REQUIRE ONE QUALIFICATION, that you repeat the instruction of *Bhagavad-gita*. That’s all.’ Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa. That’s all. You become a guru. Don’t adulterate krsna-upadesa like a rascal or nonsense. Present it as it is —*Bhagavad-gita*. Then you become a guru. You can become a guru in your family, you can become a guru in your society, your nation —wherever you are. And if it is possible, you go outside and preach this mission of *Bhagavad-gita*. Therefore our movement’s name is Krsna consciousness. Whatever Krsna says, you accept and preach. You become guru. Thank you very much.”

(Sannyasa Initiation, Mayapur 3/16/76)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“[A]mara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa. This instruction was given in South India when Caitanya Mahaprabhu was traveling in South India. So many people... He was attractive, and... ‘Sir, take me with You. Sir, take me with You.’ He traveled in the villages, villages, very extensively. Especially He traveled in South India.

“So at that time this instruction was given to some South Indian *brahmana*, ‘My dear sir, better stay here. Don’t come with Me. You try to preach My philosophy. You haven’t got to come with Me.’ So He said, *amara ajnaya guru hana*, that ‘Why you want to come with Me? My mission is this. IF YOU WANT TO HELP ME, THEN YOU BECOME A GURU UNDER MY INSTRUCTION. YOU BECOME A GURU.’ ‘Sir, I have no education. I am not a *brahmana*. I am this. I am that. How can I become guru?’

“So Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa*.” Where you are living, you just try to deliver them. But you become a guru.” “How I shall become?” *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa*: “SIMPLY YOU INSTRUCT WHAT KRSNA HAS SAID, THAT’S ALL. THEN YOU BECOME GURU. You don’t require any other qual...” “No, I am not a *brahmana*, I am *sudra*, I am this or...” That is also all right because He said to Ramananda Raya when... He was *sudra*. He was talking with Caitanya Mahaprabhu but he was very learned devotee. So he was feeling hesitation that “Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s coming from very high grade *brahmana* and He is *sannyasi*. His position is very exalted. I am a *sudra*. How I can advise Him?” He was questioning and Ramananda Raya was answering. So the answer-giver is in superior position, so he hesitated. So while he was hesitating, Caitanya Mahaprabhu encouraged him, *kiba sudra kiba vipra nyasi kene naya, ye krsna tattva vetta sei guru haya*. He said, “It doesn’t matter whether you are a *brahmana* or a *sudra* or... These are all bodily conception of life. You become above the bodily conception of life. You simply try to understand Krsna. *Yei krsna tattva vetta*.” (Lecture Nel 1/4/76)

“Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu strictly followed Krsna. That is his grace: *yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa / amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa*: ‘Instruct everyone to follow the orders of Lord Sri Krsna as they are given in the

Q. #15: Isn't it very difficult to become a guru?

Srimad-Bhagavatam and *Bhagavad-gita*. In this way become a spiritual master and try to liberate everyone in this land.' (Caitanya-caritamṛta, Madhya-līla, Chapter 7, Verse 128.)

"THIS MEANS THAT CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU ADVISES EVERYONE, ESPECIALLY EVERY INDIAN, TO BECOME A GURU UNDER HIS ORDER. And when there is a question what is His order, that is explained in the next line: you simply repeat the instructions of Kṛṣṇa, that is, *Bhagavad-gita*, to everyone whom you may meet. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission is as good as that of Kṛṣṇa, but sometimes non-devotees misunderstand purposefully or foolishly the instruction given by Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gita*. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu says that you strictly follow the instructions of Kṛṣṇa and preach it to everyone. Therefore our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is based on the advise of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to preach the *Bhagavad-gita* As It Is."

(Letter to Shree Shastri, 11/14/75)

"This time I have requested all Nairobi important friends that 'Now you take *sannyasa* and become guru. Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahaprabhu asked everyone to become guru.' Amara ajnaya guru haya tara ei desa.' You have come to Africa. Now become their guru and deliver them.' 'Now, how shall I do it?' *Yare dekha tare kaha kṛṣṇa upadesa:*' Simply speak. Don't become very big. SIMPLY SPEAK WHAT KṚṢṆA HAS DONE. THAT'S ALL. YOU BECOME GURU.'

(Conversation, Bombay 11/3/75)

"Just like a post peon who gives you five thousand rupees, delivers. He does not deliver. Somebody else is delivering. He's simply carrying. That's all. Similarly, IF WE SIMPLY CARRY THE MESSAGE OF KṚṢṆA AS IT IS, WE BECOME PERFECT. IT IS NOT VERY DIFFICULT. IF I SIMPLY CARRY THE MESSAGE OF KṚṢṆA, WHERE IS THE DIFFICULTY? Everything is there. Kṛṣṇa has said everything. Kṛṣṇa says, man-mana mad-bhakto mad-yaji mam namaskuru. We carry this message. Just always think of Kṛṣṇa, always offer obeisances to Kṛṣṇa, become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa. Man-manah, think of Kṛṣṇa always. We have to carry this message. Where is the difficulty?

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“So TO BECOME A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER, THERE IS NO DIFFICULTY. If you, simply, if we carry the message of Krsna as it is without any adulteration. So we must find out a person who is actually bona fide spiritual master by this test, that he’s not. I mean to say adulterating Krsna’s message. He’s not playing howl with the message of Krsna in order to introduce himself, his person. He’s simply presenting the message of Krsna as it is. Then he’s spiritual master. Nobody else.” (NOD Vrndavana 10/31/72)

“So preaching is our life. The more we preach, the more we are successful. *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa*. This is Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s preaching. *Amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa*, yare dekha, tare kaha krsna-upadesa. This is Caitanya Mahaprabhu. EVERYONE OF YOU BECOME GURU AND DELIVER THE RESIDENTS OF YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD. EI DESA. WHEREVER YOU ARE LIVING, JUST DELIVER THEM. BECOME THEIR GURU. How to become guru? It is not difficult. *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa*. What Krsna has said instruct them. You simply repeat it, that’s all. You become guru.

“So this should be preached all over the world. You learn from *Bhagavad-gita* and repeat. You simply say, ‘Krsna said four things: man mana bhava mad bhakto mad yaji mam namaskuru. ’Just always think of Me.’ Krsna said. ‘And just become My devotee. Just worship Me and offer obeisances.’ Kindly do these things.’ So IF YOU CAN INDUCE ONE PERSON TO DO THESE FOUR THINGS, YOU BECOME GURU. IS THERE ANY DIFFICULTY? ‘Then you become a devotee of Krsna.’ How? ‘Always think of Krsna. Worship Krsna and offer obeisances. Here is our temple, please come, offer obeisances. Offer little flower if you can secure. Otherwise, obeisances sufficient. And chant Hare Krsna.’ You become guru.

“TO INFORM THIS MESSAGE IS DIFFICULT? NOT AT ALL. You may carry the message. If he’s fortunate, he’ll do it. EVEN HE DOES NOT DO IT, YOU ARE CARRYING THE MESSAGE, YOU BECOME RECOGNIZED BY KRSNA. NA CA TASMAN MANUSYESU KASCIN ME PRIYA-KRTTAMAH. YOU ARE DOING SINCERELY, THEN YOU ARE RECOGNIZED BY KRSNA. Just like a canvasser, salesman, goes to the market, tries his best to secure some business. The master sees the report how he has worked. Even though he has not secured a single paisa business, but he

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has tried to introduce the goods, then he's bona fide. He's bona fide. Similarly, we have to simply carry the message of Krsna and try to convince people. If one is convinced, it is good, if not, doesn't matter. I am not going to... Then you are recognized by Krsna. RECOGNITION MEANS YOU BECOME THE DEAREST SERVANT OF KRSNA. THEN WHAT DO YOU WANT MORE? IF KRSNA RECOGNIZES THAT 'YOU ARE MY MOST DEAR SERVANT,' THEN WHAT DO YOU WANT MORE? *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna-upadesa.*" (Conversation, Paris 8/2/76)

"Our mission is that especially those who have taken their birth in India that it is their responsibility to become perfect in the science of Krsna Consciousness and to deliver everyone in the world. In this way everyone is expected to become guru. But how to be a guru? It is said that one simply has to repeat the instructions that Krsna has given. IF HE REPEATS WITHOUT ADDING OR SUBTRACTING ANYTHING, THEN HE IS QUALIFIED AS GURU. Actually there is only one guru—Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So THOSE WHO SIMPLY REPEAT HIS WORDS, THEY ALSO BECOME GURU. But of course a guru never thinks himself as being God. He only thinks himself as the servant of the servant of the servant: *gopi bhartur pada-kamalayor das dasanudasa.*"

(Letter to H.J. Bhatia, 11/23/75)

"Evam *parampara*-praptam. We have to take knowledge by the disciplic succession. ...Krsnas tu bhagavan svayam. *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa.* Caitanya Mahaprabhu's, this Krsna consciousness movement propaganda, what is this propaganda? HE SAYS THAT 'EVERY ONE OF YOU BECOME GURU.' He wants not rascal imitation guru but real guru. That He wants.

"Because people are in darkness, WE REQUIRE MANY MILLIONS OF GURUS to enlighten them. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission is, He said, that 'Every one of you become guru.' *Amara ajnaya guru haya tara ei desa.* You haven't got to go foreign countries. Wherever you are, you teach; become guru. It doesn't matter. *Ei desa.* He says, *ei desa.* If you have got power, you can go other country but it doesn't require. In whichever village,

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

whichever country or town you are, you become a guru. This is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission. *Amara ajnaya guru haya tara ei desa.*' This country, this place.'

"So 'but I have no qualification. how can I become guru?' THERE IS NO NEED OF QUALIFICATION. 'Still, I can become guru?' Yes. 'How?' *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa:*' Whomever you meet, you simply instruct what Krsna has said.' That's all. You become guru. Everyone is very anxious to become guru, but rascal does not know how to become guru, a simple thing.

"So many gurus come from India in this country, all rascal, but they will not speak what Krsna has instructed. Maybe for the first time this has begun in Krsna consciousness. Otherwise all rascals, they instructed something else, some meditation, this, that, all cheating. REAL GURU IS HE WHO INSTRUCTS WHAT KRSNA HAS SAID. It is not that you manufacture your teaching. No. That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu. There is no need of manufacturing. The instruction is already there. You have simply to say, 'This is this.' That's all. Is it very difficult task?

"Father said, 'This is microphone.' A child can say that 'Father said this is microphone.' He becomes guru. Where is the difficulty? The authority, father, has said, 'This is microphone.' A child only can say, 'This is microphone.' So similarly, Krsna says that 'I am the Supreme.' So if I say, 'Krsna is the Supreme,' where is my difficulty, unless I cheat others to become the Krsna or the Supreme? That is cheating. But if I say the simple truth, that 'Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the proprietor of everything. He is to be worshiped,' then where is my difficulty?

"So that is our mission. ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE COME TO KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT, THAT IS OUR REQUEST, THAT YOU, ALL OF YOU, BECOME GURU but don't speak nonsense. That our is request. Simply speak what Krsna has said. Then you become *brahmana*. You'll be guru, and everything. Thank you very much."

(Lecture, Honolulu 5/21/76)

"So Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission is *para upakara*. And He advises everyone, especially Indians, to become guru. He said, *amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa.* 'Every one of you, you become a guru, and try to deliver the persons where you are living.' So how can I become guru? Yes, it is very easy. What is that? *Yare dekha tare kaha 'krsna' upadesa.* Then you become guru. You simply repeat what Krsna has said in the *Bhagavad-gita*, you become

Q. #15: Isn't it very difficult to become a guru?

guru. To become guru is not... But if you want to be a bluffer, cheater, then you can talk all nonsense. But IF YOU ACTUALLY TALK ONLY KRSNA'S WORDS, THEN YOU BECOME A GURU. IT'S NOT VERY DIFFICULT." (Lecture, Toronto 6/20/76)

"Make sure that they are well aware of the four rules and regulations and that they are fixed in chanting the prescribed number of 16 rounds daily on the beads. Without these two principles no one can make advancement on the path of regulated bhakti. Teach them the science of the Bhagavad gita and train them to be first class representatives of Krsna. IT IS NOT VERY DIFFICULT, simply one has to hear from the perfect authority who is in disciplic succession from Krsna Himself, and then repeat the same message without any change. IF ONE DOES THIS THEN HE IS QUALIFIED TO BECOME GURU." (Letter to Jayadharmā, 8/20/76)

"Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, *amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa*. HE ASKED EVERYONE, 'JUST BECOME GURU.' Follow His instruction. You become guru. *Amara ajnaya*. 'What I say, you do. You become a guru.' Where is the difficulty? 'And what is Your ajna?' *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa*. Bas. Everything is there in the *Bhagavad-gita*. You simply repeat. That's all. YOU BECOME GURU. TO BECOME A GURU IS NOT DIFFICULT JOB. FOLLOW CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU AND SPEAK WHAT KRSNA HAS SAID. BAS. YOU BECOME GURU."

(Morning Walk, Bombay 4/13/77)

"S.PRABHUPADA:...Caitanya Mahaprabhu says that 'You become guru.' *Amara ajnaya guru hana*...You understand Bengali?

D: Just smattering of it.

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. *Amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa*. Suppose you are living in that village. Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, 'You become a guru here.' Here. You haven't got to go out. *Ei desa*, 'where you are living.' Just see how nice it is. *Amara ajnaya*: 'By My order, you become a guru and deliver the people of this place.' This is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's... 'So I am not a guru.'

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

I do not know. How I shall become?' NO, YOU HAVEN'T GOT TO BOTHER. *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa:* 'SIMPLY YOU REPEAT WHAT KRSNA HAS SAID.' YOU BECOME GURU. THAT'S ALL. Everyone can do that. Gita is there. You sit down in your place and preach *Bhagavad-gita* and try to induce them to take it. YOU BECOME GURU."

(Conversation, Bombay 4/23/77)

"OUR CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU'S MISSION IS THAT 'YOU BECOME GURU,' as I was telling, 'AND TEACH, DELIVER PERSONS WHERE YOU ARE.' If you say, 'How can I become guru?' There is no difficulty. SIMPLY REPEAT THE WORDS OF BHAGAVAD-GITA. THAT'S ALL. YOU BECOME GURU. SO OUR MISSION IS TO CREATE REAL GURU, NOT THESE JUGGLERS. AND REAL GURU IS HE WHO SPEAKS ON BEHALF OF KRSNA. And that is wan[ted] ... IT IS VERY SIMPLE.

"...This is our mission. Everything is there. Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *yare dekha tare kaha krsna upade...*' YOU SIMPLY MAKE YOUR LIFE SUCCESSFUL BY UNDERSTANDING BHAGAVAD-GITA AND PREACH THIS. YOU BECOME GURU.' So where is the difficulty? WHY DON'T YOU DO THAT?"

(Conversation, Bombay 4/24/77)

"We repeat. We don't manufacture. What is the use of manufacturing? I am imperfect. Whatever I manufacture, that is imperfect. So better to repeat the words of the perfect. That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's mission. HE SAID, 'EVERY ONE OF YOU BECOME GURU AND DELIVER YOUR SURROUNDING PERSONS, EITHER YOU ARE IN FAMILY OR IN NEIGHBORHOOD OR IN SOCIETY OR IN NATION, AS MUCH AS YOU CAN.' *Amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa.* So whatever limited circle, YOU JUST BECOME GURU AND DELIVER THEM.

"Deliver means deliver from the ignorance. Everyone is in ignorance, *dehatma-buddhih. Yasyatma-buddhih kunape tri-dhatuke, sa eva go-kharah.* So we have to teach them that 'You are not this body. You are pure soul. Your business is different. And that is enlightenment. THAT IS THE BUSINESS OF GURU.

Q. #15: Isn't it very difficult to become a guru?

“So we can do that business. And how to do it? That is... Caitanya Mahaprabhu says, *yare dekha tare keha krsna upadesa*. You haven't got to manufacture anything. What Krsna has already said, you repeat. Finish. DON'T MAKE ADDITION, ALTERATION. THEN YOU BECOME GURU. VERY SIMPLE THING. If I say that “My father said, ‘This is a bell,’” I am correct because I have learned it from my father, authority. I may be fool, rascal. It doesn't matter. But because I have learned it from the authority and presenting it that ‘This is a bell,’ this is perfect.

“Similarly, I cannot become guru because I am imperfect. My senses are imperfect. I cannot see even what is beyond this wall, although I am very much proud of my eyes. I want to see. What you can see? Imperfect, all senses. But if some authority says that ‘Beyond this wall this is the.., like this,’ it is all right. SO WE HAVE TO FOLLOW THIS PATH, THAT YOU BECOME GURU, DELIVER YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD MEN, ASSOCIATES, BUT SPEAK THE AUTHORITATIVE WORDS OF KRSNA. Then it will act. So our, this Krsna consciousness movement is like that. We do not manufacture ideas. That has spoiled the whole world.”

(Conversation, Hrisikesa 5/11/77)

“This is very easy. So I am not a scholar. I am simply... Whatever is said there, I am trying to distribute in a palatable way. That's all. It is not my manufacture. And that is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's... *Amara ajnaya guru hana tara ei desa*. YOU ALL BECOME GURU. ‘How can I become guru? I have no education. I have no knowledge.’ No, you haven't got to acquire all these things. That is already... *Yare dekha tare keha*. Finished. So I never tried to become a scholar. But I tried. Whatever is spoken by Krsna, deliver. That's all. And that is guru.”

(Conversation, Vrndavana 6/26/77)

“We simply repeat. That is our business. We are not learned scholars. But our mission is to repeat the words of Krsna. That is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's order. He says, *amara ajnaya guru haya tara ei desa*: ‘You become guru.’ ‘Now, how shall I become guru? I am neither learned nor Vedantist, neither *sannyasi*. How can I become guru?’ ‘NO, NO, YOU HAVE NO DIFFICULTY. YOU, ON MY ORDER, BECOME GURU SIMPLY...’ *Yare dekha tare kaha krsna upadesa*. Bas. ‘YOU BECOME GURU. WHOMEVER

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

YOU MEET, YOU SIMPLY TRY TO CONVINC HIM WHAT KRSNA HAS SPOKEN. THEN YOU BECOME GURU.' SO WE REQUEST EVERYONE THE SAME THING. AND BECOME GURU. IT IS VERY URGENTLY NECESSARY. People are becoming godless, atheist, nonbelievers, and they are suffering. So every village, every home, every neighborhood, they require guru. But who will be guru? One who repeats the instruction of Krsna. *Yare dekha tare kaha*. IT IS VERY EASY."

(Conversation, Hrishikesh 5/12/77)

"Interviewer: What is your hierarchy in Krsna conscious? That is, do you have anything comparable to bishops and the hierarchy of the Christian faith and of other major faiths? That is, you are the spiritual preceptor, and who are all those below you, between you and the congregation, the members?

"Prabhupāda: It is not exactly the hierarchy, but in the Christian method, Roman Catholic method, the process of the Pope, Archbishop, and..., that is very nice. There is no objection of us. But our point is that Krsna consciousness is lacking. In spite of all arrangement, if people lost faith in God, so simply by hierarchy, what is the benefit there? There is no benefit. You see? *Bambarambhe laghu-kriya*, in the Sanskrit word, that you can make a very high-grade arrangement, but the result is zero. So that hierarchical arrangement is exactly not in Krsna consciousness. But OUR METHOD IS VERY SIMPLE. IF ONE IS FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO MEET A BONA FIDE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND IF HE ACTS STRICTLY UNDER HIS DISCIPLINE, HE ALSO BECOMES WITHIN A VERY SHORT TIME ANOTHER SPIRITUAL MASTER." (Interview, Seattle 9/24/68)

The Guru and What Prabhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)

The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)

Question Sixteen

We think that you are using the word guru in the sense of anyone being a siksa-guru, because, of course, it can't mean that anyone can be a diksa-guru, isn't it so?

“There is no difference between the shelter-giving Supreme Lord and the initiating [diksa] and instructing [siksa] spiritual masters. IF ONE FOOLISHLY DISCRIMINATES BETWEEN THEM, HE COMMITS AN OFFENSE IN THE DISCHARGE OF DEVOTIONAL SERVICE.” (C.c. Adi 1.47 ppt.)



“Guru krsna krapaya paya bhakti lata bija. We have to acquire this energy through the mercy of guru and Krsna. So Krsna is within as caitya-guru, and when we are serious He comes out as the spiritual master. *Siksa-guru, diksa-guru*. So THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SIKSA-GURU AND DIKSA-GURU AND KRSNA. Krsna manifests Himself externally as *siksa-guru* and *diksa-guru*.” (NOD Vrndavana 10/29/72)

“ACCORDING TO SASTRIC INJUNCTIONS, THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SIKSA-GURU AND DIKSA-GURU, and generally the *siksa-guru* later on becomes the *diksa-guru*.” (SB 4.12.32)

“Bilvamangala Thakura actually entered into the transcendental pastimes of Lord Krsna. He has recorded his transcendental experiences and appreciation in the book known as Krsna-karnamrta. In the beginning of that book he has offered his obeisances to his different gurus, and IT IS TO BE NOTED THAT HE HAS ADORED THEM ALL EQUALLY. The first spiritual master mentioned is Cintamani, who was his instructing spiritual

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

master because she first showed him the spiritual path. Cintamani was a prostitute with whom Bilvamaggala was intimate earlier in his life. She gave him the inspiration to begin on the path of devotional service, and because she convinced him to give up material existence to try for perfection by loving Kṛṣṇa, he has first offered his respects to her. Next he offers his respects to his initiating spiritual master, Somagiri, and then to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who was also his instructing spiritual master.”

(Cc Adi 1.57)

“...SOMETIMES A CASTE GURU says that *ye kṛṣṇa-tattva-vetta, sei guru haya* means that one who is not a *brahmana* may become a *sikṣa-guru* or a *vartma-pradarsaka-guru* but not an initiator guru. [...] THE WORD GURU IS EQUALLY APPLICABLE TO THE VARTMA PRADARSAKA GURU, SIKSA-GURU AND DIKSA-GURU. Unless we accept the principle enunciated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement cannot spread all over the world. According to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s intentions: *prthivite ache yata nagaradi-grama sarvatra pracara haibe mora nama*. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu’s cult must be preached all over the world.

[...]“SRILA BHAKTISIDDHANTA SARASVATI THAKURA ALSO STATES THAT although one is situated as a *brahmana*, *ksatriya*, *vaisya*, *sudra*, *brahmacari*, *vanaprastha*, *grhastha* or *sannyasi*, IF HE IS CONVERSANT IN THE SCIENCE OF KṚṢṆA HE CAN BECOME A SPIRITUAL MASTER AS VARTMA-PRADARSAKA-GURU, DIKSA-GURU OR SIKSA-GURU.” (C.c. M.8.128 purp. ppt.)

“A devotee must have only one initiating spiritual master because in the scriptures acceptance of more than one is always forbidden. There is no limit, however, to the number of instructing spiritual masters one may accept. GENERALLY A SPIRITUAL MASTER WHO CONSTANTLY INSTRUCTS A DISCIPLE IN SPIRITUAL SCIENCE BECOMES HIS INITIATING SPIRITUAL MASTER LATER ON.” (C.c. Adi 1.35 ppt.)

“Sṛila Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī states that the instructing spiritual master is a bona fide representative of Sri Kṛṣṇa. [...] THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF INSTRUCTING SPIRITUAL MASTERS. One is the liberated

Q. #16: *Do you mean siksa or diksa?*

person fully absorbed in meditation in devotional service, and the other is he who invokes the disciple's spiritual consciousness by means of relevant instructions." (C.c. Adi 1.47 ppt.)

"Cleansing oneself as well as teaching others to be clean; these two things must be there simultaneously. None of us have perfect desires but we are trying to be perfect and teach others to be perfect as far as possible. THEY CANNOT BE SEPARATED BUT MUST GO TOGETHER AS PARALLEL LINES. SIKSHA AND DIKSHA. *Siksha* means learning. *Diksha*, or initiation, means the beginning of spiritual realization. So every disciple must take his own spiritual progress positively and help others to do so." (Letter to Nayan Abhiram, 2/4/71)

The Guru and What Parbhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)

Question Seventeen

I am still doubtful of a grhastha being a guru. How should it be viewed?

“SO FAR AS INITIATING DISCIPLES IS CONCERNED, ANYONE WHO IS QUALIFIED CAN DO THIS. For example, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur was householder and Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati was staunch brahmachary, yet they both were qualified for initiating disciples.” (Letter to Krishna Devi, 11/2/69)

“What is the wrong to become *grhastha*? I was *grhastha*, *pakka* caliber *grhastha*. My Guru Maharaja was *brahmachari*. Just see his character. Caitanya Mahaprabhu was *grhastha*, but when He took *sannyasa*: "Oh, I am now..." For sober person. That is wanted. That is ideal. He married twice. Bhaktivinoda Thakura married twice. Caitanya Mahaprabhu married twice. What is the wrong there? One has to become pure devotee, that's all. Other things, of course, are circumstantially favorable, either a *grhastha*, *brahmachari* or *vanaprastha* or *sannyasa*. *Kiba vipra kiba sudra nyasi kene naya, yei krsna-tattva-vetta sei 'guru' haya* [Cc. Madhya 8.128]. YOU MUST KNOW THE SCIENCE OF KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS. THAT MAKES YOU GURU, NOT THIS DRESS.”

(Conversation -- January 7, 1977, Bombay)

“So Bhaktivinoda Thakura is an ideal guru. He was not a *sannyasi*; he was *grhastha*, householder, living with family, wife, children. Still, he was guru. So anyone can become guru. Not that a *sannyasi* can become guru. A HOUSEHOLDER ALSO CAN BECOME GURU, PROVIDED HE KNOWS THE SCIENCE.

“Caitanya Mahaprabhu, when He was talking with Ramananda Raya... Caitanya Mahaprabhu was a *sannyasi*, very highly born in *brahmana* family, very learned scholar. So He was talking with Ramananda Raya, a *grhastha*, governor of Madras. And He was questioning, and Ramananda Raya was answering. That means he was taking the part of guru, and Caitanya



The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

Mahaprabhu was taking the part of a disciple. So he was hesitating, Ramananda Raya. He thought himself that 'I am a *grhastha* ; I'm not even a *brahmana*. Besides that, I am dealing in material affairs. I am governor, politics. And Caitanya Mahaprabhu is a *sannyasi*, born of a high-class *brahmana* family. So it does not look well that I shall teach Him.' So he was hesitating.

"Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, 'Oh, why you are hesitating?' He said, kiba vipra, kiba *sudra*, nyasi kene naya, yei krsna-tattva-vetta, sei 'guru' haya. He said, 'Don't hesitate. Either one may become a *brahmana* or one may become a *sudra*...' Kiba vipra, kiba *sudra*. Vipra means *brahmana*, and *sudra*... *Sudra* is the fourth grade human being. *Brahmana* is the first grade. So kiba vipra, kiba *sudra*. He may be a first grade human being or the lowest grade human being, or he may become a *sannyasi* or a *grhastha*. It does not matter. Anyone who knows the science of Krsna, he can become a guru. This is the verdict. Because spiritual science does not belong to the bodily platform. It is on the spiritual platform. It is very nice.

"Just like when you go to a lawyer or to an engineer or to a physician. You do not inquire whether he's a *brahmana* or *sudra*. Simply you have to know whether he's a lawyer. That's all. Whether he's a physician actually. If he knows the medical science, he may be a *brahmana*, he may be a *sudra*, he may be a *sannyasi*, he may be a householder. It doesn't matter. Your business is with a physician, with a lawyer. Similarly, your business is to understand Krsna. So anyone who knows Krsna perfectly, you have to go there. Tad-vijnanartham sa gurum evabhigacchet. It is... VEDIC INJUNCTION IS NOT THAT YOU HAVE TO APPROACH A SANNYASI OR A GRHASTHA OR AN INDIAN OR AMERICAN, NO. GURUM. And guru means who knows the science of Krsna. So, this Bhaktivinoda Thakura was *grhastha* , very responsible officer, magistrate.

"...So he [Bhaktivinoda Thakura] was busy, acarya. So one has to adjust things. NOT THAT 'BECAUSE I AM GRHASTHA , HOUSEHOLDER, I CANNOT BECOME A PREACHER. It is the business... It is the business of the *sannyasi* or *brahmacari*.' No. IT IS THE BUSINESS OF EVERYONE. The whole world is suffering for want of knowledge. The present civilization is animal civilization. They do not know anything beyond eating, sleeping,

Q. #17: Can a grhastha be guru?

mating, and defending. That's all. This is animal civilization. Animal does not know beyond these four principles of life: eating, sleeping, mating, and defending. That's all. No. Human life is meant for something else. 'What I am? What is God? What is my relation with God? What is this material world? Why I am here? Where I have to go next?' So many things one has to learn. Athato brahma-jijnasa. This is human life. Not that eat and sleep and have sex life and die some day like cats and dogs. Therefore, THERE IS NEED OF ACARYAS, TEACHERS, FOR PROPAGATING SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE, KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS. BHAKTIVINODA THAKURA WAS... ALTHOUGH HE WAS A GRHASTHA, HOUSEHOLDER, A GOVERNMENT OFFICER, MAGISTRATE, BUT HE WAS ACARYA. So from his dealings, from his life, we should learn how one can become a preacher in any stage of life. It doesn't matter what he is." (Lecture, London 9/23/69)

"Anyone who follows strictly the footprints of Shri Arjuna is certainly a *Mahatma*. It does not mean that a red-dressed man is a *Mahatma* and a noble householder like your goodself is otherwise. We can find out *Mahatmas* like Arjuna in the householder life also, and IN THIS AGE OF KALI WE SHOULD FIND OUT MORE MAHATMAS IN THE HOUSEHOLDERS LIFE THAN IN THE OTHER CAMP."

(Letter to Shri Jugalkishore Birla, 8/26/58)

"...ONE WHO ACTS STRICTLY IN THE LINE OF SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU IS COMPETENT TO OFFER BLESSINGS TO SANNYASIS, EVEN THOUGH HE BE A GRHASTHA HOUSEHOLDER. Although he is in an exalted position, a *sannyasi* yet must elevate himself to the transcendental platform by rendering service to the Lord. By His actual behavior, Caitanya Mahaprabhu begged the blessings of Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya a householder. He set the example of how one should expect blessings from a Vaisnava, regardless of his social position."

(C.c. M.7.69 ppt)

"To spread Krsna consciousness, one need only be cognizant of the science of the spirit soul. IT DOES NOT MATTER WHETHER ONE IS A *brahmana*, *ksatriya*, *vaisya*, *sudra*, *sannyasi*, GRHASTHA or whatever. If one simply understands this science, he can become a spiritual master.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

[...]“Factually the qualifications of a spiritual master depend on his knowledge of the science of Kṛṣṇa. It does not matter whether he is a *brahmana*, *ksatriya*, *sannyasi* or *sudra*.” (C.c. M.8.128 purp. ppt.)

[...] Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura comments that Advaita Acarya took initiation from Madhavendra Puri, who was a *sannyasi* in the disciplic succession of the Madhva-*sampradaya*. According to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu:

kiba vipra kiba nyasi sudra kene naya,
yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-veṭṭa, sei “guru” haya
(Cc. Madhya 8.128)

‘A person may be a *brahmana*, *sannyasi*, a *sudra* or whatever, but if he is well conversant in the science of Kṛṣṇa, he can become a guru.’

“This statement is supported by Sri Madhavendra Puri. ACCORDING TO THE PANCARATRA INJUNCTION, ONLY A HOUSEHOLDER BRAHMANA CAN INITIATE. OTHERS CANNOT. [...]Actually, people beg to be initiated by these householder *brahmanas* just to become successful in the varnasrama institution or to become free from material desires. IT IS THEREFORE NECESSARY FOR A SPIRITUAL MASTER IN THE GRHASTHA -ASRAMA TO BE A STRICT VAISNAVA. A spiritual master from the *sannyasa* order has very little opportunity to perform arcana, [...] but when one accepts a spiritual master from the transcendental *sannyasis*, the principle of Deity worship is not at all neglected. To implement this conclusion, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu gave us His opinion in the verse *kiba vipra kiba nyasi*, etc. This indicates that the Lord understood the weakness of society in its maintaining that only a *grhastha -brahmana* should be a spiritual master. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu indicated that IT DOES NOT MATTER WHETHER THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS A GRHASTHA (HOUSEHOLDER), a *sannyasi* or even a *sudra*. A SPIRITUAL MASTER SIMPLY MUST BE CONVERSANT IN THE ESSENCE OF THE SASTRA; HE MUST UNDERSTAND THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD. ONLY THEN CAN ONE BECOME A SPIRITUAL MASTER. Diksa actually means initiating a disciple with transcendental knowledge by which he becomes freed from all material contamination.” (C.c. Madhya 4.111 purp.)

Q. #17: Can a *grhastha* be guru?

“FORMERLY THE ACARYAS WERE GENERALLY ALL SANNYASIS, but Lord Chaitanya, in His instruction to Roy Ramananda, who was a confidential devotee of Lord Caitanya, but a householder and responsible government official, Governor of Madras, has given open instruction that IT DOES NOT MATTER WHAT IS THE SOCIAL OR ECCLESIASTICAL ORDER, IF ONE IS FULLY IN KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS, HE CAN ACT AS ACARYA.”
(Letter to Suridas, 3/17/70)

"Suppose one is in household life. Question may be whether a *mahatma* can be in the household life or not. That is being described: Yes. In household life also there can be *mahatma*. Just like Advaita Mahaprabhu. Caitanya Mahaprabhu even, Nityananda Mahaprabhu. They were all householders. Caitanya Mahaprabhu, He was a householder. He married twice. His first wife died -- He married for the second time. Regular householder, although He left household life very early. He was only twenty-four years old; therefore He had no children. But Nityananda Prabhu had one child, Virabhadra, and Advaita Prabhu had two, three children, of which buddhi was very highly elevated. Similarly, Srivasa Thakura, he had children. So Caitanya Mahaprabhu does not say that one has to become in the renounced order or *sannyasi*, then he becomes a *mahatma*. No. We also do not propagate such idea. At least, I am not doing that. I am creating householder, ideal householder. And my ideas are being fruitful. Here in London I sent six householders, and they are doing nice, sincerely they are working. Therefore I am very much proud of them.

"So here is also the statement that even... It's not required that *sannyasi* is only *mahatma*, but a *grhastha* can be, is also *mahatma*. So *grhastha* -*mahatma*, his symptoms are described: ye va mayise krta-sauhrdarthah. Their only business is to please Krsna. That is the first qualification. They have no other business. Ye va mayise krta-sauhrdarthah. Then how they deal with others? A *grhastha* has to live... A *sannyasi* may live alone in forest or in Himalaya or in a secluded place in Vrndavana or somewhere, but a *grhastha*, he has to deal with ordinary persons, so many others, businessmen or ordinary people. So that is stated here, that a *grhastha* -*mahatma*, his first symptom is that he has no other business than to please Krsna. That is his first business.

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[...]A householder *mahatma* has only one aim: how to attain the perfectional stage of love of God. That is the aim. Generally, a householder in the modern civilization, they are simply trying to accumulate money, increase the bank balance and make the society, friendship and love as the aim and object of life, and they have no other business. But a person who is *mahatma*, his aim is different. His aim is "How to make my life perfect in Krsna consciousness. How to please Krsna, how to make friendship with Krsna."

(*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5.5.2 -- London, September 17, 1969)

"So these *mahatmas*, tyagis. Generally, they are *sannyasis*. And so far other *mahatmas* also, it does not mean only the *sannyasi* can be *mahatma*. No. *Grhastha* s also can be *mahatma*. How *grhastha* s can be *mahatmas*, that is explained in the next verse: *ye va mayise krta-sauhrdarta*. His only business is to satisfy Krsna. That is... Otherwise, here it is said, *jayatmaja-ratimatsu grhesu*. He has no interest in so-called family life, wife, children, friends, and nationality. No. *Ye va mayise krta-sauhrdarta*. Only interest is how to please Krsna. Such person, he is also *mahatma*. Not that only the *mahatmas* who are renounced order. There are *grhastha* s also. Just like Advaita Acarya, He was *grhastha* . He became very, very sorry that people are so much suffering. "It is not in My power to elevate them. Unless Krsna personally comes, it is not possible." Therefore He offered to Lord Visnu Ganga-jal, tulasi, praying, "Please come. People are very much suffering. So if You come..." And on His request Krsna came in the form of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. So it is not that a *grhastha* cannot be *mahatma*. There are many *mahatmas*.

sri-krsna-caitanya prabhu nityananda

sri-advaita gadadhara srivasadi-gaura-bhakta-vrnda

[I offer my obeisances to Sri Krsna Caitanya, Prabhu Nityananda, Sri Advaita, Gadadhara, Srivasa and all others in the line of devotion.]

All *gaura-bhakta-vrndas*, they were *grhastha* s. Even Caitanya Mahaprabhu was also *grhastha* . But their only business was to satisfy Krsna: *ye va mayise krta-sauhrdarta janesu dehambhara-vartikesu grhesu jayatmaja-ratimatsu na priti*. And the ordinary *grhastha* s, they are called *grhamedhi*, they are simply interested with family life, not for the people in general. So a *grhastha* can

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be a *mahatma* also if he is broad-minded, how to do benefit to the mass of people by introducing Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

(*Srimad-Bhagavatam* 5.5.3 -- Vrndavana, October 25, 1976)

“Regarding the wife of the Spiritual Master being considered as mother, THIS APPLIES WHEN THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS NOT SANNYAS AND HE HAS A WIFE.”
(Letter to Upendra, 1/24/69)

"TRANSLATION

If THE WIFE OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER is young, a young *brahmacari* should not allow her to care for his hair, massage his body with oil, or bathe him with affection like a mother.

PURPORT

“The relationship between the student or disciple and the wife of the spiritual master or teacher is like that between son and mother. A mother sometimes cares for her son by combing his hair, massaging his body with oil, or bathing him. Similarly, the wife of the teacher is also a mother (*guru-patni*), and therefore she may also care for the disciple in a motherly way. If the wife of the teacher is a young woman, however, a young *brahmacari* should not allow such a mother to touch him. This is strictly prohibited. There are seven kinds of mothers:

atma-mata guroh patni
brahmani raja-patnika
dhenur dhatri tatha prthvi
saptaita matarah smrtah

These mothers are the original mother, THE WIFE OF THE TEACHER OR SPIRITUAL MASTER, the wife of a *brahmana*, the king's wife, the cow, the nurse and the earth. Unnecessary association with women, even with one's mother, sister or daughter, is strictly prohibited. This is human civilization. A civilization that allows men to mix unrestrictedly with women is an animal civilization. In Kali-yuga, people are extremely liberal, but mixing with women and talking with them as equals actually constitutes an uncivilized way of life.”
(SB 7.12.8 ppt.)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“The Krsna Consciousness society was based on renunciation, said Prabhupada, and therefore ALL SINCERE DEVOTEES WERE AS GOOD AS SANNYASIS. The actual dress didn’t matter, whether white or saffron, although an ideal *grhastha* should eventually come to the stage of formal *sannyasa*.”
(Lilamrta VI, pg.167)

“IN OUR SOCIETY EVERYONE, either a brahmachary or *sannyasi* or *grhastha*, who has dedicated his life and soul for this movement, THEY ARE ALL ON THE SAME LEVEL OF SANNYASI.”

(Letter to Brahmananda Swami, 8/30/69)

“ACTUALLY ALL MY DISCIPLES ARE SANNYASIS because they have surrendered everything in the service of Krsna.”

(Letter to Nalinikanta, 11/21/75)

“Again Srila Prabhupada quoted the verse that had become a theme for the festival: *kiba vipra, kiba nyasi, sudra kene naya*. ‘EITHER HE IS A GRHASTHA OR A SANNYASI, IT DOESN’T MATTER. HE MUST BECOME A GURU. How? Yei krsna-tattva-vetta. One who knows the principles of Krsna consciousness, one who understands Krsna, he can become a guru.’”
(Lilamrta VI, pg.180)

“Sri Ramananda Raya. He was a *grhastha*. He was a responsible government officer. Still, he was the best disciple of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Ramananda Raya, while talking with Caitanya Mahaprabhu, he was feeling little shameful because Caitanya Mahaprabhu was a great *sannyasi* and coming from a very respectable brahmana family, and Ramananda Raya, he belonged to the *karana* caste of Orissa, and he was *grhastha*, at the same time in government service. So he was feeling little shameful like that, that "I am teaching Caitanya Mahaprabhu." So when he was feeling like that, Caitanya Mahaprabhu encouraged him,

kiba vipra kiba sudra nyasi kene naya
yei krsna-tattva-vetta sei guru haya

[Cc. Madhya 8.128]

"You become a *sannyasi* or you become a *grhastha* or you are a brahmana or a *sudra*, the Krsna consciousness has nothing to do with these material things.

Q. #17: Can a grhastha be guru?

If you know actually what is Krsna, then you can become guru." Another place also, Krsna, er, Caitanya Mahaprabhu has said that,

*yei bhaje sei bada abhakta hina chara
krsna-bhajane te nahi jati-kuladi-vicara*

[Cc. Anrya 4.67]

"Anyone who is a devotee, he is great. And who is not devotee, he may declare himself as great, but he is the most fallen." In the devotional service there is no such distinction as jati and kula. So if you follow -- the example is there in your country, Ramananda Raya -- then wherever you are, you are exalted. Narottama dasa Thakura, he has also said -- he is acarya -- *grhe va vanete thake ha gauranga bale dake narottama mage tara sanga*: "It doesn't matter whether he is a *grhastha* or he's a *sannyasi*." *Vanete* means *vanaprastha*, *sannyasi*. "Wherever he may be, if he's actually a perfect devotee of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, I want his association. Never mind." *Grhe va vanete thake ha gauranga bale dake narottama mage tara sanga*.

"So Krsna *bhajana* is so magnanimous, so exalted, in any position YOU CAN BECOME THE GREATEST GURU, PROVIDED YOU FOLLOW THE FOOTSTEPS OF SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU."

(Evening Lecture -- January 23, 1977, Bhuvaneshvara)

"SO THERE IS NO BAR AGAINST ANYONE; ANYONE CAN BECOME A SPIRITUAL MASTER PROVIDED HE KNOWS THE SCIENCE OF KRSNA. This is the only qualification, and this science in essence is contained in *Bhagavad-gita*. AT THE PRESENT MOMENT, THOUSANDS OF SPIRITUAL MASTERS ARE NEEDED TO SPREAD THIS GREAT SCIENCE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD."

(Raja-vidya, pg.88)

"Because people are in darkness, WE REQUIRE MANY MILLIONS OF GURUS to enlighten them. THEREFORE CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU'S MISSION IS, He said, that 'EVERY ONE OF YOU BECOME GURU.' *Amara ajnaya guru haya tara ei desa*."

(Lecture, Honolulu 5/21/76)

The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)

Question Eighteen

Some ask whether the guru actually suffers for the sins of his disciples. What is the answer?

“YOU HAVE ASKED IF IT IS TRUE THAT THE SPIRITUAL MASTER REMAINS IN THE MATERIAL UNIVERSE UNTIL ALL OF HIS DISCIPLES ARE TRANSFERRED TO THE SPIRITUAL SKY. THE ANSWER IS YES, THIS IS THE RULE. Therefore, every student should be very much careful not to commit any offense which will be detrimental to this promotion to the Spiritual Kingdom, and thereby the Spiritual Master has to incarnate again to deliver him. This sort of mentality will be a kind of offense to the Spiritual Master. Out of the ten kinds of offenses, the number one offense is to disobey the orders of the Spiritual Master.



“The instructions given to the disciple by the Spiritual Master at the time of initiation should be strictly followed. That will make one advance to the spiritual path. But if one deliberately defies such instructions, then his advancement is hampered from the very beginning. THIS DEFYING MEANS TO DISCONNECT THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. AND ANYONE WHO DEFIES AND THEREFORE DISCONNECTS THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SPIRITUAL MASTER CAN HARDLY EXPECT THE ASSISTANCE OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER LIFE AFTER LIFE. I hope this will clear up this question sufficiently for you.” (Letter to Jayapataka, 7/11/69)

“...IF SOMEBODY DOES NOT GO [TO THE SPIRITUAL SKY], THEN I SHALL HAVE TO COME BACK TO TAKE HIM THERE. One should remember this and every one of my disciples should act in such a way that they may go with me and I may not have to come back to take another birth.”

(Letter to Tusta Krishna, 12/14/72)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“The Supreme personality of Godhead says:

*sarva-dharman parityajya
mam ekam saranam vraja
aham tvam sarva-papebhyo
moksayisyami ma sucah*

‘Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reaction. Do not fear.’ (Bg. 18.66) The Supreme Personality of Godhead can accept the reactions of anyone’s sinful deeds and neutralize them because He is *pavitra*, pure, like the sun, which is never contaminated by any worldly infection. *Tejyasam na dosaya vahneh sama-bhujo yatha* (Bhag. 10.33.29). One who is very powerful is not affected by any sinful activity. But here we see that mother Ganges fears being burdened with the sins of the people in general who would bathe in her waters. This indicates that no one but the Supreme Personality of Godhead is able to neutralize the reactions of sinful deeds, whether one’s own or those of others. **SOMETIMES THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, AFTER ACCEPTING A DISCIPLE, MUST TAKE CHARGE OF THAT DISCIPLE’S PAST SINFUL ACTIVITIES AND, BEING OVERLOADED, MUST SOMETIMES SUFFER –IF NOT FULLY, THEN PARTIALLY– FOR THE SINFUL ACTS OF THE DISCIPLE.** Every disciple, therefore, must be very careful not to commit sinful activities after initiation. The poor spiritual master is kind and merciful enough to accept a disciple and partially suffer for that disciple’s sinful activities, but Kṛṣṇa, being merciful to His servant, neutralizes the reactions of sinful deeds for the servant who engages in preaching His glories. Even mother Ganges feared the sinful reactions of the people in general and was anxious about how she would counteract the burden of these sins.” (SB 9.9.5)

“As Kṛṣṇa takes away all the sinful reactions of a person immediately upon his surrender unto Him, similarly the external manifestation of Kṛṣṇa, the representative of Kṛṣṇa who acts as the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, takes all the resultant actions of the sinful life of the disciple immediately after the disciple’s initiation. Thus if the disciple follows the principles instructed by the spiritual master, he remains purified and is not contaminated by the material infection.

“Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu therefore stated that the spiritual master who plays the part of Kṛṣṇa’s representative has to consume all the sinful

Q. #18: Does the guru actually suffer for the sins...?

reactions of his disciple. SOMETIMES A SPIRITUAL MASTER TAKES THE RISK OF BEING OVERWHELMED BY THE SINFUL REACTIONS OF THE DISCIPLES AND UNDERGOES A SORT OF TRIBULATION DUE TO THEIR ACCEPTANCE. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu therefore advised that one not accept many disciples.” (SB 4.21.31)

“I have seen what you have written about your protection by my humble self, but that is inevitable when a Spiritual Master accepts somebody as disciple. Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita that He takes charge of a surrendered soul; so much so that Lord Krishna protects His devotee from all his sinful activities in the past. Similarly, THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, WHEN HE ACCEPTS A DISCIPLE AND THE DISCIPLE SURRENDERS UNTO HIM, HE HAS GOT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ABSORBING THE SINFUL REACTION OF HIS DISCIPLE’S LIFE. THIS IS A GREAT RESPONSIBILITY OF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER. We should therefore be very careful not to overburden our Spiritual Master by further repetition of sinful activities.

“I was not very much interested in these matters because my Guru Maharaj liked very much publication of books than constructing big, big temples and creating some neophyte disciples. As soon as he saw that His neophyte disciples were increasing in number, He immediately decided to leave this world. TO ACCEPT DISCIPLES MEANS TO TAKE UP THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ABSORBING THE SINFUL REACTION OF LIFE OF THE DISCIPLE.” (Letter to Satsvarupa and Uddhava, 7/27/70)

“Accepting an unlimited number of devotees or disciples IS VERY RISKY for one who is not a preacher. ACCORDING TO SRILA JIVA GOSVAMI, A PREACHER HAS TO ACCEPT MANY DISCIPLES TO EXPAND THE CULT OF SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU. THIS IS RISKY because when a spiritual master accepts a disciple, he naturally accepts the disciple’s sinful activities and their reactions. Unless he is very powerful, he cannot assimilate all the sinful reactions of his disciples. Thus if he is not powerful, he has to suffer the consequences, for one is forbidden to accept many disciples.” (Cc Madhya 22.118)

“Because of sinful activities, at night we have bad dreams, which are very troublesome. Indeed, Maharaja Yudhisthira was obliged to see hell because of a slight deviation from devotional service to the Lord. Therefore, *duhsvapna* –bad dreams– occur because of sinful activities. A DEVOTEE SOMETIMES

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

ACCEPTS A SINFUL PERSON AS HIS DISCIPLE, AND TO COUNTERACT THE SINFUL REACTIONS HE ACCEPTS FROM THE DISCIPLE, HE HAS TO SEE A BAD DREAM. Nonetheless, the spiritual master is so kind that in spite of having bad dreams due to the sinful disciple, he accepts this troublesome business for the deliverance of the victims of Kali-yuga. After initiation, therefore, a disciple should be extremely careful not to commit again any sinful act that might cause difficulties for himself and the spiritual master. Before the Deity, before the fire, before the spiritual master and before the Vaisnavas, the honest disciple promises to refrain from all sinful activity. Therefore he must not again commit sinful acts and thus create a troublesome situation.” (SB 8.4.15)

“In the bhakti-yoga process, the role of the spiritual master is most important and essential. Although THE SPIRITUAL MASTER WILL ALWAYS COME BACK UNTIL HIS DEVOTEES HAVE ACHIEVED GOD REALIZATION, one should not try to take advantage of this. We should not trouble our spiritual master but should complete the bhakti-yoga process in this life. The disciple should be serious in his service to the spiritual master, and if the devotee is intelligent, he should think, ‘Why should I act in such a way that my spiritual master has to take the trouble to reclaim me again? Let me realize Krsna in this life.’ That is the proper way of thinking. We should not think, ‘Oh, I am sure that my spiritual master will come and save me. Therefore I will do as I please.’ IF WE HAVE ANY AFFECTION FOR OUR SPIRITUAL MASTER, WE SHOULD COMPLETE THE PROCESS IN THIS LIFE, SO THAT HE DOES NOT HAVE TO RETURN TO RECLAIM US.

“In this regard, there is the example of Bilvamangala Thakura, who, in his previous life, was elevated almost to prema-bhakti, the highest platform of devotional service. However, since there is always a chance for a falldown, somehow or other he fell down. In his next life, he was born in a very rich *brahmana* family, in accordance with the principle enunciated in the Sixth Chapter of *Bhagavad-gita* (6.41): *sucinam srimatam gehe*. Unfortunately, as is often the case with rich boys, he became a prostitute hunter. Yet it is said that his spiritual master instructed him through his prostitute, saying, ‘Oh, you are so attached to this mere flesh and bones. If you were this much

Q. #18: *Does the guru actually suffer for the sins...?*

attached to Kṛṣṇa, how much good you might achieve!' Immediately Bilvamangala Thakura resumed his devotional service.

“Although THE SPIRITUAL MASTER ASSUMES RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS DISCIPLE, we should not take advantage of this. Rather, we should try to please the spiritual master (*yasya prasadaḥ bhagavat-prasadaḥ*). We should not put our spiritual master in such a position that he has to reclaim us from a house of prostitution. But even if he has to do so, he will do it, because he assumes this responsibility when he accepts his disciple.”

(POP, Ch.8, pgs.118-9)

“Regarding your question about sufferings of master, YOU CAN SIMPLY PONDER OVER LORD CHRIST’S CRUCIFICATION.”

(Letter to Rebatinandan, 12/31/72)

"Tamala Kṛṣṇa: [...A]ccepting initiation is a serious matter.

Prabhupada: Initiation means seriously take up the...

Tamala Kṛṣṇa: Vow.

Prabhupada: And if you make it a fun business, then I become implicated, you become implicated.

Tamala Kṛṣṇa: In what way does the spiritual master become...?

Prabhupada: Well, this is then something.(?)

Tamala Kṛṣṇa: He has to work very hard on behalf of the disciple...

Prabhupada: No. To accept his sinful reaction.

Tamala Kṛṣṇa: He does that?

Prabhupada: It is not easy job to become a spiritual master. Yes. Then when it is overloaded, you'll suffer.

Tamala Kṛṣṇa: Kṛṣṇa transfers the sinful reaction unto the spiritual master from the disciple.

Prabhupada: Yes.

Tamala Kṛṣṇa: Why? Is it because there will be such a heavy...?

Prabhupada: Kṛṣṇa says... That is the principle. This is, *aham tvam sarva-papebhyo mokṣayisyami* [Bg. 18.66]. "You have to take all the sinful reactions." This is the principle, that Kṛṣṇa is God. He can nullify everything. But I am not God. When it is overloaded, I have to suffer. This is

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

the principle that the Christian idea that Christ takes.

Tamala Krsna: The trouble with the Christians is that they never relieved Christ. They go on sinning. That's not love.

Prabhupada: Yes. The principle is that the spiritual master takes all the resultant sinful action, but the disciple also says that "Now, stop it. Otherwise my spiritual master..." That is gentleman. And "Now use that thing, go on taking our sinful reaction. We will go on with our own business."

Tamala Krsna: That's not loving at all. That is taking advantage.

Prabhupada: That is cheating.

Tamala Krsna: Cheating.

Prabhupada: The same cheating. And he is not liberated because he continues cheating.

Tamala Krsna: Frankly, though, we can see by Christianity that some defect is there. Either it's probably not there on the part of Jesus. He could have given them a way to purify themselves, but they...

Prabhupada: One chance, that "You have accepted me, I take your all sinful reactions." But these rascals continue.

(Room Conversation -- April 16, 1977, Bombay)

SYAMASUNDARA: One time you said that sometimes you feel sickness or pain due to the sinful activities of your devotees. Can sometimes disease be due to that? Caused by that?

S.PRABHUPADA: You see, Krsna says:

*aham tvam sarva-papebhyo
moksayisyami ma sucah*

'I will deliver you from all sinful reaction. Do not fear.' So Krsna is so powerful that He can immediately take up all the sins of others and immediately make them right. But when a living entity plays the part on behalf of Krsna, he also takes the responsibility for the sinful activities of his devotees. Therefore to become a guru is not an easy task. You see? He has to take all the poisons and absorb them. So sometimes –because he is not Krsna– sometimes there is some trouble. Therefore Caitanya Mahaprabhu

Q. #18: Does the guru actually suffer for the sins...?

has forbidden, 'Don't make many sisyas, many disciples.' But for preaching work we have to accept many disciples –for expanding preaching– even if we suffer. That's a fact. THE SPIRITUAL MASTER HAS TO TAKE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL THE SINFUL ACTIVITIES OF HIS DISCIPLES. Therefore to make many disciples is a risky job unless one is able to assimilate all the sins.

*vancha-kalpa-tarubhyas ca
krpa-sindhubyha eva ca
patitanam pavanebhyo
vaisnavebhyo namo namah*

['I offer my respectful obeisances unto all the Vaisnava devotees of the Lord. They are just like desire trees who can fulfill the desires of everyone, and they are full of compassion for the fallen conditioned souls.'] He takes responsibility for all the fallen souls. That idea is also in the Bible. Jesus Christ took all the sinful reactions of the people and sacrificed his life. That is the responsibility of a spiritual master. Because Krsna is Krsna, He is apapa-viddha—He cannot be attacked by sinful reactions. But a living entity is sometimes subjected to their influence because he is so small. Big fire, small fire. If you put some big thing in a small fire, the fire itself may be extinguished. But in a big fire, whatever you put in is all right. The big fire can consume anything.

BOB: Christ's suffering was of that nature?

S.PRABHUPADA: Mm-m?

BOB: Was Christ's suffering—

S.PRABHUPADA: That I have already explained. He took the sinful reactions of all the people. Therefore he suffered.

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

BOB: I see.

S.PRABHUPADA: He said –that is in the Bible– that he took all the sinful reactions of the people and sacrificed his life. But these Christian people have made it a law for Christ to suffer while they do all nonsense. [Bob gives a short laugh.] Such great fools they are! They have let Jesus Christ make a contract for taking all their sinful reactions so they can go on with all nonsense. That is their religion. Christ was so magnanimous that he took all their sins and suffered, but that does not induce them to stop all these sins. They have not come to that sense. They have taken it very easily. ‘Let Lord Jesus Christ suffer, and we’ll do all nonsense.’ Is it not?

BOB: It is so.

S.PRABHUPADA: They should have been ashamed: ‘Lord Jesus Christ suffered for us, but we are continuing the sinful activities.’ He told everyone, ‘Thou shalt not kill,’ but they are indulging in killing, thinking, ‘Lord Jesus Christ will excuse us and take all the sinful reactions.’ This is going on. We should be very much cautious: ‘For my sinful actions my spiritual master will suffer, so I’ll not commit even a pinch of sinful activities.’ That is the duty of the disciple. After initiation, all sinful reaction is finished. Now if he again commits sinful activities, his spiritual master has to suffer. A disciple should be sympathetic and consider this. ‘For my sinful activities, my spiritual master will suffer.’ IF THE SPIRITUAL MASTER IS ATTACKED BY SOME DISEASE, IT IS DUE TO THE SINFUL ACTIVITIES OF OTHERS. ‘Don’t make many disciples.’ But we do it because we are preaching. Never mind –let us suffer– still we shall accept them. Therefore your question was – when I suffer is it due to my past misdeeds? Was it not? That is my misdeed –that I accepted some disciples who are nonsense. That is my misdeed.

BOB: This happens on occasions?

S.PRABHUPADA: Yes. This is sure to happen because we are accepting so many men. It is the duty of the disciples to be cautious. ‘My spiritual master

Q. #18: Does the guru actually suffer for the sins...?

has saved me. I should not put him again into suffering.’ When the spiritual master is in suffering, Krsna saves him. Krsna thinks, ‘Oh, he has taken so much responsibility for delivering a fallen person.’ So Krsna is there.

*kaunteya pratijanihi
na me bhaktah pranasyati*

[‘O son of Kunti, declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes.’] Because the spiritual master takes the risk on account of Krsna.

BOB: Your suffering is not the same kind of pain...

S.PRABHUPADA: No, it is not due to karma. The pain is there sometimes, so that the disciples may know, ‘Due to our sinful activities, our spiritual master is suffering.’

BOB: You look very well now.

S.PRABHUPADA: I am always well... in the sense that even if there is suffering, I know Krsna will protect me. But this suffering is not due to my sinful activities.”

(PQPA, Ch.6, pgs.54-60)

“The spiritual master accepts the sinful activities of his disciples from the first initiation. I MAY GIVE INITIATION VERY EASILY, BUT WHAT CAN I DO? I AM PREPARED TO GO TO HELL FOR THE SERVICE OF LORD CHAITANYA.”

(Letter to Jadurani, 9/4/72)

“You get the seed of devotion, and the Hare Krishna mantra through the mercy of the spiritual master and Krishna. Similarly, UPON YOUR SURRENDER, THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND KRISHNA TAKE

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR SINS. SO IF YOU COMMIT SIN AGAIN, THE SPIRITUAL MASTER BECOMES RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR SINFUL REACTION. Therefore, it is the disciple's duty not to commit sin again. Not only Gayatri mantra, but all mantras cleanse one from sinful reactions, but we should not chant these mantras and then commit sin again.”
(Letter to Batua Gopal, 8/22/72)

“Instruct them fully in the qualifications for becoming brahmin, and HENCE FORTH THEY MUST BE VERY, VERY CAREFUL NOT TO COMMIT ANY SINFUL ACTS OR OTHERWISE I SHALL HAVE TO SUFFER AS THEIR SPIRITUAL MASTER.”
(Letter to Sri Govinda, 12/27/72)

The Guru and What Parbhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)

The Guru and What Parbhupada Said (I n the Service of Iskcon)

Question Nineteen

Is the external appearance of the guru important?

“V: What are the reasons why one should not hear from one who has got sufficient knowledge on Lord Krsna if he is not outwardly a Vaisnava. That means he’s not having *sikha* or *kanti*, like that.

S.PRABHUPADA: What is that?

D: He says, ‘What’s wrong with hearing from someone if he has some knowledge of Krsna even if he doesn’t have a *sikha* and *tilaka* and what have you?’

S.PRABHUPADA: That is the injunction of authority. *Avaisnava-mukhodgirnām putam hari-ka...*, *sravanam na kartavyam*. We have to abide by the orders of the superiors. ‘Why?’ –there is no question. Authority says; you have to accept. You cannot say, ‘Why?’ Vedic injunction... Therefore Krsna was accepted as guru by Arjuna. *Sisyas te ‘ham sadhi mam prapannam*. Because as friend and friend the reply and argument will go on, to stop this argument Krsna is accepted as guru, not as friend. Similarly, when you accept a guru, you must accept guru according to the Vedic principle. So here guru, Sanatana Gosvami, he is giving the injunction that *avaisnava-mukhodgirnām putam hari-kathamrtam, sravanam na kartavyam*. Exceptional case is different. The paramahamsa stage. But a guru, although he is paramahamsa, because he is teaching, he comes down as *madhyama-adhikari*.



“There are three kinds of Vaisnava: *kanistha adhikari*, *madhyama adhikari* and *uttama adhikari*. *Uttama adhikari* may be without *kanti*, without *sikha*, without Vaisnava symptoms. He’s *paramahamsa*. But when he comes to the preaching platform he must become a *madhyama adhikari*, not to imitate *uttama adhikari*, because he has to teach. HE CANNOT DEVIATE FROM

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

THE TEACHING PRINCIPLES. SO WHAT YOU ARE SPEAKING, THAT 'WITHOUT SIKHA, WITHOUT KANTI, ONE CAN BECOME GURU,' THAT IS FACT FOR THE PARAMAHAMSA, NOT FOR THE PREACHER. PREACHER MUST BEHAVE VERY NICELY."

(Lecture, Bhuvaneshvara 1/24/77)

"[...] f you want to manufacture something of your own concoction, that will not act. That will not... That will be gramophone. No ...actually penetrating. *Apane acari prabhu jiveri siksaya*. Caitanya Mahaprabhu says that you have to act accordingly as it is instructed, then you can teach others. IF YOU DO NOT ACT YOURSELF, YOUR WORDS WILL HAVE NO VALUE ...CUT.

(Lecture, Los Angeles 12/6/73)

"Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow. And WHATEVER STANDARDS HE SETS BY EXEMPLARY ACTS, ALL THE WORLD PURSUES.

PURPORT

"People in general always require a leader who can teach the public by practical behavior. A leader cannot teach the public to stop smoking if he himself smokes. Lord Caitanya said that a teacher should behave properly before he begins teaching. One who teaches in that way is called acarya, or the ideal teacher."

(BG 3.21)

"Our guru, out of the Six Gosvamis, one of them, he has given his direction in the Bhakti... What is that? *Hari-bhakti-vilasa*, that *avaisnava mukhodgirnam putam hari-kathamrtam sravanam na kartavyam* [Padma Purana]. A person who is not Vaisnava... Vaisnava means *krsna tattva vetta*. If he's not well versed in the science of Krsna, if his behavior is not Vaisnava... *Sadacara-sampanna*. VAISNAVA MUST HAVE DVADASA-TILAKA, SIKHA, SUTRA, KANTI, and there are many things, description, *sadacara-sampranna*, Vaisnava. If he's not that, simply by education if he speaks about Krsna, one should not hear. One should not hear. These are professional men. If you pay him something, he'll speak for some time, but his behavior is not Vaisnava. So from such person it is forbidden to hear about Srimad-Bhagavatam or anything about Krsna. *Avaisnava-mukhodgirnam*

Q. #19: *Is the external appearance important?*

putam hari-kathamrtam, sravanam na kartavyam. So one may say that "He's speaking about Krsna, so what is the wrong there? He may be misbehaved, but he's speaking about Krsna." So that Sanatana Gosvami says, *putam hari-kathamrtam.* *Hari-kathamrtam* is always pure. That's all right. But *avaisnava-mukhodgirnam putam hari-kathamrta, sravanam...* Why? *Sarpocchistam payo yatha.* Everyone knows milk is very nice and nutritious food, but if it is touched by the lips of a serpent, it is spoiled, no more to be... So it is forbidden, that we should not try to understand about Krsna from a person who is not Vaisnava."

(Lecture on Cc Madhya 8.128-- January 24, 1977, Bhuvaneshvara)

The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)

Question Twenty

How should we see a godbrother from whom we have taken second initiation, or, for that matter, how should we see any senior Godbrother?

“...ONE WHO TEACHES CAN BE TREATED AS SPIRITUAL MASTER. It is not that after we become initiated we become perfect. No. It requires teaching. So IF WE TAKE INSTRUCTION FROM THEM, ALL SENIOR GODBROTHERS MAY BE TREATED AS GURU, THERE IS NO HARM. Actually you have only one spiritual master who initiates you, just as you have only one father. But every Vaisnava should be treated as prabhu, master, higher than me, and in this sense, IF I LEARN FROM HIM, HE MAY BE REGARDED AS GURU. It is not that I disobey my real Spiritual Master and call someone else Spiritual Master. That is wrong. It is only that I can call Spiritual Master someone who is teaching me purely what my initiating Spiritual Master has taught. Do you get the sense?” (Letter to Galim, 11/20/71)



“[...] ANYONE WHO CAN GIVE INSTRUCTION IN SPIRITUAL LIFE IS TREATED AS SPIRITUAL MASTER. There are two kinds of Spiritual Master, initiator and instructor.” (Letter to Himavati, 1/24/69)

“There is no difference between the shelter-giving Supreme Lord and the initiating [diksa] and instructing [siksa] spiritual masters. IF ONE FOOLISHLY DISCRIMINATES BETWEEN THEM, HE COMMITS AN OFFENSE IN THE DISCHARGE OF DEVOTIONAL SERVICE.”

(C.c. Adi 1.47 ppt.)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

“One must be prepared to offer the necessary respect and honor to the spiritual master. He should not be unnecessarily envious of his Godbrothers. Rather, IF A GODBROTHER IS MORE ENLIGHTENED AND ADVANCED IN KRSNA CONSCIOUSNESS, ONE SHOULD ACCEPT HIM AS ALMOST EQUAL TO THE SPIRITUAL MASTER, and one should be happy to see such Godbrothers advance in Krsna consciousness. A devotee should always be very kind to the general public in instructing Krsna consciousness because that is the only solution for getting out of the clutches of *maya*. That is really humanitarian work, for it is the way to show mercy to other people who need it very badly. The word *susrusabhirataya* indicates a person who faithfully engages in serving the spiritual master. One should give personal service and all kinds of comforts to the spiritual master. A devotee who does so is also a bona fide candidate for taking this instruction.”

(SB 3.32.42 ppt.)

“Regarding serving your godbrothers, this is a very good practice. The Spiritual Master is never without His followers, so TO SERVE THE SPIRITUAL MASTER ALSO MEANS TO BE THE SERVANT OF HIS DISCIPLES. When you want to serve the king, you must also serve his minister, secretary, and everyone who serves him. And to serve his servants may please him more than to serve the king personally. So the Spiritual Master is not alone. He is always with His entourage. We are not impersonalists. We take care of every part of the whole, as much as one should take care of his hat as well as his shoes. Both are equally important for the upkeep of the body. I hope that you will understand this rightly.”

(Letter to Shivananda, 1/23/69)

“Our Krishna Consciousness movement is based on complete fellow feeling and love, but there is a word, *maryada*, which means RESPECT WHICH SHOULD ALWAYS BE OFFERED TO THE SPIRITUAL MASTER AND ELDERLY MEMBERS.”

(Letter to Jayapataka, 4/17/70)

Q. #20: How should we see a Godbrother...?

“ 20th February, 1970

My Dear Jagannatham Prabhu,

Please accept my humble obeisances. I am so glad to receive your letter dated 10 February, 1970, redirected from my New York center.

Perhaps you are the eldest amongst us now living as disciples of Srila Prabhupada. You are now eighty-one years old, and I am only seventy-four. THEREFORE I AM YOUR YOUNGER BROTHER AND I SHALL ALWAYS EXPECT BLESSINGS FROM YOU.

[...]You are so kind upon me, and AS YOUR YOUNGER BROTHER I SHALL ALWAYS BE READY FOR YOUR SERVICE. So please treat me as your humble servant. Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours affectionately,

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami”

The Guru and What Parabhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)

Question Twenty-one

Prila Prabhupada, the difficulty is that different devotees present so many different quotes. Who to follow...?

“[...Q] uotation and counter-quotation cannot solve the problem. In a court both the learned lawyers quote from law books, but that is not the solution to the case. THE DETERMINATION OF THE CASE IS THE JUDGMENT OF THE PRESIDING JUDGE. So argument cannot bring us to a conclusion.

“THE SCRIPTURAL QUOTATIONS ARE SOMETIMES CONTRADICTORY, and every philosopher has a different opinion, because without putting forward a different thesis, no one can become a famous philosopher. It is therefore difficult to arrive at the right conclusion. THE CONCLUSION IS, AS ABOVE MENTIONED, TO ACCEPT THE JUDGMENT OF AUTHORITY. We follow the authority of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu, who is nondifferent from Krsna....



“Other quotations will not act very appreciably at this time. In a drugstore there may be many medicines, and all may be genuine, but WHAT IS REQUIRED IS THAT AN EXPERIENCED PHYSICIAN PRESCRIBE MEDICINE FOR A PARTICULAR PATIENT. We cannot say in this case, “This is also medicine, and this is also medicine.” No. The medicine which is effective for a particular person is the medicine for him –*phalena pariciyate* [a thing is judged by its results].” (SSR 4th.Edition, pg.116)

“To support this statement there are many authoritative assertions by the learned scholars of bygone ages. According to their general opinion, a person may become governed by certain convictions derived by his own arguments and decisions. Then another person, who may be a greater logician, will

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

nullify these conclusions and establish another thesis. In this way THE PATH OF ARGUMENT WILL NEVER BE SAFE OR CONCLUSIVE. SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM RECOMMENDS, THEREFORE, THAT ONE FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE AUTHORITIES.”

(NoD 2: The First Stages of Devotion)

“LOGIC WE USE TO CONVINCING SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T ACCEPT THE AUTHORITY. THE BASIC PRINCIPLE IS AUTHORITY.”

(Letter to: Satsvarupa -- Johannesburg 21 October, 1975)

“*Mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ* [Cc. Madhya 17.186]. WE HAVE TO FOLLOW THE FOOTPRINTS OF PURE DEVOTEES. It is said that *tarkaḥ apratiṣṭhaḥ*. IF YOU WANT TO BECOME PURE BY YOUR ARGUMENTS AND LOGIC, THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE. I MAY BE DEFEATED BY ANOTHER STRONG MAN WHO IS STRONGER IN ARGUMENT THAN ME, so this is not the way of becoming purified, *tarka*, simply arguing. *Tarkaḥ apratiṣṭhaḥ smṛtayo vibhinnāḥ* [Cc. Madhya 17.186]. *Śrutayaḥ*, scriptures. Suppose somebody sticks to the scriptures. SO SCRIPTURES, THERE ARE DIFFERENT TYPES OF SCRIPTURE. SO THEY ARE VIBHINNA. VIBHINNA MEANS DIFFERENT TYPES. SO HOW WE CAN BECOME PURIFIED BY, EVEN BY FOLLOWING THE SCRIPTURES? *Tarko 'pratiṣṭhaḥ smṛtayo vibhinnā na cāsāv ṛṣir yasya mataṁ na bhinnam*. Muni means thoughtful, philosophers. If we follow a particular type of philosopher, that is also not perfect because I may be under the care of a philosopher, frog philosopher. So that is also not sure. *Tarko 'pratiṣṭhaḥ smṛtayo vibhinnā na cāsāv ṛṣir yasya mataṁ na bhinnam, dharmasya tattvaṁ nihitaṁ guhāyām*.

“THEREFORE TO BECOME PURE OR TO UNDERSTAND THE ESSENCE OF PURITY IS VERY CONFIDENTIAL. IT IS NOT TO BE ACQUIRED BY OUR OWN EFFORTS, BY ARGUMENT OR BY BEING EXPERT IN SCRIPTURE OR BY BECOMING A PHILOSOPHER or a similar way. It is very confidential. Then how? *Mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ* [Cc. Madhya 17.186]. YOU HAVE TO FOLLOW A PURE DEVOTEE, ACKNOWLEDGED DEVOTEE.”

(Lecture on Bg & Talk, Los Angeles 11/25/68)

Q, #21: Different devotees with different quotes: Who to follow?

«[T]HERE ARE THINGS WHICH ARE BEYOND OUR EXPERIENCE, beyond our reasoning, beyond our, I mean to say, conception. Those things are called *acintya*. *Acintya* means inconceivable. Inconceivable.

«Now, HOW TO UNDERSTAND THAT WHICH IS BEYOND OUR CONCEPTION? The scriptures says like this, *acintyah khalu ye bhava na tams tarkena yojayet*: "Anything which is beyond our conception, beyond our reasoning power, beyond our approach of the material senses, such things WE SHOULD NOT TRY TO HAVE CONCEPTION SIMPLY BY ARGUMENTS." So in the Vedic injunction it is said that *tarkah apratistha*: "By... What should be the... What should be our real understanding, that WE CANNOT ESTABLISH SIMPLY BY ARGUMENT."

«*Tarkah apratisthah smrtayo vibhinnah*: [Cc. Madhya 17.186] "If we consult different scriptures, then we'll find that one scripture is speaking something, another scripture is speaking something else." [...] So therefore it is said that *smrtayo vibhinnah*. IF YOU CONSULT DIFFERENT SCRIPTURES, YOU'LL FIND DIFFERENT CONTRADICTORY STATEMENTS. Your scripture may be different from my scripture. And *nasau munir yasya matam na bhinnam*. IF YOU CONSULT PHILOSOPHERS, YOU'LL FIND ONE PHILOSOPHER IS DIFFERING FROM ANOTHER PHILOSOPHER. A big philosopher means who has cut down other philosophers and put up his own theory, "This is true." This is going on.

«So *tarko 'pratisthah smrtayo vibhinna nasau munir yasya matam na bhinnam*. THEN HOW TO CONCLUDE WHAT IS THE RIGHT PATH? I cannot establish it by my imperfect arguments. I cannot consult even the scriptures. Neither I can take real instruction from different philosophers. Then what, WHAT IS THE WAY OF HAVING THE REAL THING? So it says that *dharmasya tattvam nihitam guhayam*: "THE TRUTH OF RELIGIOSITY IS VERY CONFIDENTIAL, VERY SECRET." SO HOW TO KNOW IT? *Mahajano yena gatah sa panthah*: [Cc. Madhya 17.186] "WE HAVE SIMPLY TO SEE THAT GREAT PERSONALITIES, AS THEY HAVE TAKEN UP, WE HAVE TO FOLLOW. THAT'S ALL."

«Just like in your Christian religion you may not understand all the Biblical injunctions or you may not have the time, but you'll simply, if you follow the ideal life of Lord Jesus Christ, then you get the same result. Similarly, the Muhammadans, if they follow the ideal life of Muhammad, Hazrat

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

Muhammad, so they get the result. *Mahajano yena gatah sa panthah* [Cc. Madhya 17.186].

«Just like in a unknown path, in a village, especially when there is a field [...]in the country, everything, every, every place is of the same similar nature, the same jungle, the same field, the same grass. We do not know where I am going. Or in the sea. Or in the sea. I have got experience. Have you ever traveled in the sea? No. But when I was coming from India, so everywhere I see a round only, round of water. I do not know which way the ship is proceeding. You see? But they have got a chart. They have got a chart. [...]What are these charts? The charts are that experienced sailors, they have made the charts. The captain was also consulting that chart because it was made by experienced sailors. That is nothing. So SIMILARLY IN CALCULATING IN WHICH WAY WE HAVE TO FIND OUT OUR SALVATION IS TO FOLLOW SUCH LIBERATED SOULS.»

(Lecture Bg 2.12 -- New York, March 7, 1966)

“*Mahajano yena gatah sa panthah* [Cc. Madhya 17.186]. You cannot come to the conclusion what is *sraddha* and *sadhana* by simply argument. *Tarko apratistha*. BY ARGUMENT, WE CANNOT ESTABLISH. *Srutayo vibhinna*. THE SCRIPTURES ARE MANY VARIETIES. *Srutayor vibhinna nasau munir yasya matam na bhinnam*. AND EVERY PHILOSOPHER MUST DIFFER WITH ANOTHER PHILOSOPHER. THEREFORE, MAHAJANO YENA GATAH SA PANTHAH: WE HAVE TO FOLLOW THE FOOTPRINTS OF GREAT AUTHORITIES.”

(Lecture NOD-- Vrndavana, November 12, 1972)

The Guru and What Parbhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)

The Guru and What P rabhupada Said (I n the Service of I skcon)

Question Twenty-two

But isn't it possible to just have one understanding that would satisfy us all?

“S.PRABHUPADA: NOTHING CAN SATISFY EVERYONE. That is not possible. There is no such thing within this material world which can satisfy everyone. There is no such thing.

I: Because we...

S.PRABHUPADA: No, no, because... There may be so many 'because.' But THE FACT IS THAT THERE IS NOTHING IN THIS MATERIAL WORLD WHICH CAN SATISFY EVERYONE.

I: There can be a method which can...

S.PRABHUPADA: Maybe, but we do not know.

I: Therefore beyond that, you see, I came...

S.PRABHUPADA: Just like Krsna. We accept Krsna the supreme authority. Krsna says, *mam ekam saranam vraja*. Who is accepting this? We have accepted. Some others may have accepted but you have not accepted. So therefore even Krsna's injunction is not accepted by everyone, what to speak of others? So therefore YOU CANNOT FIND OUT WITHIN THIS MATERIAL WORLD ANYTHING WHICH CAN SATISFY EVERYONE. THAT IS NOT POSSIBLE.

I: We have not found that.

S.PRABHUPADA: You may think, but WE HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THERE IS NOTHING, SUCH THING, WHICH CAN SATISFY EVERYONE. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE.

I: Until we hear all, we may do that...

S.PRABHUPADA: That may be an ideal, but we take Krsna as the highest authority. Even Krsna's words are not accepted. That's a fact. Krsna says,



The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

'You surrender unto Me.' So a few persons might have surrendered to Him. Even Kṛṣṇa was present, only the Pandavas and the inhabitants of the Vr̄ndavana and Dvāraka, some of them understood that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme. But many did not accept Him. Many insulted Him. Just like Sisupala insulted Him. So EVEN KRSNA COULD NOT BE ACCEPTED."

(Conversation, Allahabad 1/17/71)

The Guru and What Parbhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)

The Guru and What Prabhupada Said (In the Service of Iskcon)

Final Note

by

Prila Prabhupada

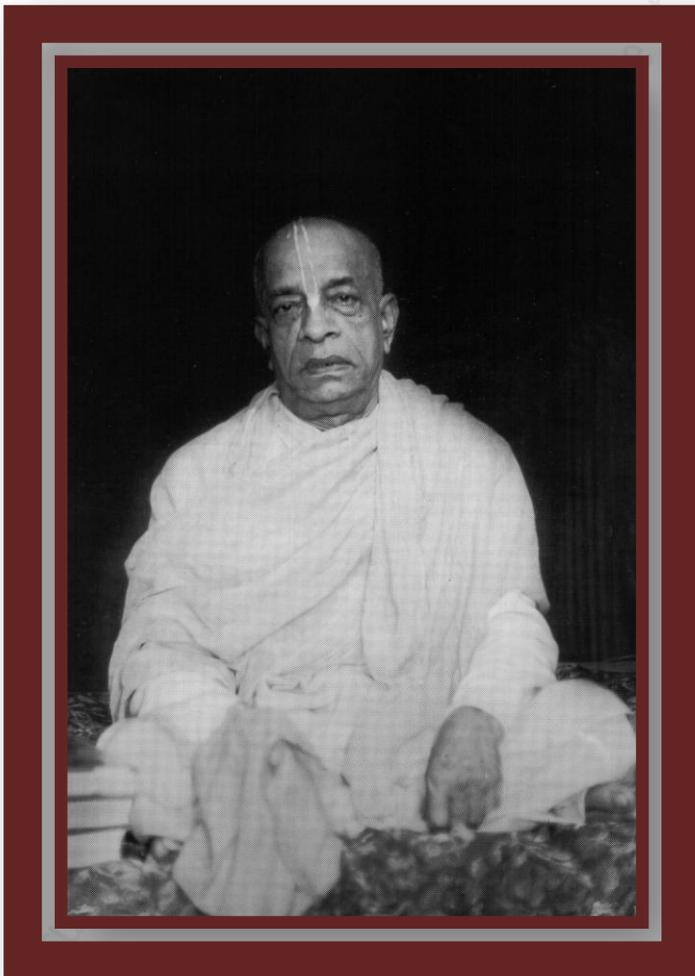
“IN A COURT OF JUSTICE two lawyers put forward their respective relevant arguments taken from the authorized law books to decide a point, but it is up to the judge to decide the case in favor of one of the litigants. WHEN THE OPPOSING LAWYERS PUT FORWARD THEIR ARGUMENTS, BOTH OF THEM ARE LEGAL AND BONA FIDE, BUT THE JUDGMENT IS GIVEN AS TO WHICH ARGUMENT IS APPLICABLE TO THE PARTICULAR CASE.



“...We have to accept everything favorable to the circumstances. Rejection of other methods in a particular circumstance does not mean that the rejected ones are not bona fide. But for the time being, taking into consideration the age, time, and object, methods are sometimes rejected even though bona fide. WE HAVE TO TEST EVERYTHING BY ITS PRACTICAL RESULT.”

(SSR, III, “The Scriptural Basis of K.C.”, 4th. Printing, pg. 116)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said



Epilogue

Disciplic Succession: Unbroken, Still!

OUR CONCLUSION IS that the International Society for Krsna Consciousness (ISKCON) has to satisfy its final judge and authority, His Divine Grace Om Visnupada Paramahansa Parivrajakacarya Astottara-sata Sri Srimad A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

It has been proven even to the common eye that he executed an astounding task, establishing in record time a triumphant, worldwide movement for the propagation of Krsna consciousness. It has been proven to the devotees' eyes that Srila Prabhupada fulfilled the desires of the predecessor acaryas and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu, by creating in –and from– the midst of sinful humankind a society of pure, Krsna conscious devotees who have dedicated their lives for the propagation of the Holy Names of the Lord. This success was brought about specially by his unique presentation of the Krsna conscious philosophy in the form of his writings, and the success was such, that in describing it Srila Prabhupada said it was beyond his expectations.

“The secret of success in advancement in spiritual life is the firm faith of the disciple in the orders of his spiritual master. The Vedas confirm this:

*yasya deve para bhaktir
yatha deve tatha gurau
tasyaite kathita hy arthah
prakasante mahatmanah*

‘To one who has staunch faith in the words of the spiritual master and the words of the Supreme Personality of Godhead the secret of success in

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

Vedic knowledge is revealed.' The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is being propagated according to this principle, and therefore our preaching work is going on successfully, in spite of the many impediments offered by antagonistic demons, because we are getting positive help from our previous acaryas. One must judge every action by its result. [...]The success of the ISKCON party, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, which strictly follows guru and Gaurāṅga, is increasing daily all over the world. Srīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura wanted to print as many books as possible and distribute them all over the world. We have tried our best in this connection, and we are getting results beyond our expectations.

(Cc Adi 12.8)

It is now the duty of Srīla Prabhupada's followers to perpetuate this success, which is something that can only be accomplished by means of the same formula –firm faith in the orders of the spiritual master. Otherwise, in that same portion of *Caitanya-caritamṛta* he warns about the impending danger:

TRANSLATION

Some of the disciples strictly accepted the orders of the acarya, and others deviated, independently concocting their own opinions under the spell of daivi maya.

PURPORT

This verse describes the beginning of a schism. When disciples do not stick to the principle of accepting the order of their spiritual master, immediately there are two opinions. Any opinion different from the opinion of the spiritual master is useless. One cannot infiltrate materially concocted ideas into spiritual advancement. That is deviation. There is no scope for adjusting spiritual advancement to material ideas.

TRANSLATION

The order of the spiritual master is the active principle in spiritual life. Anyone who disobeys the order of the spiritual master immediately becomes useless.

Epilogue

PURPORT

Here is the opinion of Srila Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvami. Persons who strictly follow the orders of the spiritual master are useful in executing the will of the Supreme, whereas persons who deviate from the strict order of the spiritual master are useless.” (Cc Adi 12.9-10)

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu sent Srila Prabhupada with a mission, and Srila Prabhupada fulfilled it. That mission was to institute the system of disciplic succession all over the world. Srila Prabhupada did not come to be the last link of the chain, but to assure its perpetual continuation. And he did his part. By leaving, Srila Prabhupada indicated that the system was established and that his disciples would now be the bona fide spiritual master. Prepared or unprepared as they were, by leaving he was forcing them to take up the responsibility.

Srila Prabhupada’s instructions and desires are no secret. They are expressed throughout all of his teachings. He always presented his movement as a solidly established organization, not as an experimental society. Everything had been provided for in his ISKCON.

As a most important provision, he openly entrusted his mission to his disciples. If they strictly follow his orders they will succeed in going back home, back to Godhead, and their followers will go with them –after having been themselves the bona fide spiritual master for the next generation. “This is the law of disciplic succession” –he said.

Therefore, we shouldn’t become perplexed in the face of this law. It is enacted by time, and time is Krsna. Now we should tell the world that the disciplic succession has been perpetuated. Now we should reassume again our original enthusiasm in the service of Srila Prabhupada, and take up once again our original mission –the spiritual conquest of the world. There is nothing to lose or to fear. We are fully protected by what PRABHUPADA SAID.

“[...]I am very much confident that you will be able to render more and more the best service to Krsna and to your spiritual master. That means that you will simply introduce our Krsna Consciousness program anywhere and everywhere, without any compromise or deviation from

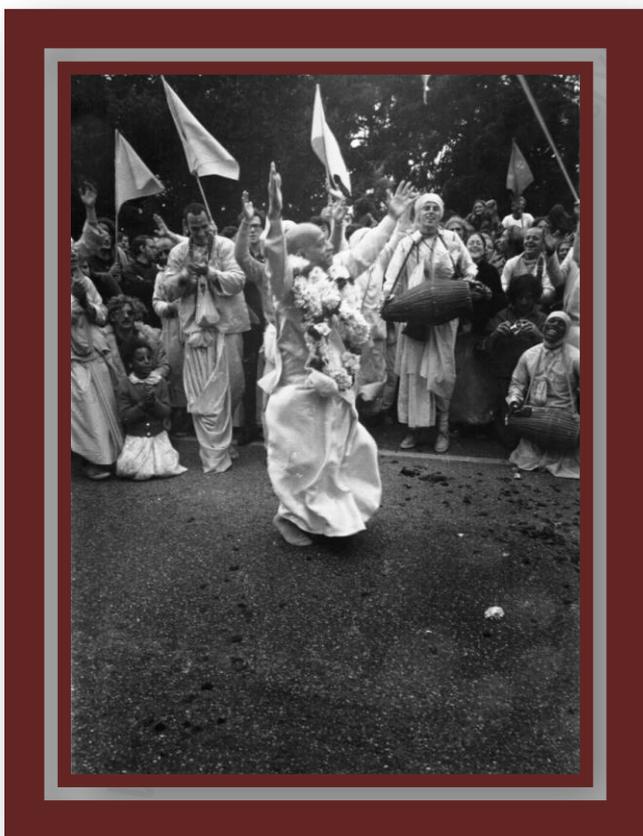
The Guru and what Prabhupada Said

the highest standard of devotional practice, as chalked out for us by our great predecessors. If you yourself remain always pure, then your preaching will have effect. As soon as there is little impurity, the whole thing will deteriorate and go to hell. So we shall not like to take the credit in that case.

“Therefore I am praying simply that all of you, my advanced disciples, GBC men, sannyasis, temple officers, like that, that all of you will become sober-minded and feeling always very much responsible how the things will go on as I have given them. If you simply do as I am doing, not avoiding anything which may have to be done for pushing on Kṛṣṇa’s movement, remaining always stuck up very tightly to the footsteps of Rupa Gosvami, then without any doubt you will remain always fresh and enthusiastic for working very energetically on Kṛṣṇa’s behalf, without any falldown.”

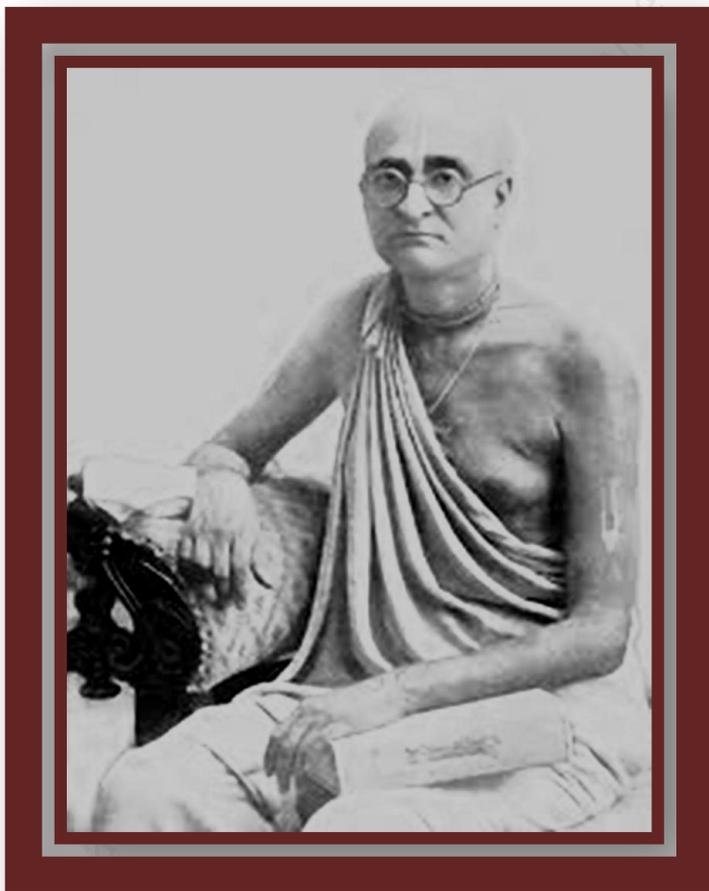
—Sriḷa Prabhupada in a letter, 12/29/72

Epilogue



Srila Prabhupada Ki Jaya!

The Guru and what Parama-Prabhupada Said



Appendix One

The Guru and what Parama-Prabhupada Said

The following are an essay and a Vyasa-Puja lecture by our parama-guru, His Divine Grace Om Visnupada Paramahansa Parivrajakacarya Astottara-sata Sri Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura Prabhupada. The articles appeared originally in his English newspaper, the Sree Sajjana-Toshani, also known as "The Harmonist." Note that the second article is his response to the last Vyasa-Puja he was offered in person. To preserve their authenticity, the articles have been retyped unedited, except for appearance.

I

Sree Sajjana-Toshani,

VOL. XXVI, NO.7,

DECEMBER 1928, 442 Chaitanya-Era.

EDITORIAL

Initiation into Spiritual Life.

THE CEREMONY OF DIKSA or initiation is that by which the spiritual Preceptor admits one to the status of a neophyte on the path of spiritual endeavour. The ceremony tends to confer spiritual enlightenment by abrogating sinfulness. Its actual effect depends on the degree of willing co-operation on the part of the disciple and is, therefore, not the same in all cases. It does not preclude the possibility of reversion of the novice to the

Initiation into Spiritual Life

non-spiritual state, if he slackens in his effort or misbehaves. Initiation puts a person on the true track and also imparts an initial impulse to go ahead. It cannot, however, keep one going for good unless one chooses to put forth his own voluntary effort. The nature of the initial impulse also varies in accordance with the condition of the recipient. But although the mercy of the good preceptor enables us to have a glimpse of the Absolute and of the path of His attainment, the seed that is thus sown requires very careful tending under the direction of the preceptor, if it is to germinate and grow into the fruit-and-shade-giving tree. Unless our soul of his own accord chooses to serve Krishna after obtaining a working idea of his real nature, he cannot long retain the Spiritual Vision. The soul is never compelled by Krishna to serve Him.



But initiation is never altogether futile. It changes the outlook of the disciple on life. If he sins after initiation, he may fall into greater depths of degradation than the uninitiated. But although even after initiation temporary set-backs may occur, they do not ordinarily prevent the final deliverance. The faintest glimmering of the real knowledge of the Absolute has sufficient power to change radically and for good the whole of our mental and physical constitution and this glimmering is incapable of being totally extinguished except in extraordinarily unfortunate cases.

It is undoubtedly practicable for the initiated, if only he is willing, to follow the directions of the preceptor that lead by slow degrees to the Absolute. The good preceptor is verily the savior of fallen souls. It is, however, very rarely that a person with modern culture feels inclined to submit to the guidance of another specially in spiritual matters. But the very person submits readily enough to the direction of a physician for being cured of his bodily ailments. Because these latter cannot be ignored without consequences that are patent to everybody. The evil that results from our neglect of the ailments of the soul is of a nature that paralyses and deludes our understanding and prevents the recognitions of itself. Its gravity is not recognised as it does not apparently stand in the way of our worldly activities with the same directness as the other. The average cultured man is, therefore, at liberty to ask questions without realising any pressing necessity of submitting to the treatment of spiritual maladies at the hands of a really competent physician.

The Guru and what Parama-Prabhupada Said

The questions that are frequently asked are as these:-'Why should it be at all necessary to submit to any particular person or to subscribe to any particular ceremony for the purpose of realising the Absolute Who by His nature is unconditioned? Why should Krishna require our formal declaration of submission to Himself? Would it not be more generous and logical to permit us to live a life of freedom in accordance with the principles of our perverted nature which is also His creation? Admitting that it is our duty to serve Krishna, why should we have to be introduced to Him by a third party? Why is it impossible for one to serve Sri Krishna directly? It would no doubt be highly convenient and helpful to be instructed by a good preceptor who is well-versed in the Scriptures in understanding the same. But one should never submit to another to an extent that may furnish a rascal with an opportunity of really doing harm. The bad preceptor is a familiar character. It is inexplicable how those gurus who live in open sin contrive nevertheless to retain the unquestioning allegiance of the cultured portion of their disciples.



Such being the case, can we blame any person who hesitates to submit unconditionally to a preceptor, whether he is good or bad? It is of course necessary to be quite sure of the bonafide of a person before we accept him even tentatively as our spiritual guide. A preceptor should be a person who appears likely to possess those qualities that will enable him to improve our spiritual condition.

Those and similar thoughts are likely to occur to most persons who have received an English education, when they are asked to accept the help of any particular person as his spiritual preceptor. The literature, science and art of the West, body forth the principle of the liberty of the individual and denounce the mentality that leads one to surrender to however superior a person his right of choosing his own course. They inculcate the necessity and high value of having faith in oneself.

Initiation into Spiritual Life

But the good preceptor claims our sincere and complete allegiance. The good disciple makes a complete surrender of himself at the feet of the preceptor. But the submission of the disciple is neither irrational nor blind. It is complete on condition that the preceptor himself continues to be altogether good. The disciple retains the right of renouncing his allegiance to the preceptor the moment he is satisfied that the preceptor is a fallible creature like himself. Nor does a good preceptor accept any one as his disciple unless the later is prepared to submit to him freely. A good preceptor is in duty bound to renounce a disciple who is not sincerely willing to follow his instructions fully.



If a preceptor accepts as his disciple one who refuses to be wholly guided by him, or if a disciple submits to a preceptor who is not wholly good, such preceptor and such disciple are, both of them, doomed to fall from their spiritual state.

No one is a good preceptor who has not realised the Absolute. One who has realised the Absolute is saved from the necessity of walking on the worldly path. The good preceptor who lives the spiritual life is, therefore, bound to be wholly good. He should be wholly free from any desire for anything of this world whether good or bad. The categories of good and bad do not exist in the Absolute. In the Absolute everything is good. We can have no idea in our present state of this absolute goodness. Submission to the Absolute is not real unless it is also itself absolute. It is on the plane of the Absolute that the disciple is required to submit completely to the good preceptor. On the material plane there can be no such thing as complete submission. The pretence of complete submission to the bad preceptor is responsible for the corruptions that are found in the relationship of the ordinary worldly guru and his equally worldly-minded disciples.

All honest thinkers will realise the logical propriety of the position set forth above. But most persons will be disposed to believe that a good preceptor in

The Guru and what Parama-Prabhupada Said

the above sense may not be found in this world. This is really so. Both the good preceptor and his disciple belong to the spiritual realm. But spiritual discipleship is nevertheless capable of being realised by persons who belong to this world. Otherwise there would be no religion at all in the world. But



because the spiritual life happens to be realisable in this world it does not follow that it is the worldly existence which is capable of being improved into the spiritual. As a matter of fact the one is perfectly incompatible with the other. They are categorically different from one another. The good preceptor although he appears to belong to this world is not really of this world. No one who belongs to this world can deliver us from worldliness. The good preceptor is a denizen of the spiritual world who has been enabled by the will of

God to appear in this world in order to enable us to realise the spiritual existence.

The much vaunted individual liberty is a figment of the diseased imagination. We are bound willingly or unwillingly to submit to the laws of God in the material as well as in the spiritual world. The hankering for freedom in defiance of His laws is the cause of all our miseries. The total abjuration of all hankering for such freedom is the condition of admission to the spiritual realm. In this world we desire this freedom but are compelled against our will to submit to the inexorable laws of physical nature. This is the unnatural state. Such unwilling for forced submission does not admit us into the spiritual realm. In this world the moral principle, indeed claims our willing submission. But even morality also is a curtailment of freedom necessitated by the peculiar circumstances of this world. The soul who does not belong to this world is in a state of open or court rebellion against submission to an alien domination. It is by his very constitution capable of submitting willingly only to the Absolute.

Initiation into Spiritual Life

The good preceptor asks the struggling soul to submit not to the laws of this world which will only rivet its chains but to the higher law of the spiritual realm. The pretence of submission to the laws of the spiritual realm without the intention of really carrying them out into practice is often mistaken for genuine submission by reason of the absence of fullness of conviction. In this world the fully convinced state is non-existent. We are, therefore, compelled in all cases to act on make-believes viz. the so-called working hypotheses. The good preceptor tells us to change this method of activity which we have learnt from our experience of this world. He invites us first of all to be really and fully informed of the nature and laws of the other world which happens to be eternally and categorically different from this phenomenal world. If we do not sincerely submit to be instructed in the alphabets of the life eternal but go on perversely asserting however unconsciously our present processes and so-called convictions against the instructions of the preceptor in the period of novitiate we are bound to remain where we are. This also will amount to the practical rejection of all advice because the two worlds have nothing in common though at the same time we naturally fail to understand this believing all the time in accordance with our accustomed methods that we are at any rate partially following the preceptor. But as a matter of fact when we reserve the right of choice we really follow ourselves, because even when we seem to agree to follow the preceptor it is because he appears to be in agreement with ourselves. But as the two worlds have absolutely nothing in common we are only under a delusion when we suppose that we really understand the method or the object of the preceptor or in other words reserve the right of assertion of the apparent self. Faith in the scriptures can alone help us in this otherwise unpracticable endeavour. We believe in the preceptor with the help of the shastras when we understand neither. As soon as we are fully convinced of the necessity of submitting unambiguously to the good preceptor it is then and only then that he is enabled to show us the way into the spiritual world in accordance with the method laid down in the shastras of that purpose which he can apply properly and without perpetrating fatal blunder in as much as he himself happens to belong to the realm of the spirit.



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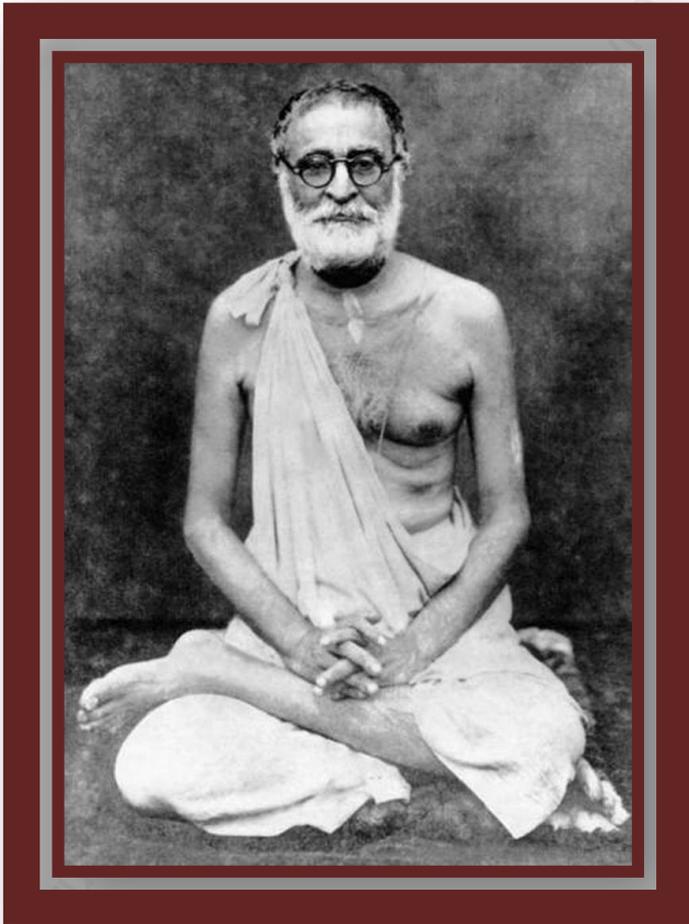
The crux of the matter lies not in the external nature of the ceremony of initiation as it appears to us because that is bound to be unintelligible to us being an affair of the other world, but in the conviction of the necessity and the successful choice of a really good preceptor. We can attain to the conviction of the necessity of the help of a good preceptor by the exercise of our unbiased reason in the light of our ordinary experience. When once this conviction has been truly formed Sri Krishna Himself helps us in finding the really good preceptor in two ways. In the first place he instructs us as regards the character and functions of a good preceptor through the revealed Shastras. In the second place He Himself sends to us the good preceptor himself at the moment when we are at all likely to benefit by his instructions. The good preceptor also comes to us when we reject him. In such cases also it is certainly Krishna Who sends him to us for no reason what-so-ever. Krishna has revealed from eternity the tidings of the spiritual realm in the form of transcendental sounds that have been handed down in the records of the spiritual Scriptures all over the world. The spiritual Scriptures help all those who are prepared to exercise this reason for the purpose of finding not the relative but the Absolute Truth to find out the proper instructor in accordance with their directions. The only good preceptor is he who can make us really understand the spiritual scriptures and they enable us realise the necessity and the nature of submission to the processes laid down in them. But there is still every chance of foul play. A very clever man or a magician may pass himself off as a person who can properly explain the Scriptures by means of his greater knowledge or deceptive arts. It is very important, therefore, that we should be on our guard against such tricks. The Scholar as well as the magician pretend to explain the Scriptures only in terms of the object or happenings of this world. But the Scriptures themselves declare that they do not tell us at all of the thing of this world. Those who are liable to be deluded by the arts of pervert yogis who persuade themselves into believing that the spiritual is identical with the perversion, distortion or defiance of the laws of physical nature. The laws of physical nature are not unreal. They govern the relation of all relative existences(.) In our present state it is therefore, always possible for another who possesses the power or the knowledge to demonstrate the merely tentative character of what we choose to regard as our deepest convictions by

Initiation into Spiritual Life

exposing their insufficiency or inapplicability. But such surprises as they belong to the realm of the phenomenal, have nothing to do with the Absolute. Those who have an unspiritual partiality for scholarship or for magic fall into the clutches of the pseudo-religionists. The serious plight of these victims of their own perversity will be realised from the fact that no one can be delivered from the state of ignorance by the method of compulsion. It is not possible to save the man who refuses on principle to listen to the voice of reason. The empiric pedants are no exception to this rule.

The plain meaning of the Shastras should, therefore, be our only guide in the search of the good preceptor when we actually feel the need of his guidance. The Scriptures have defined the good preceptor as one who himself leads the spiritual life. It is not any worldly qualifications that make the good preceptor. It is by unreserved submission to such a preceptor that we can be helped to re-enter into the realm that is our real home but which unfortunately is veritable terra incognita to almost all of us at present and also impossible of access to one body and mind alike which is the result of the disease of abuse of our faculty of free reason and the consequent accumulation of a killing load of worldly experiences which we have learnt to regard as the very stuff of our existence.

The Guru and what Parama-Prabhupada Said



II

Sree Sajjanatoshani,

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Editor's Response to Sree Vyas-Puja Addresses
(Translated from the original Bengali)

IN TODAY'S GREAT GATHERING of such a large number of enlightened persons, a good deal has already been said by more than one speaker. The audience have been listening to their addresses for a long time. I have not much to say of my own. Previous speakers have elucidated what I have to say. Many of them have spoken in the English language. For this reason it has become necessary for me to address you in Bengali. The Bengali language, such as I can command, is not easy. I do not know whether it will be intelligible to all.

Before I proceed to say anything of my own, I have to offer an explanation for myself as to why I have been listening to all these words of praise without the least hesitation.

I do not possess much knowledge of any language. I have, however, been able to gather from the words of praise, that have been so abundantly and so kindly addressed to me by my masters, that those words demonstrate my ineligibilities. On behalf of myself the only explanation I have to offer is this that if I had said anything about myself I should have been responsible for the same. But I am relieved of all responsibility as the words of the order of my masters have been spoken by other mouths.

As regards my part of the conduct, to which I have also alluded, it might have been open to the criticism of other persons if it had proceeded from myself.



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But it is not so. It is the doing of my Master. And it is for this simple reason that I have been under the obligation to display such behaviour without stopping to consider whether it might be disliked by other persons.



We have heard it said that the plant comes out of the seed, and that it cannot grow otherwise. The seed is born from the tree and the tree grow from the seed, turn by turn. If we adopt the view that no seed should grow from the tree, the forward movement of growth is stopped and its continuous flow is destroyed. I have, therefore, to practise to sit at these assemblies in the garb of a wise person and to listen to the words of praise relying on the dictum that the command of the Master is above all questioning. If, however, I am thereby led to suppose that it is a good thing to listen to one's own praise, my worthlessness is published to all the world in a glaring manner by such silly thinking.

I am obliged to accept this honour in order that the current of the Word of God may not be obstructed and its perennial flow may not cease. Our judgment in this matter is different from that of persons who listen to their praises for pampering their arrogance by such audiencing.

We should listen to nothing else but the praises of the Divine Master. I have to conduct myself, with all humility, in any manner that the order of my masters may at any moment consider it to be needful for me. I am not prepared to take the responsibility upon myself for any inconveniences that may result from such conduct.

I have heard from my Divine Master that one should audience the Word of God by being infinitely humbler than a blade of grass. Whoever chants the Word is no other than the Lotus Feet of the Divine Master. Audiencing the chanted Word is the disciplic function. The Word is mirrored in the heart by the only method of audiencing the chant of the Divine Master. Therefore, I am eligible to listen to these words of praise by the disciplic method. There is a great necessity to learn by the method of listening how one should

Editor's Response to Free Vyasa-Puja Addresses

approach God and His devotees with humility, in what manner one must sing their praises and honour them.



Today I have found much that everyone should note most carefully. There has been an opportunity of learning how one should honour other persons being himself unhonoured, how one should sing the praises of God and His devotees by silencing the hostile clamours of all kinds of indolence.

Singing the praises of the devotees of God is, indeed, the one thing needful. My revered masters have taught us to praise God and His devotees by their praises directed to myself. By praising the non-devotees both the offerers and the recipients of such praise are put to difficulties. My reverend masters are endeavouring to purify my heart by teaching me to be humble. They are saying to me, 'We possess the priceless quality of honouring other persons. We are offering you all this honour that you may, by similarly honouring all persons of this world, be enabled to be constantly engaged in the service of God and His devotees who can be perfectly served only by those who are inspired with such burning love'.

God and His devotees are worshipped by chanting their praises. It enables us to learn the language of Bandana or worship by the method of praise. We have also heard the following words which were spoken by our former masters, 'I am incomparably more vile than insects bred in odure and infinitely more wicked than Jagai and Madhai'.

It is only when we have occasion to listen to the praises of the Supreme Object of all praise from the Master and they react on our hearts, that we may learn about our utter worthlessness. Their profound humility and obedience teach us that it is never possible to approach God and His devotees except by such humble submission.

The Guru and what Parama-Prabhupada Said

If we learn to be arrogant, we would surely be deprived of the service of God and His devotees for good.

“There are persons who do not worship His devotees while worshipping God. Verily they are arrogant persons and not worshipers of God”.



If the same devotion with which we worship God is not aroused in our hearts to the feet of His devotees, we are rendered perfectly worthless, and will have lived in vain.

I am extremely unfit and encompassed with all the evils. But an immense number of God's devotees have mercifully appeared for my good who am so completely engulfed in evil. Many of them have gathered at this place for subduing my irrepressible arrogance. All of them are instructing me about the highest service of God. May we be ever ready to brush away from our hearts, by the rough application of hundreds of thousands of pointed broomsticks, the wicked design of being honoured above other persons by the devotees of God. God will be merciful to us and we shall be blessed with the gift of devotion to His Divine Feet the very day that we are delivered from the evil desire of seeking advantages and honours from others. A person is relieved from all ineligibilities by being imparted fitness for the service of God. Women, Shudras and the rest are condemnable and contemptible in the eyes of the world for their evil deeds. Even such persons are able to attain the eternal good by noting the model disposition of the devotees of God, who honour all persons without being honoured, and by following their conduct and teaching. Let us remember the text already quoted,

“There are those who worship God but do not worship His devotees. Verily such persons are arrogant sinners. They are not worshipers of God”.

If we become arrogant after having adopted the path of devotion, if we worship only God and disregard the worship of His devotees, we would be put

Editor's Response to Sree Vyasa-Puja Addresses

to manifold difficulties for our offence at the feet of the servants of God: we would be overtaken by the greatest of all misfortunes by being afflicted with apathy for the principle of devotion itself.

Human life is not intended for gathering evil. It is meant solely for the attainment of the supreme good. Why do I forget it? Why do I forget that I am the meanest and least of all entities? The ambition to lord it over others, to be great, to be elevationist or salvationist, is brought about when we allow ourselves to fall a victim to the temptations of the deluding energy of God. Such ambition is petty and useless. If there is any use in curbing one's hankering for becoming great in the eyes of the world, if there is any use in gaining one's real health, it is imperative to accept the line of thought of the Vaishnavas.



Those who are fit possess abundant power of devotion. They are strong. I have not gained so much strength. Being puffed up with the false idea of the same, I should not apply myself to find out the shortcomings of the Vaishnavas, or to condemn the service of Lord Vishnu or to seek to establish my own point of view by neglecting the method by which I may be enabled to serve the Lord and His devotees. No language can describe the havoc that is wrought in human life by such arrogance. I make this submission with all humility, taking hold of your feet, 'May you kindly refrain from imitating the conduct of the Vaishnavas. May you always follow their line of thought'. There is no relationship for us other than with the devotees of Vishnu. Relationship with other persons can only aggravate the desire for sensuous gratification.

Many a year have now passed over me one by one. I at last realise that there is no other help for me than the mercy of the holy feet of the Vaishnavas. Every one of my acts is fit to be attacked. I pray to those, who look down upon me, that if they consider that it is allowable for me to follow the conduct and the teachings of the Vaishnavas, they would no longer maintain that attitude. They will kindly impart to me the needful strength and fitness to communicate their power to those who are stupid and ignorant and devoid of all strength.

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One who serves Lord Hari counts himself as the least of all entities. One is lifted to the highest order of the Vaishnavas when one can feel himself the least of all. One can then speak the message of the highest devotion of Lord Hari.

“The best of all persons deems himself to be less than all others”.



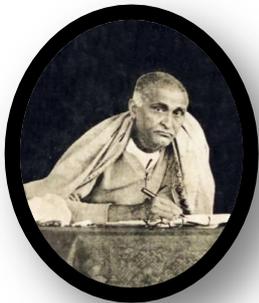
It is necessary for the best to scrutinise one's ineligibility. Why should a person be anxious to pry into the defects of others when he does not seek to scrutinise his own conduct? Is this the disposition of the Vaishnava? On the other hand, even those, who are low in the scale of service, may attain the higher level. Let us remember the texts:

“Not to speak of persons who listen to and remember with care the instructions of the scriptures, even those who live by sin, viz., women, Shudras, Hunas, Savaras and the birds of the air, can know God and prevail over His deluding power if they follow the conduct of the devoted servants of the Lord who covers the worlds by His wonderful strides”.

“The acts and expressions of the Vaishnavas cannot be understood even by the wise.”

The devotees are attached to the Lord Who pervades the worlds with His wonderful strides. Let us not be misled by the apparent sight. Many a person have been liable to mistake the pebble for the pearl, the snake for the rope, evil for good, by falling a victim to delusion by their reliance on apparent sight. It is only when a person allows himself to fall into the clutches of self-delusion that one's senses show their eagerness for supplying the wants incidental to the phenomenal world by supposing himself to be an inhabitant of the same. We should consider well how we are to be delivered from being thus exploited by the deluding energy. It will never bring us relief if we adopt the lordly mentality for supplying our present inadequacies and for avoiding what certain hasty observers have been pleased to dub as 'the slave mentality'

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of the devotees of God. Such modes of thinking accelerate our march towards the Inferno by plunging us into the course of sensuous indulgences.

If we disregard or ignore the devotees of God for elevating ourselves, we would thereby be cast into the prison of three dimensions and spin towards inflation instead of contraction. 'I will be good; I will be cured of my disease; I will have real

well-being': this is the proper kind of judgment. But it is not at all laudable to entertain the contrary thoughts, '-I will be great, I will gratify my malice by stopping the course of the whole world.' It is by no means proper to set up one's superiority against the worshipfulness of God's devotees. The path of audiencing the Transcendental Word has been rendered devious by the malinterpretation of the text 'Aham Brahmarshmi.' I have listened to the true interpretation of the text at the lotus feet of my Divine Master. It is to this effect, "It is our eternal duty to chant constantly the Name of Hari by being infinitely more truly humble than the smallest blade of grass, more truly forbearing than even the proverbially patient tree, by honouring others without being honoured."

We find assembled here today many really great souls. What persuasive courtesy, what humility do they possess! How great is the benefit, how great the good that we may have by listening to their words! We have it from the Talavakar Upanisad that those who aspire to be masters of the devotees, who are the masters of God Himself, are, indeed, most culpably arrogant. Srimad Bhagabat significantly declares, 'Let those who profess to know God brag of their knowledge, but let me have nothing to do with such fellows. This is all I have got to say in this matter.'

Not one among the paths of this material world is a path of the service of the Divinity. The idea that one should be master of God's devotees leads to inferno. It is harmful to follow any worldly path. To follow the devotees of God is the only path that leads to one's real good. Whatever method is

The Guru and what Parama-Prabhupada Said

followed by the devotees is worthy of being cherished with the utmost love and reverence.



Holding the blade of straw between my teeth I pray time and again for this only boon that I may be a particle of dust at the lotus feet of the most revered Sree Rupa Goswami Prabhu. Let there be birth after birth for us that we may walk in the path of the followers of Sree Rupa by being the particles of dust at the lotus feet of the devotees of God. The root of it all is humility or the due realisation of one's own ineligibility. If this conviction of our unfit-ness for the service of God is to us either automatically or by the instruction of other persons, we are only then in a position to behold the beauty of the lotus feet of God's devotees. In all the talks of the average people of this world the idea that is uppermost is how to promote the gratification of one's senses. If we happen to be obsessed with the idea that it is the path of religion, we would be prevented for good from becoming truly religious.

All persons are accustomed to worship the Beautiful Feet of God. But the conception that God is to supply our comforts and conveniences in lieu of worship is worthy of a shopkeeper. That we are to receive some other things in exchange of our worship is not the trend of thought of the devotees of God. If one seeks to follow such a course, one will never understand the nature of the service of Krishna. God is full of the highest well-being. It is no proof of one's goodness of judgment to pray to God for the gratification of one's senses instead of the highest good. It should be the duty of all persons to follow the line of thought that seeks to find out how Krishna is to be served.

"I have not spared any method for carrying out the bad dictates of the lusts of the flesh. But they have had no pity upon me, nor have they produced in me any compunction or satiety. Wherefore, Lord of the Yadus, having only now gained the balance of my judgment, after finally giving up the abject thralldom of the sensuous appetites, I have come to Thee, Who art the

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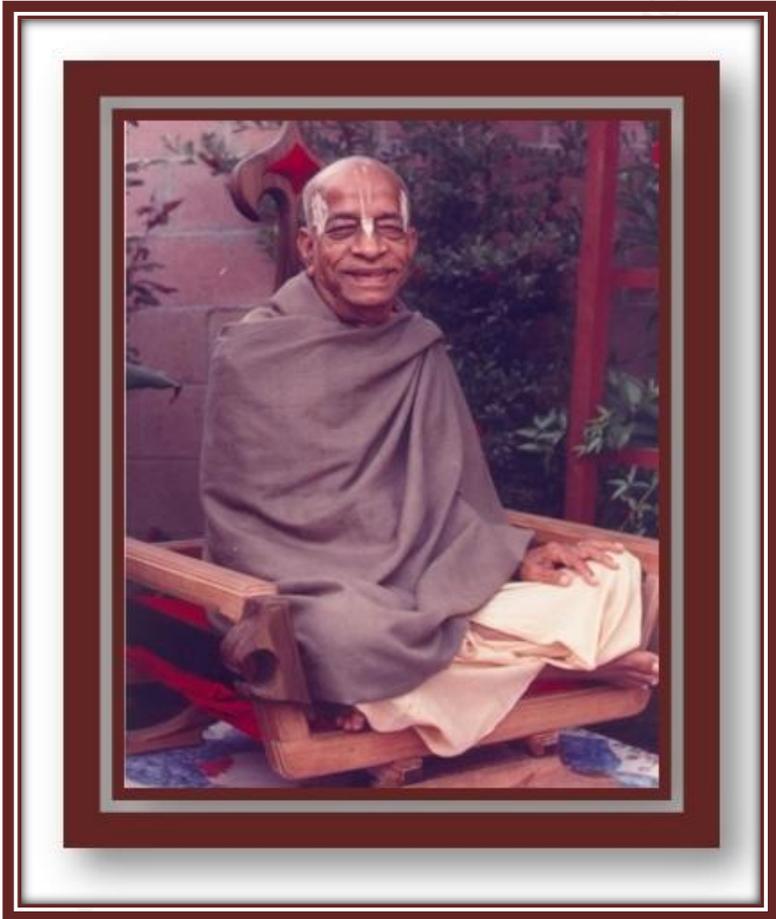
Refuge from all fear. May Thou be pleased to employ me in Thy service." Oh my Lord, I pray to Thee for employing me in Thy service. I will no more serve dogs and horses, iron and gold, men and gods. I have courted my own destruction by engaging in their service. Thy service, O Lord, is the only means of being delivered from this dire misfortune. But it is a far cry to seek to obtain Thy service without serving those who have dedicated themselves to Thy service. The service of Thy devotees is productive of greater good than any other method.

We do not find God in this world. The devotees, who serve God, out of their mercy show themselves to us. We should follow their conduct and teaching. It is the only path to our well-being. Due to our meagre education and small experiences, to most of us the ideas and ways of thinking of the devotees of God appear to be unedifying 'slave mentality'. Let us not indulge in such profane ravings under the urge of mental aberration. On the contrary, our line of thought should be, 'Let the censorious people calumniate us to their heart's content. We will not mind them. Let us roll in the dust and forget everything in the ecstasy of intoxication by excessive drinking of the strong wine of the tasty liquid mellow of Lord Hari.'

We will roll in the dust sanctified by the tread of the feet of God's devotees. We will not make any disciples. We have not made any disciples, nor will we make any. Because unless we cease to do so, we shall be misled along the wrong tracks by the sinister insinuations of those who are constitutionally averse to the service of God. All of you are the order of my masters. May you have mercy upon me, remembering that I am your disciple.

The Guru and What Parbhupada Said (I n the Service of Iskcon)

The Guru and what Prabhupada Said



Appendix Two

Who is Srila Prabhupada?

BORN IN CALCUTTA on September 1, 1896, in a family of pure devotees of Krsna, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada dedicated his whole life to the practice and propagation of spiritual knowledge as presented in ancient Vedic and Vaisnava tradition.

In 1922, after completing his university education, Srila Prabhupada met his spiritual master, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Maharaja (1874-1937), the most prominent and erudite Krsna conscious master of the time, the founder of the Gaudiya Matha (a Vedic institution with 64 centers in India).

Entrusted by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta with the mission of disseminating Vedic knowledge in the English language, Srila Prabhupada began to prepare by studying and preaching, and especially by publishing his own writings on the Krsna conscious philosophy. At the time of his passing away on November 14, 1977, in Vrndavana, India, he had brought to light over seventy volumes of translations, commentaries and studies on the classic works of India's spiritual civilization. By then, more than 100,000,000 copies of his literatures had been distributed all over the world in over forty languages.

In 1965, at the advanced age of sixty-nine and to crown the fulfillment of his spiritual master's request, Srila Prabhupada journeyed from India to the West in his historic voyage in the Jaladuta freighter, establishing in New York the International Society for Krsna consciousness (ISKCON).

For twelve years he conducted this worldwide confederation, which under his direct guidance grew into over one-hundred asramas, schools, temples and farm communities. At his earnest request, his mission is now being carried forward by his disciples.