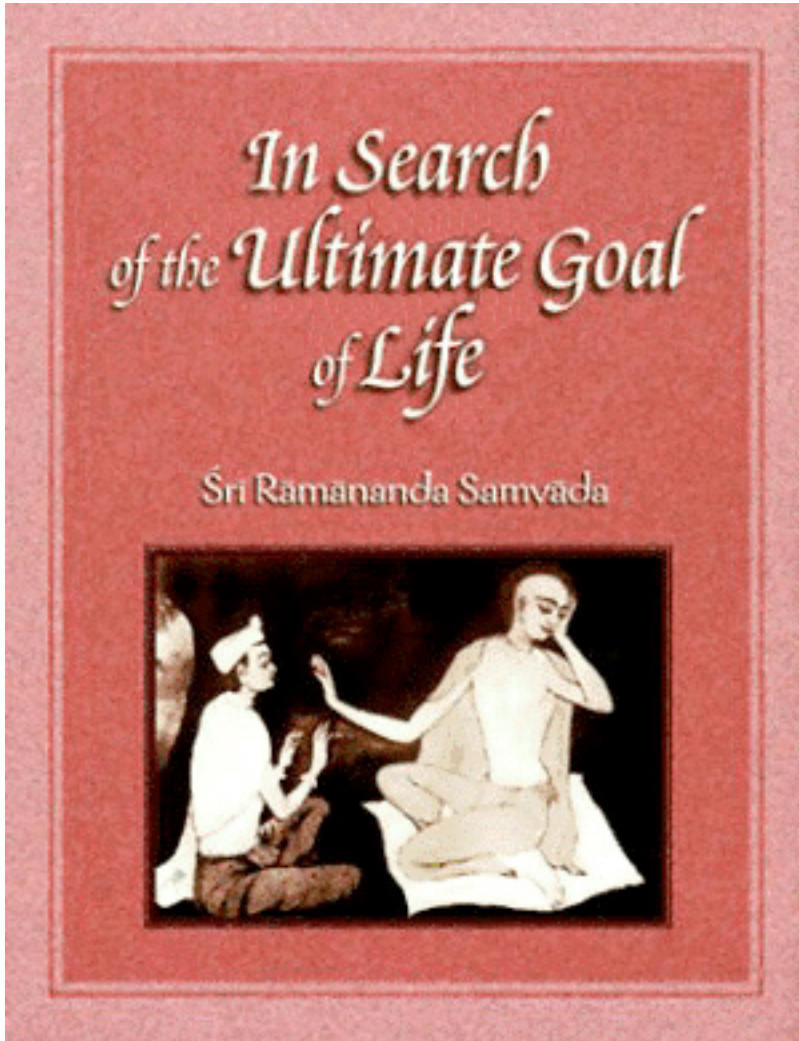


# **Sri Ramananda Samvada In Search of the Ultimate Goal of Life**



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

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# Introduction by Swami B.G. Narasingha

In Search of the Ultimate Goal of Life was written by our Divine Guide and Master, Om Visnupada Paramahansa Parivrajakacarya Astottara-sata Sri Srimad A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada just after his entering the renounced order of life in the autumn of 1959. At that time, Srila Prabhupada was living in Sri Vrndavana-dhama and would sometimes practice madhukari. Madhukari means to collect a little food door to door for one's maintenance just as the bee collects a little pollen flower to flower. Srila Prabhupada, however, often requested the householders whom he called upon to give pen and paper for his writing rather than the rice, dahl, and chapatis traditionally sought by holy men practicing madhukari.

On those papers that he received as alms, Srila Prabhupada wrote page after page, preparing his messages of Godhead for the world. Some of the manuscripts he published in his Back to Godhead magazine, and others, like Easy Journey to Other Planets, he printed as small booklets. Although unable to publish everything he wrote, Srila Prabhupada nevertheless continued to write and stockpile his manuscripts. Unfortunately, some of the early writings of His Divine Grace were lost after Srila Prabhupada left Sri Vrndavana-dhama to conduct his worldwide campaign of spreading Krsna consciousness.

In 1977, just on the eve of our Divine Master's departure for the eternal abode of Sri Sri Radha-Krsna, I found a handwritten manuscript at the bottom of an old metal trunk in the Radha-Damodara temple. The handwriting was easily recognizable as Srila Prabhupada's. After the disappearance of His Divine Grace, I carried the manuscript with me wherever I went, showing it to interested devotees. On several occasions, my godbrothers suggested that I publish the manuscript for wide-scale distribution.

The original manuscript of more than two hundred pages was entitled Lord Caitanya: His Sannyasa and Sankirtana Movement. Unfortunately, 40 pages were missing from the middle section. For several years, we searched for those missing pages but were unable to find them. The manuscript was therefore divided into two parts. The first part describes Lord Caitanya's traveling from Navadvipa-dhama to Jagannatha Puri immediately after His accepting the sannyasa order, the Lord's visiting the temple of Ksiracora Gopinatha, the pastime of the Gopinatha Deity stealing the offering of condensed milk to satisfy His pure devotee Sripad Madhavendra Puri, and the pastime of the Saksi Gopala Deity appearing as a witness to defeat the atheists. The second part of the manuscript describes the talks between Lord Caitanya and Ramananda Raya when the two met on the banks of the river Godavari in South India.

In the second part of the manuscript, Srila Prabhupada preaches very enthusiastically - discussing the varnasrama system, chastising the materialists, condemning the impersonalist conception, exposing the imitationists, praising the virtues and characteristics of pure devotion, and entering into confidential descriptions of the nature of rasa-tattva, the transcendental mellowness of spontaneous love of Godhead.

# Part 1

While on tour of South India, Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu arrived on the banks of the river Godavari, where He met Sri Ramananda Raya, a great devotee of Sri Krsna. Lord Caitanya expressed a deep desire to hear about Sri Krsna from the lips of Ramananda Raya and requested that Ramananda recite a verse from the revealed scriptures concerning the ultimate goal of life. Ramananda then replied:

"If a person performs the prescribed duties of his social position, he awakens his original Krsna consciousness."

Supporting his statement, Ramananda then cited a verse from the Visnu Purana (3.8.9):

*visnur aradhyate pantha*

*nanyat tat-dosa-karanam*

"The Personality of Godhead Lord Visnu is worshiped by the proper performance of prescribed duties in the system of varna and asrama. There is no other way to satisfy the Personality of Godhead. One must be situated in the institution of the four varnas and asramas."

## Varna and Asrama Jeopardized

Hearing this statement from Ramananda Raya, Lord Caitanya replied that the system of varnasrama-dharma was external and thus it was not acceptable. Lord Caitanya also rejected the statement of Ramananda because the system of varnasrama-dharma is now jeopardized by the influence of the present age of Kali, the age of quarrel and fighting. In the Bhagavad-gita, the Personality of Godhead declares that the varnasrama system is created by Him, although He is aloof from such a system. Because the varnasrama system is a creation of the Personality of Godhead, it is not possible to do away with it. However, the nefarious activities of the people of the age of Kali can jeopardize the varnasrama system. We have purposely used the word jeopardized because the whole system still exists but in a reflected form.

In the varnasrama system of social management, the aim of life is to attain the favor of Lord Visnu, the all-pervading Personality of Godhead. Unfortunately, at the present moment the aim of life is to displease the all-pervading Godhead and thereby suffer perpetually under the laws of material nature. The goal of the varnasrama system is to peacefully perform the prescribed duties of humanity and thereby achieve the highest success, namely the favor of Lord Visnu. But when the aim of life is the planned exploitation of

material nature, all life is jeopardized on account of the human race fighting with the laws of nature.

The arrangement of nature is so strict that even a slight violation of the laws of nature can do great harm to a conditioned human being. Human beings must always consider themselves to be living under the stringent laws of nature. They must always remember that their plans for breaking nature's laws will bring about tremendous hardship. Regrettably, human beings under the deluding influence of material nature want to lord it over the laws of nature, and, as such, they are more and more entangled in conditioned life. Foolish human beings do not see the defect of their so-called advancement of knowledge. The most difficult problems of life are birth, death, old age, and disease. These four problems are a permanent settlement for the conditioned soul. Human beings want to lord it over the laws of nature but their so-called advancement of scientific knowledge cannot solve these problems.

A continuous increase of world population to the proportion of three births in every second has puzzled the brains of the leaders of society. To solve the problem of birth, they put forward rascal plans of birth control under the name of family planning, yet the problem is unsolved. By the laws of nature, the population is ever-increasing in spite of all their scientific plans and schemes. On the whole, the problem of birth has remained unsolved.

## **Mother Nature's Atom Bomb**

The death problem is also not solved. None of the scientific knowledge of the human being has solved the death problem. The advancement of material knowledge can simply accelerate the problem of dying; nobody can save a person from the cruel hands of death. The discovery of the atom bomb and similar other great inventions of the fertile brain of the scientist has simply increased the death problem. The foolish scientists do not know that the atom bomb is actually the scheme of Mother Nature, who is sure to kill the demoniac population when it increases disproportionately.

Modern economists also believe in the laws of nature and confirm that unrestricted birth increases in the human population will certainly result in famine, pestilence, epidemics, and war. So, the so-called civilized states' plan of killing human beings by atomic and hydrogen bombs is actually the plan of Mother Nature to punish the foolish miscreants. Everything is automatically executed by Mother Nature as soon as the human being is in violation of her laws. However, foolish people, out of their undue vanity, think that the



plan is made by them. To execute her stringent punishment, Mother Nature dictates to the human brain the ability to invent the atomic bomb. Foolishly, the human being wants to take the credit for such inventions, which are meant only for punishment. We learn this fact from the Bhagavad-gita (3.27), wherein it is said that everything is done by prakrti or Mother Nature. But the foolish living entity, puffed up by the vanity of learning, falsely considers himself the Creator.

## **The Problem Remains the Same**

Without going further into the details of birth and death in terms of modernized scientific plans, it can safely be said that the problem of birth and death remains in its original proportion. Nothing has been done to increase or decrease the problem.

The problem of old age and disease is also not solved. The more the inventions of modernized science are made, the more relative diseases increase proportionately.

We can again conclude that birth, death, old age, and disease are the sum total of all the problems of material existence and can never be solved by any plan made by human beings. If a human being wants to solve all the problems of material existence, he must abide by the advice of Godhead that only by full surrender unto Him can one be saved from the stringent conditions of the material laws of nature.

## **Perverted Castes**

The system of varnasrama-dharma as it is mentioned in the scriptures aims at achieving the favor of Lord Visnu. This is the only solution to the problem of birth and death. The jeopardized system of varnasrama-dharma has produced a perverted form, commonly known as the caste system. The caste system is now represented by the political diplomats, the soldiers, the capitalists, and the laborers. The politicians or the best planning brains of the human race have taken the position of brahmanas. Surely the brahmana possesses the best brain for solving the problems of human life, but the politicians are simply using the best part of their brains for executing their own selfish plans. Avoiding the orders of the Supreme Godhead, they only bring disorder to the society.

The military arrangement is a false representation of the ksatriyas, who are meant to give protection to the public at large. However, the military leaders of every country are suck-

ing the blood of the masses by imposing heavy, unbearable taxes, instead of giving any actual protection.

The capitalists, who represent vaisyas, instead of accumulating wealth for carrying out the will of Lord Visnu, are amassing huge wealth for their own sense gratification. As a result of this, many problems, such as political policies that exploit the masses, have sprung up in all parts of the world. The laborers are a perverted representation of the sudras, who are serving the capitalists under the pressure of many obligations. They are always groaning to make an adjustment to the labor problem by raising political issues. The system of varnasrama-dharma has not been ostracized as some may wish, but the whole system has now been pervertedly represented by politicians in the position of brahmanas; military men in the position of the ksatriyas; individual capitalists in the position of the vaisyas; and the ordinary laborers in the position of the sudras. The whole system is perverted by the lawbreaking attitude of mankind. This is spoiling the atmosphere of peaceful progress in human life. At present, the system of perverted varnasrama-dharma cannot in any way please the Supreme Godhead Visnu. Thus no one can escape the police action of Mother Nature, regardless of how expert one may be in material science.

## **Real Varna and Asrama**

The varnasrama system, originated by the Personality of Godhead, is spiritually significant because when all the varnas and asramas cooperate, society facilitates deliverance from the clutches of maya or illusion. This is done by all varnas and asramas carrying out the plan of Godhead. The brahmana is considered the mouth of the virat-purusa (the cosmophysical feature of the Personality of Godhead). The ksatriyas are the arms, the vaisyas are the stomach, and the sudras are the legs. The functioning of the mouth is recognized by sound. Therefore, the function of the brahmanas or sannyasis is to transmit the transcendental sound of the Vedas so that every human being can know what is what in relation to the Supreme. By transmission of transcendental sound, human beings will know their actual identities as superior in nature to matter. Thus they will know their eternal relationship with Godhead. Knowing this, they will be engaged in carrying out the plan of Godhead, instead of serving the deluding energy with a false notion of lording it over her. Carrying out the plan of Godhead will help the conditioned soul get out of the clutches of the deluding energy and enter into the kingdom of God for an eternal life of bliss and knowledge.

Every living being is struggling in this material world for eternal life, knowledge, and bliss, but is bewildered by the deluding energy. The plan of Godhead is so designed that in the human form of life one can get out of the entanglement of material existence. Because the ksatriyas are the arms of the virat-purusa, it is their duty to protect the whole body and cooperate with the mouth, stomach, and legs. The system of varnasrama is a spiritual plan of cooperation for mutual benefit, and therefore it is essential that it be maintained in its original dignity. As it stands now, it is perverted and diseased. The so-called brahmanas have become detached from the body of the virat-purusa because they do not transmit the transcendental sounds of the Vedas. A head that is cut off from the body certainly cannot produce any sound. Such a dead head, although called a brahmana, has no real value as a head. Similarly, those brahmanas who simply claim to be so by a custom of hereditary right also have no value as brahmanas, because they have no power to function as the mouth of Godhead. In the same manner, whoever fails to carry out the plan of Godhead as part and parcel of the virat-purusa must be considered fallen and detached from his position. Such separated parts are of no value as mouths, arms, stomachs, or legs.

## **Varna and Asrama Rejected**

Thus Lord Caitanya rejected Ramananda's proposal, because in the age of Kali the varnasrama-dharma is so degraded that any attempt to restore it to its original position will be hopeless. He also rejected varnasrama-dharma because it has no value in relation to pure devotional service.

The second, more important consideration is that even if the varnasrama system is observed strictly, it still cannot help one to rise to the highest plane of transcendental service to Godhead. The virat-purusa is a material conception of the Personality of Godhead and is just the beginning of spiritual realization. The topmost spiritual realization is attraction for devotional service to the Personality of Godhead. Such attraction for devotional service is the only necessity for the living being and it automatically brings a sense of detachment from all other activities.

The Personality of Godhead is worshiped by pure devotional service and He becomes available to His devotees through such devotion. Pure devotional service is produced by cultivation of pure knowledge and activities under the regulative principles of the scriptures. Thus the varnasrama system is explained in relation to pure devotion by Bhagavan

Purusa, the Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna, who descended to this material world for the deliverance of all fallen souls. The Bhagavad-gita (18.45-46) states:

*sve sve karmany abhiratah  
samsiddhim labhate narah  
sva-karma-niratah siddhim  
yatha vindati tac chrnu  
yatah pravrttir bhutanam  
yena sarvam idam tatam  
sva-karmana tam abhyarcya  
siddhim vindati manavah*

"Every human being will attain the highest goal of life simply by worshiping the Personality of Godhead, from whom all the living entities have come into being and by whom the whole cosmos is generated and again withdrawn."

Worshiping Godhead by prescribed duties is the beginning of devotional service, and all the great sages like Taṅka, Dramida, Bharuci, Bodhayana, Guhadeva, and Kapardi have approved of this system of gradual progress. All the ancient authorities have commented upon the Vedas in accordance with this principle. The authorities of the Ramanuja sect of Vaisnavas also affirm the above:

The easiest way of attaining the Absolute Truth is to culture knowledge about the Absolute Truth as it is described in the scriptures while simultaneously performing one's prescribed duty. This process is almost direct realization of the path of devotional service. Realization of the Absolute Truth by proper observance of the varnasrama system does not mean to accept only the renounced order of life sannyasa, but it means that everyone can attain the highest goal by the performance of his own duties. Proper performance does not necessarily mean to take sannyasa.

Ramananda Raya, after being asked by Lord Caitanya to define the highest standard of perfection in human life, had taken up the cause of ordinary people and supported the utility of varnasrama-dharma by quoting the Visnu Purana. He said that the performance of duties according to varnasrama-dharma should be taken as the highest perfection of life.

Yet because the varnasrama-dharma system is a problem within the material world in the age of Kali, Lord Caitanya wanted to distinguish it from the devotional activities, which are transcendental by nature. Taking into consideration the transcendental nature of devotional service, which is the highest perfection of life, Lord Caitanya declared the system of varnasrama-dharma to be external. Lord Caitanya wanted human beings to make fur-

ther advancement in the process of spiritual realization than what is possible by the performance of varnasrama-dharma.

Although the aim of varnasrama-dharma is to satisfy the all-pervading Godhead Visnu, it does not explicitly mention devotional service rendered directly to the Personality of Godhead. Without being specifically engaged in devotional service, even the proper performance of varnasrama-dharma may lead one to accept either the impersonal or personal feature of Godhead. Impersonal realization of the Absolute Truth will mar the progress of devotional service. Therefore, Lord Caitanya did not wish to risk the human life in that way, and thus He rejected varnasrama-dharma as external.

Lord Caitanya's rejection of the value of varnasrama-dharma indicated that Ramananda should suggest a more comprehensive process of self-realization.

## Hodge-podge Impersonalism

Taking the hint from Lord Caitanya, Ramananda Raya quoted a verse from the Bhagavad-gita (9.27) about the process of dedicating all one's karma (fruitive actions) to Sri Krsna, the Personality of Godhead.

*yat karosi yad asnasi*

*yaj juhosi dadasi yat*

*yat tapasyasi kaunteya*

*yat kurusva mad-arpanam*

"O son of Kunti, all that you do, all that you eat, all that you offer or give away, as well as all austerities that you perform, do as an offering unto Me."

To give and take means one person giving and another person receiving. This distinct feature of dealings between the living entity and the Personality of Godhead is a more clear conception of one's proper relationship with the Absolute Truth than that which is found in varnasrama-dharma.

The present age of Kali is almost fully surcharged with the imperfect idea of the Absolute Truth being impersonal. The mayavada school has chiefly fathered this impersonal idea of the Absolute Truth by systematic propaganda since the time of Sripad Saṅkaracarya. People of demoniac nature, who are now flourishing in all parts of the world, have relished this hodge-podge impersonal idea of the Absolute Truth for their own less than spiritual purposes.

The materialistic people of the world are practically all atheistic and immoral due to the infectious conditions of Kali-yuga. The Kali-yuga is predominated by illegitimate con-

nection with the opposite sex, killing of animals, intoxication, and gambling. The materialists are almost all notorious for all these kinds of nefarious works in spite of their so-called education and knowledge. They are, in the language of the Bhagavad-gita, duskrtina, qualified in the wrong way. When a human being's activity is targeted towards self-realization, it is right activity. Wrong activity means entangling oneself more and more in the conditions of material nature. Krti means one who is qualified and dus means the wrong way. So the combined word duskrtina means one who is qualified in the wrong way.

## **Educated Means Atheist**

The advancement of material education has produced many graduates, postgraduates, professors, and many other so-called enlightened people in this age of Kali, but most of them are being wrongly educated. The result is that the more people are educated, the more they become immoral and atheistic. Moreover, wrongly educated people have practically no faith in the scriptural injunctions. They have no respect for the self-realized sages who have left behind many valuable literary works, which are considered the treasure chest of spiritual cultivation.

To further misguide these wrongly qualified persons, the pasandis or atheists in the garb of spiritual instructors encourage them in the wrong method of livelihood. This has been predicted in the Srimad-Bhagavatam (12.4.43-44). Sukadeva Goswami addressed King Pariksit, "O my King, in the age of Kali, almost all the people who are destined to die do not worship the Absolute Personality of Godhead who is the Lord of the universe and is respectfully obeyed by all the demigods such as Brahma, Mahadeva, Indra, and others. Unfortunately, the people in the age of Kali worship pasandis, who misrepresent the teachings of the Vedas by atheistic culture. These people, infected by the sinful activities of Kali, do not worship the Personality of Godhead, the remembrance of whose name only-even by a dying person, a person in trouble, or a person who has fallen down-can deliver all from distress and sin, and lift them to the highest goal of life."

The pasandis have most successfully misdirected the so-called enlightened people of Kali-yuga. They have successfully produced or manufactured many avatars or incarnations of Godhead of their own choice without any reference to the sastras (scriptures) and propagated the false idea of impersonal liberation as the highest achievement in life.

# Sankara Astonished

These impersonalists of the present age declare themselves to be the followers of Sripad Sankaracarya, but even if Sankaracarya himself happened to appear, he would be astonished to see his so-called followers. In fact, these impersonalists are all atheists and materialists. They have nothing to do either with the actual brahmavada school of Sankaracarya or with the bhagavata sampradaya represented by the Vaisnava acaryas.

The impersonal conception of the Absolute Truth, as propounded by the so-called brahmavada school, falls short of spiritual progress from its first step. Sankaracarya's impersonal conception of brahmavada had some meaning because he emphasized renouncing material activities. His ideal example of renunciation, as personally practiced and taught by him, has great significance for the demoniac people of the age of Kali, but the present impersonalists do not follow Sankaracarya or the sastra. They do, however, preach something that is not only absurd from all spiritual points of view, but is the start of material enjoyment, which they try to cover with the red garments of renunciation. These so-called followers of Sripad Sankaracarya are condemned by Sankaracarya himself, because they have taken the red dress simply for the matter of filling their bellies.

The atheistic impersonalists have done tremendous harm to the potential for spiritual advancement of the people in general. Therefore, the impersonalists have become the principal target of reformation for the peaceful saṅkirtana movement of Lord Caitanya.

## Absolute Truth is Personal

The Absolute Truth is ultimately a person who is supreme and all-powerful. He is called Purusottama. Impersonal Brahman is the effulgence of His personal body and localized Paramatma or the Supersoul is His plenary part. That is the verdict of all the sastras, especially the Bhagavad-gita, Srimad-Bhagavatam, and all other allied transcendental literatures. The whole sankirtana movement of Lord Caitanya is aimed at giving importance to the Personality of Godhead and His transcendental service.

As such, Lord Caitanya always regarded the impersonal conception of the Absolute Truth as detrimental to the path of devotional activities. He considered the system of varnasrama-dharma to be external because even if varnasrama-dharma is properly carried out, one still cannot get a clear conception of the Personality of Godhead.

Ramananda's suggestion of the sloka from the Bhagavad-gita about offering everything to Krsna definitely advances the conception of the Personality of Godhead, but still the

practice of this conception is not fully transcendental. Thus the varnasrama-dharma conception can hardly help to raise the practitioner to the transcendental spiritual plane. Lord Caitanya thus rejected this material conception of the Personality of Godhead and called it external.

## No Clear Idea

The grossly materialistic people cannot understand how it is possible to give away the result of one's own work. It is impossible for grossly materialistic people to part with their earnings that are made by their personal effort. Such gross materialists can simply get information from the suggestion that they have to give away the result of their personal labor to the Personality of Godhead. But because they do not have a clear idea of the Personality of Godhead or the process of giving the result of their earnings to the Personality of Godhead, it is very difficult for them to practice this conception.

When Lord Caitanya rejected Ramananda Raya's second suggestion of directly offering the fruits of one's actions to God rather than indirectly through the varnasrama system, Ramananda then made a third suggestion. He proposed that ordinary people, who are fully engaged in the act of earning and enjoying, improve their life by giving up the process of continuing to live in the material world while offering the fruits of their labor to God. On the basis of this improved idea, Ramananda quoted a sloka from Srimad-Bhagavatam (11.11.32):

*ajnyaivam gunan dosan  
mayadistan api svakan  
dharman samtyajya yah sarvan  
mam bhajet sa ca sattamah*

In this sloka, the Personality of Godhead says, "Occupational duties are described in the religious scriptures. If one analyzes them, one can fully understand their qualities and faults and then give them up completely to render service unto Me. Such a person is accepted as a saint of the highest order."

This conception is based on the fact that ultimately the acceptance of the devotional service of Godhead is the highest aim of religious perfection. By performing religious duties, if we can reach pure devotion, we may be considered first-class sadhus or saints.



# Accept Sannyasa

Ramananda suggested that we give up practicing the rules of varnasrama-dharma and take sannyasa. Acceptance of sannyasa means to renounce materialistic life, and in doing so one has to engage fully in the devotional service of Godhead. In support of this idea, Ramananda quoted the above sloka from the Srimad-Bhagavatam. He also supported his suggestion with another sloka from the Bhagavad-gita (18.66):

*sarva-dharman parityajya  
mam ekam saranam vraja  
aham tvam sarva-papebhyo  
moksayisyami ma sucah*

Here, the Personality of Godhead desires that everyone give up all other religious considerations and engage wholly and solely in following Him exclusively. "I will protect you from all difficulties arising out of renouncing all other engagements. You have nothing to fear."

## Go Higher

An improved consciousness for the materialists is a desire to either retire from material activities or stay at a place that is undisturbed by the uproar of the modes of nature. The river Viraja is outside the boundary of the material world where there is no disturbance from the three modes of nature. The material world is the creation of the external energy of Godhead, and Vaikuntha, the spiritual world, is the creation of the internal energy of Godhead.

Viraja is situated between the material world and the spiritual world. It is outside the boundary of both the material and the spiritual world. However, renunciation without any positive engagement is imperfect and cannot give the candidate the desired result of love of God.

The aim of Lord Caitanya is to bring people to the spiritual world. Therefore, this suggestion of Ramananda, which does not take one within the boundary of Vaikuntha, was also rejected by the Lord. Negating the material activities or becoming disinterested in material activities does not suggest accepting positive spiritual activities. Spiritual activities completely depend on spiritual understanding. People having no realization of the spiritual world cannot sustain themselves by giving up all other activities. One must have a positive transcendental engagement. Otherwise, simply negating the material activities of

religiosity will not help one the slightest bit in spiritual realization. By such renunciation, one will simply feed a void in his life and will again be attracted by the material activities for want of actual spiritual engagements. This sort of spiritual realization is another type of impersonal conception and is therefore not ultimately suitable for the prospective devotee.

## Mixed Devotion

Ramananda, having realized the desire of Lord Caitanya, then suggested an improved process, called calculated devotion (jnana-misra-bhakti). Driven by a false sense of oneness with the Absolute Truth, the empiric philosopher tries to make an analytical study of the cosmic situation to find out the Absolute Truth. When he has done so, he becomes cheerful on account of his self-realization.

The symptoms of perfect realization of the Absolute Truth, which promote one to the stage of pure devotional service to the Personality of Godhead, are described in the Bhagavad-gita (18.54). This was quoted by Ramananda as a further improvement on the suggestion of renunciation of karma:

*brahma-bhutah prasannatma  
na socati na kanksati  
samah sarvesu bhutesu  
mad-bhaktim labhate param*

"The practitioner who has realized the Absolute Truth as the nondifferentiated impersonal Brahman does not lament over any material loss, neither does he desire any material gain. He is equipoised towards all objects of the material world, and these conditions make him fit to be promoted to the pure devotional service of Godhead."

However, the brahma-bhutah state of consciousness is also not a fully transcendental state of spiritual existence. The supramental consciousness, as exists in the spiritual kingdom of Vaikuntha, is a further development. The brahma-bhutah state of consciousness is undoubtedly free from gross material consciousness, and although touching the Absolute Truth indicates a transcendental feeling, it is not the actual transcendental position for realizing the activities of Vaikuntha. As such, it is also external.

Lord Caitanya wants the living entity to be free from every type of material consciousness, including becoming unconcerned with empiric knowledge and fruitive activities. One should stay in pure consciousness, as even a slight tinge of material consciousness causes an impersonal conception of the Absolute Truth. In all these different stages of

material consciousness, only imaginary arguments predominate over the Absolute Personality of Godhead. Imaginary argumentative endeavors are detrimental to the pure devotional service of Godhead, and, as such, even the liberated state as above mentioned is external. This liberated state is something like the convalescent stage after relief from a disease. If a convalescent person is not properly taken care of, a relapse of the disease may mar the whole attempt at recovery.

In the brahma-bhuta liberated stage, one has not yet obtained a resting place at the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead. As such, one is still unsupported and thus runs the chance of falling down again into material activities. It is therefore also external and thus the fourth suggestion of Ramananda was rejected by Lord Caitanya.

## Knowledge-free Devotion

Ramananda then suggested the beginning of pure devotional service unconcerned with empiric knowledge or fruitive activity. To support this suggestion, Ramananda quoted a statement of Brahma during his prayer of regret before Sri Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead:

*jnane prayasam udapasya namanta eva  
jivanti san-mukharitam bhavadiya-vartam  
stane stitah sruti-gatam tanu-va†-manobhir  
ye prayaso 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyam*

"O my Lord, those devotees who completely give up the attempt to become one with You by the culture of empiric knowledge and simply try to hear about Your glories from the mouths of self-realized saints, and who live a virtuous life, can easily achieve Your favor although You are unconquerable by anyone within the three worlds."(Bhag. 10.14.3)

This stage of culturing devotional service directly was accepted by Lord Caitanya. All the previously described stages of the culture of spiritual realization were rejected by Lord Caitanya most logically. The Lord, however, accepted the universal method of hearing the glories of the Personality of Godhead in all circumstances from the mouths of self-realized souls and giving up the attempt to become one with Godhead.

The poison of attempting to become one with Godhead kills the nucleus of devotional service. Anyone actually desiring to be engaged in the transcendental loving service of Godhead must definitely give up this idea for good. In the Caitanya-caritamṛta, it is said that the idea of being one with Godhead is the topmost type of pretension, and even a slight development of this idea will completely eliminate the prospect for devotional

service. This is the most dangerous misconception in spiritual life and one should at once give up the idea.

## Part 2

### Hear From Self-realized Souls

A pure living entity, being always subservient to the Almighty Godhead Sri Krsna, should reverentially give an aural reception to the transcendental sound emanating from the mouth of a self-realized soul describing the glories of the Personality of Godhead. Only a self-realized soul can produce the powerful effect of transcendental sound. Devotees must live thoroughly honest lives in all respects by their body, mind, and words. These are the simple methods of culturing spiritual realization to its zenith.

Lord Caitanya approved of this simple method for all classes of people without any distinction of caste, creed, color, or education. The only qualification of the practitioners that is essential for this spiritual culture is that they at once give up the idea of becoming one with Godhead. This idea of becoming one with Godhead is generally only acquired by the empiric philosopher, but otherwise every human being naturally feels that God is greater than himself and that he is always subservient to all His wishes. Even a great personality like Mahatma Gandhi always spoke in terms of "God is great." Gandhi often said, "Not a blade of grass moves without the sanction of God."

Therefore, the imaginary idea of becoming one with Godhead is a mental creation of the empiric philosopher as a result of his material vanity. Otherwise, the idea has no substance. The idea of becoming one with Godhead is artificial and a simple-hearted person is always against such an idea. Rejecting the idea of becoming one with Godhead is always natural for everyone and nobody has to make any special attempt to dismiss this foolishness.

The next qualification is to become gentle and humble when hearing from a self-realized soul. The Bhagavad-gita is the direct transcendental message of Godhead, and the prospective devotee must receive this message with all gentleness and humility from a self-realized soul.

The method of receiving the message of Godhead, as mentioned in the fourth chapter of the Bhagavad-gita, is to hear from the chain of disciplic succession. It is said there that the system of spiritual realization was first disclosed to Vivasvan, the sun-god, who transmitted the message to Manu, the father of mankind. Manu then transmitted the subject to his son Ikshvaku. By the transcendental method of disciplic succession, the system was realized by all the rajarsis, saintly kings. Unfortunately, the chain was broken and the message had to again be revived beginning with Arjuna, the friend and devotee of Sri Krsna.

The prospective devotee's qualification of hearing the transcendental message will not depend on birth, heritage, education, caste, creed, color, or nationality, but will depend on humility and finding the proper source for receiving the transcendental message. The mystery of the message as mentioned in the Bhagavad-gita must therefore be understood in terms of the realization of Arjuna and nobody else. The realization of Arjuna is also mentioned in the Bhagavad-gita, and whoever speaks in the line of that realization is to be considered a self-realized soul. The message of Bhagavad-gita is to be heard from a self-realized soul and not from anyone speculating on dry subjects with imaginary meanings. The un-bona-fide attempt at hearing will simply be a waste of time. The devotee must always be careful that the speaker is in the transcendental line of disciplic succession called the parampara. The qualification of the prospective devotee should be that he must live an honest life by his body, mind, and words, which will all depend on the mercy of Godhead.

## Spontaneous Love of Godhead

Thus the preliminary stage of culturing devotional service without any touch of speculative knowledge was accepted by Lord Caitanya who then asked Ramananda Raya to proceed further in developing the service sentiment to higher and higher stages of love of Godhead until the highest stage was reached. To this Ramananda answered that the progress in this line will end in the loving service of Godhead.

Every living entity has within his heart a dormant and eternal love of Godhead. Spiritual culture is the attempt to revive that eternal love of Godhead to its spontaneous stage, and the beginning of that attempt is receiving the transcendental message of Godhead from the right source- a self-realized soul. After receiving the transcendental message, this conception has to be developed to the spontaneous stage of love of Godhead. Ramananda describes the process in the following words:

*nanopacara-krta-pujanam arta-bandhoh  
premaiva bhakta-hrdayam sukha-vidrutam syat  
yavat ksud asti jathare jaratha pipasa  
tavat sukhaya bhavato nanu bhaksya-peye*

"As long as there is acute hunger in the stomach, there is pleasure in eating and drinking. Similarly, as long as ecstatic spontaneous love of God is aroused in the mind of a devotee, the worship of Godhead with all kinds of paraphernalia becomes the real cause of

happiness."

(Padyavali 13)

The purport of this statement is that hunger is the cause of pleasure in taking foodstuffs. Similarly, spontaneous love of Godhead is the cause of all pleasure in spiritual culture. Sri Ramananda Raya quoted another sloka as follows:

*krsna-bhakti-rasa-bhavita matih  
kriyatam yadi kuto 'pi labhyate  
tatra laulyam api mulyam ekalam  
janma-koti-sukrtair na labhyate*

"The intelligence for achieving the loving service of Godhead may be purchased from anywhere it is available. The price for such a purchase is a strong desire for achieving such a stage of life. Such a strong desire for rendering loving service unto the Personality of Godhead is very, very rare because it is developed by accumulating the results of many virtuous purifying acts in thousands and thousands of lives."

(Padyavali 14)

The desire for rendering loving service unto the Personality of Godhead is an invaluable desire and it brings the highest spiritual perfection. It is very rarely seen in the ordinary course of life. Lord Caitanya, being the most magnanimous incarnation of the Personality of Godhead, out of His kindness and causeless mercy upon the fallen souls of this age of Kali, is prepared to bestow the highest benefit of life by the simple method of hearing and chanting the glories of the Personality of Godhead. This is the beginning of the transcendental method, gradually reaching to the stage of spontaneous love of Godhead.

## Dasya-Prema

To develop the conception, Lord Caitanya asked Ramananda to go further. As such, Ramananda first suggested the devotional service called dasya-prema or the mellow of transcendental servitude. He quoted a verse from Srimad-Bhagavatam that was uttered by Durvasa Muni. Durvasa Muni, with the pride of a caste brahmana, envied the pure devotee Maharaja Ambarisa, who happened to be a householder king and by caste a ksatriya. Durvasa Muni wanted to put Maharaja Ambarisa in trouble by the strength of his mystic prowess.

When Ambarisa Maharaja was put into trouble, the disc weapon of Lord Visnu, sudarsana cakra, appeared to rescue Maharaja Ambarisa and attack Durvasa for his nefarious deed of troubling a pure Vaisnava devotee. As Durvasa was being harassed by the sudarsana

cakra of Lord Visnu, he came to his senses and understood that he was mistaken in considering a pure devotee to be less qualified than a mystic like himself. In the end, Durvasa was excused by Maharaja Ambarisa, who was naturally always forgiving to everyone. Durvasa Muni, being relieved from his misconception of caste predominance, praised the Personality of Godhead and His sweet relationship with His pure devotee. He said, "Nothing is impossible for a pure devotee of the Personality of Godhead because simply by hearing His transcendental name, a person becomes purified of all vices." The purport is that if a person can become purified of all sins simply by hearing the Holy Name of Godhead, what is impossible for His servant who is constantly engaged in His service? Durvasa Muni acknowledged the supremacy of a servant of Godhead over any kind of yogi, what to speak of a jnani or karmi (empiric philosopher or fruitive worker). The transcendental bliss that is enjoyed by a servant of the Personality of Godhead has been described by Sri Yamunacarya. He said, "O my Lord, when shall I feel myself to be Your absolutely faithful, bona fide servant, and live in transcendental cheerfulness by constantly obeying Your orders after being completely freed from all mental speculative desires?"

## Sakhya-Prema

Lord Caitanya was satisfied by Ramananda's explanation of transcendental servitude to the Personality of Godhead, and He asked Ramananda to go still further. Ramananda then explained spontaneous loving service rendered by a friend of the Personality of Godhead. This is called sakhya-prema or the transcendental rasa of friendship with the Personality of Godhead.

*raya kahe-"sakhya-prema-sarva-sadhya-sara*

"Sakhya-prema is superior to dasya-prema in the following respect: Although in dasya-prema there is a transcendental relationship with Godhead as master and servant, it includes the sense that "God is my maker."

Thus in dasya-prema there is an awareness of the greatness of the Personality of Godhead, and as such dasya-prema is mixed with a sense of fear and reverence for Him.

In sakhya-prema, the sense of fear and reverence is completely absent. On the contrary, a sense of equality prevails in the sakhya-prema. This sense of equality is an advance over the dasya-prema. Here is a quotation from Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.12.11) on the subject of sakhya-prema:

*ittham satam brahma-sukhanubhutya*



*dasyam gatanam para-daivatena  
mayasritanam nara-darakena  
sardham vijahruh krta-punya-punjah*

"The Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna, who is experienced by the empiric philosophers as an impersonal feeling of transcendental bliss, who is the Supreme Personality of Godhead to the devotees related with Him as master and servant, and who is an ordinary human child to the people under the illusion of the external energy, was playing in the rasa of friendship with the cowherd boys of Vraja who obtained that stage of life after many, many virtuous acts accumulated in many, many lives."

## Vatsalya-Prema

Lord Caitanya approved of this advance and asked Ramananda to go still further in the development of transcendental relationships. Sakhya-prema is an advance in transcendental mellowness over dasya-prema, but vatsalya-prema, parental affection, is still more advanced than sakhya-prema. Ramananda Raya thus described a stanza from Srimad-Bhagavatam wherein the excellence of vatsalya-prema is described.

*nandah kim akarod brahman  
sreya evam mahodayam  
yasoda va maha-bhaga papau yasyah stanam harih*

"O brahmana, it is puzzling to try to understand what virtuous acts Nanda Maharaja performed that he could have Hari (Sri Krsna) as his son. It is also puzzling to try to understand about Yasodadevi, who was addressed by the Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna as 'Mother' and whose breast He sucked in filial affection."

Here is another quote from the Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.9.20):

*nemam virinco na bhavo  
na srir apy anga-samsraya  
prasadam lebhire gopi  
yat tat prapa vimuktidad*

"Thus the blessing of the Personality of Godhead Srî Krsna, which was gained by the cowherd lady Yasodadevi, was never expected by the demigods like Brahma or Siva or even by Laksmidevi, who is the constant consort of the Personality of Godhead Narayana."

This means that Srimati Yasodadevi and Nanda Maharaja worshiped the Personality of Godhead with the conception of the 'sonhood of Godhead.' In Christianity the 'fatherhood of Godhead' is accepted, and in Hinduism there is worship of Sakti, the external energy of Godhead, the 'motherhood of Godhead.' Both of these shadows of vatsalya-prema are material or a product of the external energy. They are a sort of perverted representation of the real vatsalya-prema, because by such a material conception of 'fatherhood' or 'motherhood' of Godhead, the worshiper's aim is to extract service from the Almighty.

The spirit of enjoyment and the spirit of renunciation are the predominant factors of material existence. The enjoying spirit is cultivated by the karmis, people engaged in fruitive activities, and the spirit of renunciation is cultivated by the jnanis, empiric philosophers, who have become baffled by their engagement in fruitive activities. Both the karmis and jnanis are therefore materialists because both of them maintain the spirit of being served by the Absolute Truth. To satisfy their own conceptions, both of them demand something from the Absolute Truth.

The Absolute Truth is meant to be served by all living entities. He is not meant to serve the living entities. The living entities are mentioned in the Bhagavad-gita as the parts and parcels of the Absolute Truth. The parts and parcels are meant to render service to the whole. It is absurd for the parts and parcels to think of becoming one with the whole or to extract service from the whole. The part and parcel living entity, when unfit to render service, is detached from the whole. Therefore, the spirit of demanding service from the Absolute Whole is a symptom of being detached from the Absolute Whole, or, in other words, of being in the domain of the external energy of Godhead. Such a demanding policy of the materialists, through the conception of the 'fatherhood' or 'motherhood' of Godhead, is a slight attempt to revive their eternal relationships with Godhead; however, these conceptions are far from the conception of the 'sonhood of Godhead' as shown by Nanda and Yasoda.

The conception of the 'sonhood of Godhead' is a cent percent spiritually pure transcendental rasa. There was no demand made by Nanda and Yasoda on the Personality of Godhead. They offered pure and simple service to the Personality of Godhead by nursing Him as a baby. Under the influence of yogamaya, the internal energy of Godhead, they thought of Sri Krsna as nothing more or less than their affectionate and dependent son. The service of parents for a dependent son is always spontaneous and unalloyed.

# Madhurya-Prema

Lord Caitanya admitted the superiority of vatsalya-prema over sakhya-prema, but He asked Ramananda to go still further in the realm of transcendental mellowness. Lord Caitanya said:

*prabhu kahe- "eho uttama, age kaha ara"*

*raya kahe, "kanta-prema sarva-sadhya-sara"*

"So far, you have certainly explained the gradual development of transcendental, eternal relationships with the Personality of Godhead very well. But above this conception of vatsalya-prema there is a supreme transcendental rasa, which is the topmost transcendental service."

Upon hearing this suggestion of Lord Caitanya, Ramananda declared that a transcendental conjugal relationship with Godhead is the highest form of loving service rendered to the Personality of Godhead.

The process of developing a transcendental relationship with Godhead is understood gradually. By simply accepting the glories of the Personality of Godhead and establishing service to Him in the transcendental rasa of calmness, santa-prema, the sentiment of love for Godhead as one's personal master is not developed. Santa-prema is a stage of peaceful appreciation of the glories of the Personality of Godhead.

In dasya-prema or transcendental servitude to Godhead, a sense of intimacy with Godhead is not developed. In both sakhya-prema, transcendental friendship with Godhead, and vatsalya-prema, parental affection, the sense of unrestricted approach for loving service is not developed. As such, the complete perfection of transcendental relationships is not found. The fullness of service, unchecked by all conventional restrictions, is only developed in madhurya-prema, transcendental loving service in conjugal love.

Thus, on the order of Lord Caitanya, Ramananda began to explain the nature of madhurya-prema. Ramananda quoted a verse from the Srimad-Bhagavatam wherein Uddhava spoke of the fortune of Krsna's cowherd girlfriends, who melted away in ecstasy when they heard Uddhava describe the activities of Sri Krsna. Uddhava said,

*nayam sriyo 'nga u nitanta-rateh prasadah*

*svar-yositam nalina-gandha-rucam kuto 'nyahM*

*rasotsave 'sya bhujja-danda-grhita-kantha*

*labdhasisam ya udagad-vraja-sundarinam*

"The transcendental happiness that was bestowed upon the beautiful damsels of Vraja, who got the opportunity to be embraced by the strong hands of Sri Krsna on the occasion of performing the rasa-lila, was never experienced even by Laksmi, who resides on the chest of the Personality of Godhead Narayana. Neither was such pleasure ever felt by the

angels of heaven whose bodies emanate the smell of lotus flowers. What to speak then of ordinary beauties?"

(Bhag. 10.47.60)

Quoting another passage from Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.82.2), Ramananda said,

*tasam avirabhuc chaurih*

*smayamana-mukhambujah*

*pitambara-dharah sragvi*

*saksan manmatha-manmathah*

"Sri Krsna, who is the enchanter of Cupid, dressed in yellow, wore a garland of flowers, and all of a sudden appeared in His eternal smiling form in the midst of the cowherd girls, who were mourning in separation from Him after the pastime of the rasa-lila."

Thus Ramananda Raya summarized all of the different transcendental relationships with Godhead. He said that all of these are means of gaining the favor of Sri Krsna. A devotee in a particular relationship with Godhead will consider that relationship the highest of all, but when all the transcendental relationships are scrutinized and compared from a neutral angle of vision, the difference of intensity can be estimated.

## Upstarts

Presently, a class of asuras (ungodly people who are demoniac in nature) have ventured to become preachers of spiritual realization by propagating a novel theory that the Absolute Truth is a matter of personal realization and the particular type of realization one has does not matter. This idea has sprung up from demoniac thinking that directly denies any particular cause of the creation. A description of such asuras is given in the sixteenth chapter of the Bhagavad-gita. The asuras do not believe in the existence of the Personality of Godhead, under whose direction the creation takes place.

According to the asuras, everything in the world is a matter of chance and there is no truth in the belief that God has created the universe. The different philosophical theories about the creation, put forward by atheists, are speculative gymnastic feats. Because they say that determining the Absolute Truth is a matter of personal realization, the so-called favor of Godhead can be achieved by any means that may be conceived of by a simple speculator. They say that there are as many ways of realizing God or the Absolute Truth as there are speculators in the world.

Ramananda Raya is certainly not one of these speculators, and his mention of "various means of gaining the favor of Godhead" does not suggest that the transcendental favor of

Godhead can be achieved by any speculative method of the empiric philosopher or the upstarts of spiritual fervor.

In the name of Lord Caitanya's cult of devotion, many speculators of the above nature have already sprung up. The "various means" as suggested by Ramananda is not an adjustment of the false means of achieving the favor of Godhead adopted by the imitation Caitanyaites. "Various means" are mentioned in connection with the perfect mellows of love, namely santa-prema, dasya-prema, sakhya-prema, vatsalya-prema, and madhurya-prema.

The five transcendental rasas of loving service are possible only after one has transcended the stage of material impediments known as anarthas (unwanted things in the heart).

Those who have no access to the transcendental service of Godhead wrongly think that manufactured processes are equal to the above-mentioned self-realized stages of love of Godhead. This misconception of the upstarts is but a sign of their misfortune.

## Mellow of Sweetness

The analysis of the above-mentioned five transcendental rasas is also made in the Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu. It is said there that the transcendental rasas are experienced in five progressive ways. Yet at a certain point, one rasa is experienced as the sweetest of all.

A practical analysis has been made by Srila Krsnadasa Kaviraja Goswami in the following example: "Ether, air, fire, water, and earth are five different elements. Sound is experienced in ether. Sound and touch are experienced in air. Sound, touch, and form are experienced in fire. Sound, touch, form, and taste are experienced in water. And sound, touch, form, taste, and smell are experienced in earth. Earth has the qualities of all the elements. The analysis is that each elemental quality is developed through the other by gradual development, but the last one, namely earth, possesses all the qualities."

In the same way, the transcendental mellowness experienced in the stage of santa-prema is developed in the stage of dasya-prema and then sakhya-prema. It is further developed in vatsalya-prema, and lastly the complete development is manifested in the stage of madhurya-prema, for madhurya-prema includes all the rasas experienced in all the other devotional stages.

According to the Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.82.45), the Personality of Godhead is completely obliged by the transcendental loving service rendered in the mood of madhurya-prema:

*mayi bhaktir hi bhutanam*

*amrtatvaya kalpate*

*distya yad asin mat-sneho*

*bhavatinam mad-apanah*

The Personality of Godhead said, "Loving devotional service unto Me is itself the eternal life of the living entity. My dear cowherd girls, the affection that you have in your hearts for Me is the only cause of achieving My favor."

In the Bhagavad-gita (4.11) it is said,

*ye yatha mam prapadyante*

*tams tathaiva bhajamy aham*

*mama vartmanuvartante*

*manusyah partha sarvasah*

The Personality of Godhead declares that He is experienced in proportion to the degree of one's surrender. The Lord reciprocates in His different manifestations with the particular feelings of His devotees.

## Quacks of Spiritual Science

The materialistic philosophers of this world, by way of mental speculation, have decided that God is approachable by any means of spiritual cultivation. According to them, it does not matter whether the method is fruitive action, empiric philosophical speculation, mystic yoga, meditation, penance, or any other method; all of them will ultimately lead to the highest goal.

The example that they generally put forward in support of their theory goes like this:

"There may be several thoroughfares, and if any one of them is followed, surely one will reach the desired destination." More explicitly, they say that God is represented in various forms such as Lord Ramacandra, the impersonal Brahman, Goddess Kali, Durga, Mahadeva, Ganesa, and many others, and as such any one of them can be worshiped with equal value.

Another example they use in this connection is that a man may have many names and if he is called by any one of them, he replies to the call. These statements of the quacks of spiritual science are like the indistinct vocal attempt of a spiritual baby. The indistinct voice of a baby may be very sweet to the ear of mental speculators, but the bona fide spiritualists reject it as a foolish child's babbling.

# Attachment for Demigods

The Bhagavad-gita (9.25) states:

*yanti deva-vrata devan*

*pitrn yanti pitr-vratah*

*bhutani yanti bhutejya*

*yanti mad-yajino'pi mam*

The worshipers of the demigods such as Ganesa, Surya, and Indra will ultimately reach the abodes of such gods. They will go to the planets of those demigods respectively according to their worship, while only the devotee of Sri Krsna will reach the abode of Sri Krsna. Thus the mundaners avoid the Bhagavad-gita.

They forget that they are under the influence of the conditions of the external energy. As such, they worship the demigods motivated by a desire for material gain and develop an illusory attachment for such demigods and thereby are thrown from the real path of progress- reaching the Personality of Godhead. Being attached thus, the worshipers of different demigods are forced to circumambulate the different spheres of the material world and undergo the rigors of repeated birth and death.

Those who aspire to reach the Personality of Godhead and thereby worship Him by loving service will certainly reach Him. The real explanation is that one gets the result of the quality of their worship, and all the results are not the same, as conceived by the mundane speculators. Those who aspire after the results of their religiosity, economic development, sense gratification, and endeavors for salvation cannot expect to reach the same destination as the pure transcendental devotees. The result of religiosity is temporary happiness in the human life. The result of economic development is increased facility for sense gratification. And the result of sense gratification is frustration, which leads to the desire for liberation. The result of salvation is merging into the impersonal Brahman. But the result for the devotee of Sri Krsna is the attainment of the eternal service of the Personality of Godhead. The gulf of difference between these diverse results cannot be understood by the mundaners.

## Mahamaya and Yogamaya

Mahamaya, the mother or source of this material world, and the delegated demigods are but diverse external energies or agencies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Under the direction of the Personality of Godhead, these agencies perform their respective func-

tions in the administration of the universal laws. That is the information we have from the Bhagavad-gita, in which the Personality of Godhead declares that only under His direction does the material energy produce the material world, and the whole administration of the universes is thus controlled, ultimately by Him.

The internal energy of Godhead is different. That is also explained in the Bhagavad-gita—there is another permanent energy of Godhead that is never destroyed, even after the annihilation of the whole cosmic manifestation. That internal energy is different from mahamaya and she is called yogamaya.

The permanent universe is the creation of yogamaya. Those who want unalloyed loving service to the Personality of Godhead must ask for the mercy of yogamaya. Those who want to satisfy their own senses or those who desire to become one with the impersonal Brahman because of being baffled by the pursuit of sense gratification worship mahamaya or the predominating demigods respectively.

The damsels of Vraja worshiped yogamaya to get the son of the King of Vraja as their husband or lover, while others within the system of material varnasrama-dharma worship mahamaya, the superintending Deity of the material world, to alleviate distress. There is a gulf of difference between the results of these two varieties of worship, and the attempt to equalize such diametrically opposed activities is like the jaundiced eye seeing everything as yellow. Such is the vision of the diseased person in ignorance.

## **The Name is Absolute**

Sometimes a homely man is named "Cupid." In such a case, the name is without any significance. But this is never the case with the Personality of Godhead. Being the Absolute, all His different features are also absolute. There is no difference between Him, His names, and His features. He is known by different names. He is known as the impersonal Brahman, Paramatma, the Almighty Creator, Narayana, Gopinatha, Krsna, Govinda, and many other such names.

Although every name of the Absolute is absolute in itself, the worshiper of God as the Creator of the Universe cannot relish the same bliss as those who worship God as Narayana. "The Creator of the Universe" is the name preferred by materialistic people, as it is suitable for their sense gratification. The conception of 'Creator' does not fully represent the conception of Godhead. The creation is a function of Godhead's external energy. If He is conceived of as the impersonal Brahman, we cannot get information about all of His potencies. His transcendental bliss, knowledge, qualities, and form are not fully rep-



resented in His impersonal feature. Paramatma is also not fully representative of the conception of Godhead. In the Bhagavad-gita (18.61), Paramatma is described as localized Godhead in the heart of all living beings; He is only a partial representation of the Personality of Godhead, Narayana. Then again, the worshiper of Narayana also cannot relish the transcendental bliss experienced in the service of Sri Krsna.

## Rasabhasa

The pure devotees of Sri Krsna do not wish to worship Narayana, in whose personality the transcendental mellowness of Sri Krsna is somewhat covered. The cowherd girls never addressed Sri Krsna as "the husband of Rukmini." That would be intolerable for them. Rukmini-ramana and Sri Krsna may be the same Personality of Godhead in the opinion of the mundaners, but They cannot be equally relished.

If someone mixes up both of the above out of sheer ignorance, that is a defect in relishing transcendental mellowness called rasabhasa. People who have some sense of the delicate transcendental nature of Godhead do not commit the mistake of rasabhasa like those who form the society of ignorant people.

## Not Possible to Reciprocate

Although the Personality of Godhead reciprocates accordingly with the dealings of His different devotees in different stages of loving service, He has declared His inability to reciprocate with the dealings of the gopis, the damsels of Vraja who serve Him in the capacity of madhurya-prema. Addressing the damsels of Vraja, the Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna said,

*na paraye 'ham niravadya-samyujam  
sva-sadhu-krtyam vibudhayusapi vah  
ya mabhajan durjaya-geha-srnkhalah  
samvrscya tad vah pratiyatu sadhuna*

"My dear cowherd girls, your love for Me is spotlessly pure and it will not be possible for Me to reciprocate with the noble service you render to Me, not even in many future lives, because you have completely sacrificed the shackles of family life to come to Me. I am therefore unable to repay the debts I have incurred in accepting your love. You must

therefore kindly be satisfied by your own deeds."

(Bhag. 10.32.21)

The beauty of Sri Krsna increases in the association of the cowherd girls of Vraja, although Sri Krsna Himself is the last word in all beauty. This is confirmed in the Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.33.6):

*tatratissubhe tabhir*

*bhagavan devaki-sutah*

*madhye maninam haimanam*

*maha-marakato yatha*

"Although the Personality of Godhead who is the son of Devaki is the last word in beauty, when He is in the midst of the cowherd girls of Vraja, He appears like the most valuable jewel set within a network of golden filigree."

Lord Caitanya was now completely satisfied by the statement of Ramananda Raya about madhurya-prema, which is the culmination of transcendental loving service relationships with the Personality of Godhead. Still, He expected something more from Ramananda and asked him to go still further. At this most extraordinary request of Lord Caitanya, Ramananda was astonished. He knew no devotee who could know more than this. But as expert as he was, Ramananda began to go still further by the mercy of Lord Caitanya.

## The Topmost Servitor

Having already discussed the superexcellent qualities of the transcendental mellowness known as madhurya-prema and Sri Krsna's inability to repay the service of the spotlessly pure-hearted cowherd girls of Vraja, Ramananda then proceeded further in the same line in an attempt to discuss the service rendered by Srimati Radharani, the topmost servitor among all the cowherd girls.

Sri Krsna, the Absolute Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the full-fledged ananda-cinmoya-rasa-ujjala-vigraha: His eternal form fully displays transcendental existence, knowledge, and bliss by His own internal potency called the hladini-sakti. Srimati Radharani is the controlling Deity of that joyous energy of Godhead. The joyous nature of Sri Krsna's energy and Sri Krsna Himself are identical, but They appear separately for the purpose of enjoying each other. Therefore, Sri Sri Radha-Krsna are two component parts of the same divine entity. Without Srimati Radharani, Krsna is incomplete; and without Sri Krsna, Radharani is incomplete. Thus these two cannot be separated from one an-

other. They combine as one in Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to fulfill this transcendental truth.

## **Most Magnanimous**

It is very difficult to understand the lila of Sri Sri Radha-Krsna, but Lord Caitanya is the most liberal, magnanimous, merciful, and willing benedictor of all living beings in this age of Kali. He is readily distributing the highest secret of the spiritual world and only requires that we accept it.

Lord Caitanya has provided us with the easiest way to receive His topmost gift. The first qualification is that one should at once discard the idea of sayujya-mukti or becoming one with the impersonal Brahman. The second qualification is that one should simply hear all these transcendental messages in a fully submissive mood from a person who is a bona fide devotee in the line of Srila Rupa Goswami's disciplic succession. And the third and last qualification is that one be very pure in all one's dealings in life, remaining unaffected by the infectious influence of the age of Kali.

A person who has all of these three simple qualifications will have phenomenal success in entering into the plane of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu's unbounded mercy. Any deviation from the above-mentioned three qualities will completely close the door of entrance, regardless of how one may try to understand Him by the strength of one's mundane acquisitions. Without the above three qualifications nobody can enter into Lord Caitanya's lila. Those who have tried to enter into it neglecting the necessary qualities are known as aula, baula, karttabhaja, neda, sakhi-bheki, daravesa, sani, sahajiya, smarta, caste goswamis, ativadi, cudadhari, gaura†ga-nagari, and many others. Such persons may be considered worthless imitators of Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu's lila. Unfortunately, they are misleading the ignorant masses who are already condemned by the influence of Kali-yuga.

## **Not For Ordinary People**

Srimati Radharani is the most important of all the gopis, and Her specific loving service is the highest expression of madhurya-prema. Therefore, it is better that the neophyte practitioners in the devotional field not try to understand the intimacies of Srimati Radharani's confidential service. However, expecting that submissive and bona fide devotees

will understand Srimati Radharani's service in the future, these confidential discussions are described by Srila Krsnadasa Kaviraja Goswami in his Caitanya-caritamrta. Devotees who have been fortunate enough to rise to the spontaneous service of Godhead, raganuga-bhakti, and who have developed an attraction for madhurya-prema, may follow in the footsteps of the confidential associates of Srimati Radharani and their assistants called the manjaris. The ecstasy that was felt by Srimati Radharani when She met Uddhava in Vraja in Her mournful mood of separation from Sri Krsna is personified in Lord Caitanya. Nobody should imitate Lord Caitanya's transcendental feelings because it is impossible for a living being to reach that stage. However, at a stage of developed consciousness one can simply follow in His footsteps. These are the hints given by experienced and self-realized devotees in the line of Srila Rupa Goswami.

## Distinguished Cowherd Girl

Ramananda Raya then explained a sloka from the Padma Purana:

*yatha radha priya visnos  
tasyah kundam priyam tatha  
sarva-gopisu saivaika  
visnor atyanta-vallabha*

Srimati Radharani is the most beloved cowherd girl of Sri Krsna. Not only Srimati Radharani, but the lake known as Sri Radha-kunda is as dear to Sri Krsna as Srimati Radharani Herself.

Ramananda Raya then quoted another sloka from Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.30.28):

*anayaradhito nunam  
bhagavan harir isvarah  
yan no vihaya govindah  
prito yam anayad rahah*

My dear friends, the cowherd girl who has just been taken in privacy by Sri Krsna. leaving us all aside, must have rendered more valuable service to Him than ourselves. Sri Radha is the specific name of the distinguished cowherd girl who has rendered the most obliging services to Sri Krsna. On hearing these two statements by Ramananda, Lord Caitanya felt an ecstasy of His own and said to Ramananda:

*prabhu kahe-age kaha, sunite pai sukhe  
apurvamrta-nadi vahe tomara mukhe*

Please continue. I am feeling too much happiness by your mode of explanation. It is something like a transcendental river of bliss flowing from your tongue. Lord Caitanya added:

*curi kari' radhake nila gopi-ganera dare*

*anyapeksa haile premera gadhata na sphure*

Sri Krsna stole away Srimati Radharani because the nature of love that He had for Her was disturbed in the presence of the other gopis. If Krsna can give up the company of all other gopis for the sake of Srimati Radharani, I know that He is especially attached to Her love.

When the transcendental pastime of rasa-lila continued, Sri Krsna thought that in the presence of all the gopis, confidential and secluded love affairs with Srimati Radharani would not be possible. He thought that in the presence of others the intensity of private love affairs could not be relished. For this reason, Sri Krsna abducted Srimati Radharani from within the assembly of all the other gopis and became separated from them all.

## The Search of Sri Krsna

Ramananda Raya said that there is no comparison to Srimati Radharani's love within the universe. Srimati Radharani did not like to be equal with all the other gopis. Thus in a mood of erotic anger, She left the arena of the rasa-lila. It was the desire of Sri Krsna that Srimati Radharani fulfill His necessity for rasa-lila, but when She went away, Sri Krsna became disturbed and in a mood of moroseness He left the rasa-lila arena to search for Srimati Radharani. Ramananda Raya quoted two other slokas from the Gita-govinda (3.1,2):

*kamsarir api samsara-*

*vasana-baddha-srnkhalam*

*radham adhaya hrdaye*

*tatyaja vraja-sundarih*

*itas-tatas tam anusrtya radhikam*

*ananga-vana-vrana-khinna-manasah*

*krtanutapah sa kalinda-nandini*

*tatanta-kunje visasada madhavah*

The enemy of Kamsa (Sri Krsna) became afflicted with the desire to liberate His parents Vasudeva and Devaki from imprisonment in Mathura and left the company of the beautiful damsels of Vraja, keeping Srimati Radharani within His heart.

Being afflicted by the arrow of Cupid and unhappily regretting His mistreating Radharani, Madhava (Sri Krsna) began to search for Srimati Radharani along the banks of the Yamuna River. When He failed to find Her, he entered the bushes and began to lament. All the above statements are of a very, very high standard of transcendental pastimes of the Personality of Godhead and may appear to be like the ordinary stories of a hero and heroine. The whole activity may also appear like the lusty behavior of ordinary men and women, but this is the foolishness of the mundane conception. The complete picture is of transcendental loving service to the Personality of Godhead by the pure senses, completely freed from mundane designations and cleansed of all mundane affairs. Only the highest devotee, who is absolutely purified by the regulative principles of devotional service and who has attained the stage of realizing the degraded nature of mundane erotic activities, can relish these supramundane affairs, although they are described in language that is understandable to the general populace.

The cheerfulness of Lord Caitanya in relishing the above statements by Ramananda Raya is the proof that they are the highest standard of transcendental expression. Therefore, readers should be careful not to bring these topics down to a level of mundane affairs. Ramananda Raya continued to explain that by a critical study of the above two slokas we can know that the rasa-lila is performed in the company of innumerable cowherd girls, but, in spite of this, the Personality of Godhead prefers to remain specifically with Srimati Radharani. Knowing this, a devotee's heart becomes swollen with transcendental joy, which may be compared to a mine of nectar.

Hearing about all these transcendental love affairs, the hearts of experienced devotees are filled with an inexplicable supramundane joy. They feel that Sri Krsna is equally fond of all the gopis, but He is specifically attracted by the clever and often contradictory dealings of Srimati Radharani. Thus She contributes the most to the rasa-lila.

## **By Srimati Radharani's Side**

It is understood from the authoritative literatures, which describe the transcendental pastimes of Godhead, that in the arena of the rasa-lila dance, Sri Krsna distributed Himself in His innumerable prakasa expansions by keeping Himself between each of the cowherd girls. He also kept Himself by the side of Srimati Radharani. The prakasa expansions of

His transcendental body are all identical, but the personality by the side of Srimati Radharani is His original form, svayam-rupa. Sri Krsna is equal to everyone in His general dealings, but due to the conflicting ecstatic love of Srimati Radharani there were opposing elements. This is described in the Ujjvala-nilamani as follows:

*aher iva gatih premnah  
svabhava-kutila bhavet  
ato hetor ahetos ca  
yunor mana udancati*

The curved ways of progressive love affairs appear like the movement of a snake. Further, two different kinds of anger, anger with a cause and anger without a cause, arise within the dealings of a young man and a young woman.

In pursuance of the above principles, Srimati Radharani in a mood of erotic anger left the arena of the rasa-lila with a feeling of devout attachment. Thus Sri Hari also became mad after Her and perturbed in His mind out of anger without cause. Sri Krsna's desire was to enjoy the transcendental pastime of the rasa-lila in its fullness and the cornerstone of its whole construction was Srimati Radharani. Without Her presence, the rasa-lila is upset. Therefore, the absence of Srimati Radharani caused Sri Krsna to leave the arena and go in search of Her.

When Sri Krsna was unable to find Srimati Radharani after searching here and there, He became overwhelmingly afflicted by Cupid's arrow and began to deeply lament on account of Her absence. This fact proves that the transcendental heart of Sri Krsna is not satiated even by His enjoyment in the midst of so many millions of other cowherd girls. As such, the intensity of His love for Srimati Radharani is impossible to describe.

All the above statements regarding the transcendental lila of Sri Sri Radha-Krsna profusely delighted Lord Caitanya and He became completely satisfied by His meeting with Ramananda Raya.

*prabhu kahe-ye lagi ailama toma-sthane  
sei saba tattva-vastu haila mora jnane  
ebe se janilun sadhya-sadhana-nirnaya  
age ara ache kichu, sunite mana haya  
krsnera svarupa' kaha 'radhara svarupa'  
'rasa' kon tattva, 'prema'-kon tattva-rupa  
krpa kari ei tattva kaha ta amare  
toma-vina keha iha nirupite nare*

Lord Caitanya said to Ramananda, I have now come to know the truth of the lila of Sri Krsna and Srimati Radharani for which I approached you. I have understood the truth of the highest goal to be attained and also the means to attain it. Therefore, please explain

the divine nature of Sri Krsna and also that of Srimati Radharani. Please also let me know the truth of the mellowness of supramundane love affairs. Nobody can explain all these except your good self. Therefore, I request you to do me this favor by your unbounded mercy.

## Guru of Lord Caitanya

The method of approach and the manner of humility exhibited by Lord Caitanya to Ramananda is the ideal for approaching a bona fide tattva-darsi or a master of transcendental knowledge. This is confirmed in the Bhagavad-gita (4.34): *tad viddhi pranipatena*

*pariprasnena sevaya*

*upadeksyanti te jnanam*

*jnaninas tattva-darsinah* In the Bhagavad-gita, it is recommended that one approach the spiritual master for supramundane knowledge under the protection of service and surrender accompanied by relevant inquiries. Lord Caitanya, as the ideal teacher and practical demonstrator of the teachings of the Bhagavad-gita, teaches us by His approach to Ramananda Raya. He shows that a person desirous of knowing the transcendental science must not be proud of his material acquisitions of education and wealth, which are very insignificant to the transcendently situated spiritual master from whom we should be very keen to understand the science of devotion.

If somebody approaches the bona fide spiritual master with the vanity of mundane pride in respect to his heredity, wealth, education, or personal beauty and without the necessary qualifications of surrender, service, and relevant inquiry, surely such a person will be honored outwardly by the spiritual master, but the spiritual master will decline to bestow transcendental knowledge upon the student who by his attitude of mundane vanity is rendered unqualified. Such a proud student is actually a sudra and he has no access to spiritual knowledge for want of the necessary qualifications mentioned above. Thus the sudra student, instead of availing himself to the mercy of the spiritual master, goes to hell as a result of his mundane vanity.

Ramananda Raya was born in the family of a sudra and was also a grhasta in terms of the system of varnasrama-dharma. Lord Caitanya appeared in the family of a highly cultured brahmana of Navadvipa and was in the topmost rank of the sannyasa asrama. Therefore, in terms of the varnasrama system, Ramananda Raya was in the lowest status while Lord Caitanya was in the highest status; yet, because Ramananda was a master in the art of



transcendental knowledge, Lord Caitanya approached him as one should approach a guru. He did so for the benefit of us all.

## True Student of Truth

Lord Caitanya descended into this mortal world as the ideal spiritual master, and thus His teaching is very significant. The students who really desire spiritual upliftment may carefully note all these dealings.

Ramananda Raya, as a true Vaisnava, always possessed natural humility, and thus when he was asked by Lord Caitanya he said,

*raya kahe-ihā ami kichui nā jani  
tumi yei kahāo, sei kahī ami vāni  
tomāra siksāya pādī yēnā sukā-pathā  
saksat isvara tūmi, ke bujhe tomāra nātā  
hrdaye prerānā kārā, jihvāyā kahāo vāni  
kī kahīyē bhālā-māndā, kichui nā jani*

"My Lord, I have no information of the transcendental world but I can simply speak that which You inspire me to utter. I am just like a parrot and I can repeat only that which You direct me to say. You are Yourself the Personality of Godhead and it is very difficult to understand what You do and how You play. The inspiration that You create in me and the vocabulary that You cause to come out of my mouth are known to You. I do not know myself what I speak and what I think."

Lord Caitanya, again in His mood of a true student of truth, replied to Ramananda Raya,

*prabhu kahe-māyavādī ami tā' sannyāsī  
bhakti-tattva nāhī jani, māyavāde bhāsī  
sarvabhāumā-sāngē mōrā mānā nirmalā hā-īlā  
'krsnā-bhakti-tattva kāhā,' tānhāre pūchīlā  
tēhō kāhē-ami nāhī jani krsnā-kāthā  
sābē rāmanāndā jānē, tēhō nāhī ēthā  
tomāra thānī āīlānā tomāra māhīmā sunīyā  
tūmi mōrē stutī kārā 'sannyāsī' jānīyā  
kībā viprā, kībā nyāsī, sudrā kēnē nāyā  
yēī krsnā-tattva-vēttā, sei 'guru' hāyā  
sannyāsī' bālīyā mōrē nā kārīhā vāncānā  
krsnā-radhā-tattva kāhī' purnā kārā mānā*

"I am a mayavadi sannyasi who is an atheist by nature. As such, I always float on My theory of maya and Brahman without any entrance into devotional science. By the association of Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya, I was lucky enough to get My heart purified. When I asked him to speak about the transcendental topics of the lila of Sri Krsna and Srimati Radharani, he asked Me to see you. He recommended you as the best among those who know this science and he regretted your absence at Puri. I have therefore come to you after hearing your glories from him. You are now praising Me because I am a sannyasi, but it does not matter whether a person is a brahmana, a sannyasi, or a sudra. A person is thoroughly competent to become a bona fide spiritual master provided he knows the transcendental art and science of devotional activities. Therefore please do not try to avoid Me because I am a sannyasi. Kindly fulfill My desire by fully describing the glories of the lila performed by Sri Krsna and Srimati Radharani."

## **Beyond Varna and Asrama**

In the teachings of Lord Caitanya, especially in this perverted age of Kali, the passage mentioned above, wherein it says that it does not matter whether a person is a brahmana, sannyasi, or a sudra, is important. The qualification for a spiritual master is that he must be thoroughly conversant in the art and science of devotional service. This is revolutionary to the stereotyped, so-called spiritual mastership prevailing among the masses in India. The exploitative method is herein dealt a deadly blow and this truth is established by the devout followers of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's conception.

The fact is that a person who is thoroughly conversant about Sri Krsna can become a spiritual master either as an initiator or an instructor. It does not matter whether such a person is a brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, or a sudra. Nor does it matter whether he is a brahmacari, grhastha, vanaprastha, or a sannyasi. The only qualification of a spiritual master is his knowledge of the truth about Sri Krsna. The qualification certainly does not rest on his particular situation in terms of the system of varnasrama-dharma.

This order of Lord Caitanya, although apparently revolutionary to the non-progressive opportunists, is not at all against the injunctions of the scriptures. Following this principle, Lord Caitanya Himself took initiation from Sripad Isvara Puri, and Lord Nityananda Prabhu and Advaita Prabhu took initiation from Sripad Madhavendra Puri Goswami. Rasikananda Prabhu took initiation from Srila Shyamananda Prabhu, who appeared in the family of a non-brahmana, and Sri Ganga Narayana Cakravarti and Sri Ramakrsna Bhattacharya took initiation from Srila Narottama dasa Thakura, who also happened to appear

in the family of a non-brahmana. In the ancient literatures, it is written that there are no hereditary considerations for becoming a spiritual master.

In the Mahabharata and other historical literatures, there are innumerable examples of non-hereditary gurus and determination of caste by quality and action rather than by birth. In the Srimad-Bhagavatam (7.11.35), it is said that a person should be classified as belonging to a particular varna or caste in terms of his qualification:

*yasya yal-laksanam proktam*

*pumso varnabhivyanyakam*

*yad anyatrapi drsyeta*

*tat tenaiva vinirdiset*

According to Bhagavad-gita, a really qualified brahmana possesses nine qualities, a ksatriya seven qualities, a vaisya three qualities, and a sudra only one quality. So, wherever the particular qualities are found or developed, the person possessing these particular qualities should be regarded as such. Accepting this formula from the scriptures, the Vaisnava accepts a spiritual master upon his becoming conversant in the knowledge of Sri Krsna. The qualities of a brahmana appear naturally, and, as such, a thoroughly conversant spiritual master cannot be anything but a qualified brahmana. The false notion that without being a caste brahmana a person cannot become a spiritual master is therefore a misconception. A person born in the family of a sudra can become a spiritual master if he has acquired the necessary knowledge about Sri Krsna.

Sometimes it is seen that a pure Vaisnava does not undergo the formalities of the system of varnasrama-dharma by accepting the regulative principles thereof, but that does not mean that he is not a brahmana or a bona fide spiritual master. The Vaisnavas determine the varna and asrama of a person simply by their symptoms and not by their birth. Foolish people are unable to recognize such qualified Vaisnavas, and as such Lord Caitanya distinctly emphasizes all the above mentioned points. There is no difference in essence between the regulative principles found in the Hari-bhakti-vilasa and the statements of Lord Caitanya. The difference is concocted by the mental speculations of ignorant men.

## Who is an Acarya

Some foolish students have accepted the statements of Lord Caitanya conditionally. According to them, the spiritual master fully conversant with the science of Krsna, yet not born in a brahmana family, can be an instructing spiritual master, but not an initiating spiritual master. They do not know that there is hardly any difference between the two

classes of spiritual masters. According to them, a caste initiator or caste goswami, by dint of his hereditary blood lineage, becomes the real spiritual master, while a person knowing all about Sri Krsna can only become an instructor.

They foolishly think that the position of the initiating spiritual master is greater than that of the instructing spiritual master. However, the matter is very clearly and conclusively discussed in the Caitanya-caritamṛta (Adi-līla 1.47):

*sikṣa-guruke ta' jani kṛṣṇera svarūpa  
antaryāmi, bhakta-sreṣṭha-ei dui rūpa*

"One should know the instructing spiritual master to be the Personality of Kṛṣṇa. Sri Kṛṣṇa manifests Himself as the Supersoul and as the greatest devotee of the Lord."

In the Manu-saṁhitā, the qualification of an ācārya is described as follows: "A spiritual master is a twice-born brahmana able to train his disciple to instruct others on the Vedas."

In the Vāyu Purāna, the ācārya is described as follows: "One who knows the essence of the scriptures, establishes the truth of them, and conducts his activities according to the regulative principles of the scriptures is thus known as an ācārya."

The ācārya or spiritual master is an empowered incarnation of the Personality of Godhead. He is not to be considered a plenary portion of Godhead, but at the same time the spiritual master is certainly very near and dear to Godhead. The ācārya appears before the disciple as the bona fide representative of Godhead. Such an ācārya has no duty other than to serve the Personality of Godhead and give shelter to the willing disciple on Godhead's behalf.

If a person becomes a so-called spiritual master without being engaged wholly in the service of the Personality of Godhead, nobody should accept him as guru and his activity should not be recognized. A guru's character must be fully representative of the Personality of Godhead, and this will be demonstrated by his full-time engagement in the service of Godhead. A real ācārya is sometimes envied by the sense-gratifying masses. However, the ācārya is a nondifferent extension of the transcendental body of the Personality of Godhead. Anyone envying such a spiritual master will certainly suffer the consequence of being bereft of the Personality of Godhead's blessings.

The spiritual master, although the eternal servitor of Lord Caitanya, is always to be respected as much as Lord Caitanya. The spiritual master is the personality who exhibits the nature of Lord Caitanya. It should never be concluded that the spiritual master is exactly one and the same with Godhead as the māyavādī philosophers think. The Vaiṣṇavas accept the spiritual master in terms of acintya-bhedābheda-tattva, simultaneously one with and different from the Personality of Godhead.

# Siksa and Diksa

A spiritual master who gives instruction about the regulative principles of devotional service is called the siksa-guru or the instructing spiritual master. A person who is not engaged in the service of the Personality of Godhead and is addicted to ill habits cannot be a spiritual master. The instructing spiritual master is of two kinds. They are: (1) a self-realized soul constantly engaged in the service of the Personality of Godhead, and (2) a soul in pure consciousness who is constantly offering helpful directions favorable to the service of Godhead. Instruction in the service of the Lord is also of two kinds: (1) instruction on the object of service, and (2) instruction on the regulative principles of service. The spiritual master who connects the living entity with the Personality of Godhead Sri Krsna by initiation is called the diksa-guru or the initiating spiritual master. There is no difference between the initiating spiritual master and the instructing spiritual master. Both are the object of shelter for the disciple and both are asraya vigraha or the personality under whose shelter the eternal relationship with Godhead is established and the process of approaching Godhead by service is learned. To think of one spiritual master as purer than the other is offensive. The symbolic initiating spiritual master is Srila Sanatana Goswami, who initiates the devotees into their service to Madana-mohana. Srila Rupa Goswami is the instructing spiritual master, who instructs the devotee with his verses in the Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu regarding the service of Sri Sri Radha-Govinda. Nobody should therefore think of Sanatana Goswami as being greater than Rupa Goswami or vice versa. Both of them are our spiritual masters and engage us in the transcendental loving service of Godhead. When Lord Caitanya mentioned the word guru, spiritual master, He meant both the siksa-guru and the diksa-guru and not just one of them.

## Not a Vaisnava - Not a Guru

According to Hari-bhakti-vilasa, a pure devotee of Godhead is never a sudra. On the other hand, one who is not engaged in the service of the Personality of Godhead is definitely a sudra, even though such a person may be born in the family of any varna other than sudra. A brahmana of the standard of varnasrama-dharma, although expert in all the details of the six specific functions of the scriptures, cannot be accepted as a spiritual master if he is not a Vaisnava. But if an untouchable candala (dog-eater) becomes a Vaisnava, he can be accepted as a spiritual master. A pure devotee of Godhead, although born in the family of a sudra, can be the spiritual master of all the other three varnas.

Ramananda Raya, being always conscious of his transcendental task, is never subjected to the deluding energy of Godhead. He could understand the feelings of Lord Caitanya, and by His will, Ramananda wanted to proceed further. He said,

*aya kahe-ami-nata, tumi-sutra-dhara  
yei mata nacao, taiche cahi nacibara  
mora jihva-vina-yantra, tumi-vina-dhari  
tomara mane yei uthe, tahai uccari*

"My Lord, I am a dancing doll and You are the wire-puller. Let me dance as you wish. My tongue is like the vina (a stringed musical instrument) and You are playing upon it. Kindly let me vibrate the sound that You desire to produce."

Ramananda continued:

*parama isvara krsna-svayam bhagavan  
sarva-avatari, sarva-karana-pradhana  
ananta vaikuntha, ara ananta avatara  
ananta brahmanda ihan-sabara adhara  
sac-cid-ananda-tanu, vrajendra-nandana  
sarvaisvarya-sarvasakti-sarvarasa-purna  
isvarah paramah krsnah, sac-cid-ananda-vigraha  
anadir adir govindah, sarva-karana-karanam  
vrndavane 'aprakrta navina madana'  
kama-gayatri kama-bije yantra upasana*

"Sri Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes. He expands Himself in His innumerable plenary portions known as incarnations. He is the fountain-head of innumerable Vaikuntha planets, innumerable incarnations, and innumerable universes. He is the eternal form of transcendental existence, knowledge, and bliss. He is known as the son of the King of Vraja. He is complete in Himself with all opulences, all powers, and all divine rasas. He is, as stated in the Brahma-samhita, the Supreme Primeval Lord and the cause of all causes. Sri Krsna is the transcendental Cupid and the resident of Sri Vrndavana. He is worshiped by the transcendental sounds produced by the pure utterances of kama-gayatri and kama-bija."

# Vrndavana Eternal

Vrndavana, the residence of Sri Krsna, is described in the Brahma-samhita (5.56):

*sriyah kantah kantah parama-purusah kalpa-taravo  
druma bhumis cintamani-gana-mayi toyam amrtam  
katha ganam natyam gamanam api vamsi priya-sakhi  
cid-anandam jyotih param api tad asvadyam api ca  
sa yatra ksirabdhah sravati surabhibhyas ca sumahan  
nimesardhakhyo va vrajati na hi yatrapa samayah  
bhaje sveta-dvipam tam aham iha golokam iti yam  
vidantas te santah ksiti-virala-carah katipaye*

Everything is cognizant in the transcendental abode of Vrndavana. Although appearing in the material world, it exists eternally, even after the annihilation of the material world. The Bhagavad-gita (8.20) confirms this statement. In Vrndavana, the cowherd girls are all enjoyed by Sri Krsna, and He is the only enjoyer there because He is the Supreme Person. The trees in Vrndavana are all desire trees and the land is made of cintamani, desire-fulfilling touchstones. The water of Vrndavana is nectar, the words of conversation are themselves sweet songs, walking in Vrndavana is a dance, and the flute is eternally the constant companion of Sri Krsna.

The luminaries in the sky are transcendental and blissful. With this in mind, we should always try to understand Vrndavana. In Vrndavana, even a moment is never lost because no moment passes away, and, as such, there is not a limited conception of the future either.

The Vrndavana-dhama that we can experience in this mortal world is therefore a subject of deep study, and the significance of Vrndavana is known only to the purest devotees. Let us therefore worship Sri Vrndavana.

The Vrndavana-dhama that manifests in the material world is not realized by our material senses, which are always prone to enjoy matter. When we are inspired by the proper attitude of transcendental service to Madana-mohana, we can know the actual Vrndavana. Because it is very difficult to understand, Srila Narottama dasa Thakura taught us by his actions to cry for the mercy of Lord Nityananda Prabhu. By the mercy of Lord Nityananda, we can be free from the consciousness of trying to enjoy this material world. This enjoying spirit is known as samsara-vasana. When one is freed from the samsara-vasana, one is freed from focusing entirely on eating, sleeping, fearing, and other sense-gratifying habits. When this is done, the mind of the devotee is purified from all infections of matter, and in such a state of mind one can see the true Vrndavana-dhama situated in this mortal world.

# Cupid and the Kama-Gayatri

The eternal Cupid, Sri Krsna, is eternally distinct from the material Cupid. The material Cupid produces pleasure only temporarily, but then lulls one into material dullness in just the next moment. But the eternal Cupid is ever-awakening and the transcendental pleasure is ever-increasing in ever-renewing developments. Such pleasure is eternally-existing and is not subject to the laws of material nature. The transient pleasure derived from the material Cupid is an enjoyable object to the materialists, but the transcendental Cupid is served eternally because He is Sri Krsna, the Personality of Godhead Himself.

Gayatri means that which delivers one from the clutches of material hankerings. By chanting the kama-gayatri, klim kama-devaya vidmahe puspa-banaya dhimahi tan no 'nangah pracodayat, the transcendental sound composed of twenty-four and a half letters, one is connected with the service of Madana-mohana (kama-devaya). The nature of practical service is realized in connection with Govinda (puspa-banaya). And in the perfect stage of service, one is connected with Gopinatha (anangah), the attractor of the cowherd girls.

The description of the kama-gayatri in the Brahma-samhita is vivid. The kama-gayatri was first chanted by Lord Brahma before he created the material universes. His pure consciousness was awakened in the matter of his relationship, action, and ultimate goal in the service of the Personality of Godhead. When he became absorbed in the chanting of the transcendental sound of the kama-gayatri, he acquired the ability to create the universe, and as such he composed the Brahma-samhita in praise of the glories of Lord Govinda, the Personality of Godhead.

The scientific arrangement of the kama-gayatri is described in the Brahma-samhita. It says that the supramundane kama-gayatri combined with the kama-bija (the nucleus of transcendental love) is the transcendental means of worship by which the eternally youthful transcendental Cupid, Madana-mohana, is served. Sri Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura has explained the symbolic representation of the kama-bija 'klim,' with reference to the Brhad Gautamiya-tantra, as follows: K is Krsna, the supreme aggressive male, who possesses a form embodying full eternity, knowledge, and bliss; the letter I is Radha, the supreme receptive female, who is eternally the Vrndavesvari, or the most majestic Princess of Sri Vrndavana; the letter L is celebrated as anandatmaka-prema-sukha, or the happiness of Radha and Krsna's mutual ecstatic love in the form of pure blissful joy; and the Â is the expression of cumban-ananda-madhurya, or the ecstatic sweetness of Their most blissful kiss. When the kama-bija is added to the gayatri, it becomes the transcendental prayer for worshiping Sri Sri Radha-Krsna.



Ramananda Raya continued to speak: "Sri Krsna has multi-energies, three of which are prominent. They are known as the internal energy, external energy, and marginal energy; or the potency of full knowledge of life, the potency of darkness or ignorance, and the potency of the living being." In the Visnu Purana, these potencies are also mentioned. The internal energy and the marginal energy are referred to as the superior energies while the external energy or the potency of darkness is called the inferior energy.

## **Hladini, Sandhini, and Samvit**

Sri Krsna is originally a person full with transcendental existence, knowledge, and bliss. His internal energy or the potency of full knowledge is manifested in three diverse ways: hladini, sandhini, and samvit, which represent transcendental bliss, existence, and knowledge respectively. In the Visnu Purana, the same is confirmed as follows: "O Lord, in You who are all-pervading, the hladini, sandhini, and samvit energies are all cognizant. Your parts and parcels, the living entities, have obtained the powers that are the perverted forms of hladini, sandhini, and samvit. They have done so under the influence of the three qualities of the external energy, because the living entities are prone to be influenced by the deluding energy known as maya. However, in You these three energies are transcendental to the qualities of maya."

## **Who is Topmost**

The hladini energy means the pleasure potency and by this energy, which is His own, Sri Krsna becomes enthused and relishes His happy moods. The hladini energy is the cause of transcendental happiness for the devotees engaged in the transcendental service of Godhead. The hladini energy in Her very concentrated form is the embodiment of love of Godhead, which produces the emotions of transcendental bliss and knowledge. This transcendental love of Godhead in its mature state is named mahabhava and Srimati Radharani is mahabhava personified. She is thus described in the Ujjvala-nilamani (4.3) as follows:

*ayor apy ubhayor madhye  
radhika sarvathadhika  
mahabhava-svarupeyam*

*gunair ativariyasi*

"Among the cowherd girls, Srimati Radharani and Srimati Candravali are the principal gopis. Out of these two, Srimati Radharani is the topmost because Her position is that of mahabhava or the highest stage of transcendental love of Godhead. No other cowherd girl possesses such high qualities as Srimati Radharani."

*premera 'svarupa-deha'-prema-vibhavita*

*krsnera preyasi-srestha jagate vidita*

"Srimati Radharani is love of Godhead personified. She is made of pure love of Godhead. She is therefore celebrated in the universe as the most beloved of Sri Krsna."

The Brahma-samhita (5.37) describes this as follows:

*ananda-cinmaya-rasa-pratibhavitabhis*

*tabhir ya eva nija-rupataya kalabhih*

*goloka eva nivasty akhilatma-bhuto*

*govindam adi-purusam tam aham bhajami*

"I worship the primeval Lord Govinda, who in His original form resides in His abode named Goloka along with the transcendental cowherd girls, who are always inspired by the feelings of transcendental bliss and knowledge. That Govinda is the all-pervading Godhead."

Srimati Radharani is further described by Srila Raghunatha dasa Goswami in his Premambhoja-maranda:

The identity of Srimati Radharani is the personified service of Sri Krsna to fulfill His every desire. Her associates such as Lalita, Visakha, and other friends are the symbols of Her expression of such intimate service. The manifestation of Her first youthfully blooming appearance is the result of Her using the cosmetic made out of the affection of Sri Krsna. Her first (morning) bath is in the nectarean water of youthful energy. The gradual development of Her youthful beauty is the nectar of Her bath in the afternoon. Her evening bath is completed in the water of full-grown youth, and thus the three stages of Her youthful growth is compared with Her bath thrice daily classified under the names of karunyamrta, tarunyamrta, and lavanyamrta. This is the description of Her transcendental body.

# Qualities of Srimati Radharani

As far as Her dress is concerned, it is described in two parts. One is made of Her youthful blush of modesty woven with syama or black colored threads turned into a bluish covering, and the second is called uttaria which is red due to extreme attachment for the company of Sri Krsna.

Her breasts are covered by Her sari in the form of affection and anger toward Krsna. Her personal beauty is compared to kunkuma (a special kind of cosmetic) and Her friendship with Her associates is compared to sandalwood pulp. The sweetness of Her calm sobriety is compared to camphor. These three ingredients decorating the body of Srimati Radharani-kunkuma, sandalwood pulp, and camphor-are ever-increasingly glowing as Her youthful beauty.

Outwardly, She is very clever and contradictory while at heart She is submissive. She speaks with cruel words to Her lover, yet Her heart is revealed by the flow of tears from Her eyes. This emotion is called dhiradhiratmaka. The degrees of this particular emotion vary in intensity and are called praghosa, madhya, and mugdha respectively.

Her lipstick is the reddish color of Her lips due to Her deep attraction for Sri Krsna. The outward symptoms of Her transcendental sentiments such as cheerfulness, laughing, shivering, and crying are Her constant companions. Her different qualities may be divided into four categories, namely: (1) qualities pertaining to Her person, (2) qualities pertaining to Her words, (3) qualities pertaining to Her mind, and (4) qualities pertaining to Her relationship with others. She possesses six qualities in regard to Her person, three in regard to Her words, two in regard to Her mind, and six in regard to Her relationship with others. The description of these different qualities is very vividly given in the Ujjvala-nilamani. To avoid expansion of this literature, we will not elaborate on this subject at this time.

Srimati Radharani always bears in Her heart the sentiment of prema-vaicittya, a feeling of the fear of separation even when She is in the company of Her consort. This is due to Her being very soft-hearted. She is eternally a young girl between 16 and 20 years of age. This period is called kaisora. She is always accustomed to moving along with Her hands resting on the shoulders of Her friends, the cowherd girls. She is always being lovingly attended by Her female friends and Her mind is always full of Her transcendental pastimes with Sri Krsna. Her constant cheerfulness is the fragrance of Her body and She is constantly sitting on the bedstead of Her peculiar pride due to constantly remembering Sri Krsna.

Constant remembrance of the name, fame, and qualities of Sri Krsna are the earrings decorating Her body. The glories of Sri Krsna's name, fame, and qualities are always in-

undating Her speech. She keeps Sri Krsna enlivened by the celestial drink of the incessant chanting of His qualities. In short, She is the reservoir of pure love of Krsna and She is full and complete with all the necessary qualifications in this regard. She is the perfect symbolic representation of pure love of Godhead. This fact is described in the Govindalilamrta (11.122) in the form of questions and answers:

*ka krsnasya pranaya-janibhuh srimati radhikaika  
kasya preyasy anupama-guna radhikaika na canya  
jaihmyam kese drsi taralata nisthuratvam kuce 'sya  
vancha-purtyai prabhavati hare radhikaika na canya*

Q: Who is the generating source of the love of Sri Krsna?

A: It is Srimati Radhika only.

Q: Who is qualitatively the dearest to Sri Krsna?

A: Again, it is Srimati Radharani and nobody else. Srimati Radharani's hair is very curly, Her eyes are always moving to and fro, Her breasts are firm, and as such it is She alone who can fulfill all the desires of the all-attractive Hari.

*yanra saubhagya-guna vanche satyabhama  
yanra thani kala-vilasa sikhe vraja-rama  
yanra saundaryadi-guna vanche laksmi-parvati  
yanra pativrata-dharma vanche arundhati  
yanra sadguna-ganane krsna na paya para  
tanra guna ganibe kemane jiva chara*

Ramananda Raya concluded the descriptive qualities of Srimati Radharani by saying that She is envied by Satyabhama for Her unique fortune, and from Her alone the damsels of Vraja have learned the art of attracting a lover. Even Parvati and Laksmi, who are super-excellently beautiful, desire to possess Her qualities and beauty and rise to the level of Her chastity. Even Sri Krsna fails to calculate the qualities of Srimati Radharani. Therefore, how is it possible for any mortal being to estimate Her qualities?

On hearing these statements by Ramananda Raya, Lord Caitanya said:

*prabhu kahe-janilun krsna-radha-prema-tattva  
sunite cahiye dunhara vilasa-mahattva*

"I have come to know the essence of love between Srimati Radharani and Sri Krsna. Now I wish to hear something about Their transcendental pastimes."

# Qualities of Sri Krsna

Ramananda Raya replied that Sri Krsna is dhira-lalita, a person who is very clever, always youthful, expert in joking, free from all anxieties, and very submissive to His beloved. His characteristics are manifested always in His transcendental erotic pastimes. Thus He is constantly engaged in enjoyment with Srimati Radharani, making a perfection of the frolicsome age of kaisora. This stage of Sri Krsna's engagement is described by Srila Rupa Goswami as follows:

*vaca sucita-sarvari-rati-kala-pragalbhyaya radhikam  
vrida-kuncita-locanam viracayann agre sakhinam asau  
tad-vaksoruha-citra-keli-makari-panditya-param gatah  
kaisoram saphali-karoti kalayan kunje viharam harih*

"Sri Krsna perfectly enjoys the age of His adolescence by His pastimes with Srimati Radharani in the bowers of Vrndavana. He takes advantage of the cowherd girls by His expertise in the art of painting. He made Srimati Radharani close Her eyes in shame before Her friends by speaking words of Their lovemaking on the previous night. Then, while She was almost unconscious in a swoon, Sri Krsna, showing the highest limit of cleverness, painted Her breasts with various types of makaras (mystical fish)."

# Topmost Love Affairs

On hearing these words, Lord Caitanya said:

*prabhu kahe-eho haya, age kaha ara  
raya kahe-iha va-i buddhi-gati nahi ara*

"Yes, this is all right, but please go still further." Ramananda replied, "I think my intelligence is unable to go any further!" The stage that is yet to be described is prema-vilasa-vivarta, the feeling of original attraction matured by the feeling of separation. "I do not know if such a description will be to Your satisfaction or not."

Saying this Ramananda sang his own composition, the purport of which is as follows:

*pahilehi raga nayana-bhange bhela  
anudina badhala, avadhi na gel  
a na so ramana, na hama ramani  
dunhu-mana manobhava pesala jani'  
e sakhi, se-saba prema-kahini  
kanu-thame kahabi vichurala jani*

*na khonjalun duti, na khonjalun an  
dunhukeri milane madhya ta panca-bana  
ab sohi viraga, tunhu bheli duti  
su-purukha-premaki aichana riti*

"O, when We first met each other, the attraction was awakened by simple sight, and such attraction knows no bounds in the course of its growth, because that attraction was due to Our personal inclination. Neither Krsna nor Myself is the cause of such spontaneous attraction but it awakened and pierced Our minds in the form of Cupid. We are now separated from one another. O My dear friend, if you think that Sri Krsna has completely forgotten Me, tell Him that at the first sight We never required any negotiation, neither did We search for any messages. Cupid himself was the agent of Our meeting. But alas, at this time, O My friend, you are doing the job of a messenger when Our attraction is more desirable than before."

This sort of feeling during separation of the lover and the beloved is called prema-vilasa-vivarta, which is the topmost sentiment in loving affairs.

Here is another heartfelt description of the same prema-vilasa-vivarta by Srila Rupa Goswami in his Ujjvala-nilamani:

*radhaya bhavatas ca citta-jatuni  
svedair vilapya kramad  
yunjann adri-nikunja-kunjara-pate  
nirdhuta-bheda-bhramam  
citraya svayam anvaranjayad iha  
brahmanda-harmyodare  
bhuyobhir nava-raga-hingula-bharaih  
srngara-karuh krti*

"O, the king of the pirates (Sri Krsna) resided in the bowers of Govardhana Hill! The Creator of the Universe, who is very much expert in the art of decoration, has melted the casing of your heart and that of Srimati Radharani with the perspiration of transcendental symptoms and emotions, and thereby removed the misconception of duality. By such wonderful activities, He has painted both of your hearts in order to play wonders upon the universe."

The explanation of the sentiment of prema-vilasa-vivarta can only be realized in a pure state of consciousness freed from all material conceptions. This transcendental subject matter is not to be realized in a state of consciousness that is either grossly or subtly influenced by the material body and mind. External consciousness in relation to material intelligence and mind is different from the pure soul. The mellowness of this transcen-

dental subject is relished by the senses engaged in the divine service of the Personality of Godhead.

## Positive Consciousness

The pure state of consciousness enjoyed in the transcendental service of Godhead is only partially manifested in the impersonalists through their negation of material engagement. The impersonal negative conception is simply an antidote for material misconception, it has no positive standing. Such a state of consciousness may be somewhat enlightening, but it cannot reach the positive consciousness of the soul in its pure state. Love of Godhead is a pure and positive transcendental subject. The attraction for matter is transient and inferior, and therefore it is best described as only passing for love. The apparent happiness of the material world is really unhappiness. However, the transcendental unhappiness experienced in the prema-vilasa-vivarta has nothing to do with the unhappiness of the material conception.

In concluding this explanation of prema-vilasa-vivarta, the highest stage of transcendental relationships, Lord Caitanya said,

*prabhu kahe- 'sadhya-vastura avadhi' ei haya tomara  
prasade iha janilun niscaya  
sadhya-vastu' 'sadhana' vinu keha nahi paya  
krpa kari' kaha, raya, pabara upaya*

"Now I understand the topmost limit of the ultimate goal of life. This has been possible by your grace. The goal cannot be reached without the endeavor of the devotee and the mercy of a pure devotee. Please therefore let me now know the means of reaching this topmost goal."

Ramananda continued,

*raya kahe-yei kahao, sei kahi vani  
ki kahiye bhala-manda, kichui na jani  
tribhuvana-madhya aiche haya kon dhira  
ye tomara maya-nate ha-ibeka sthira  
mora mukhe vakta tumi, tumi hao srota  
atyanta rahasya, suna, sadhanera katha  
radha-krsnera lila ei ati gudhatara  
dasya-vatsalyadi-bhave na haya gocara  
sabe eka sakhi-ganera ihan adhikara*

*sakhi haite haya ei lilara vistara  
sakhi vina ei lila pusta nahi haya  
sakhi lila vistariya, sakhi asvadaya  
sakhi vina ei lilaya anyera nahi gati  
sakhi-bhave ye tanre kare anugati  
radha-krsna-kunjaseva-sadhya sei paya  
sei sadhya paite are nahika upaya*

"My Lord, I do not know the means of approaching the ultimate goal of life, but I speak to You whatever You desire me to speak. I do not know if I am speaking correctly or incorrectly. Nobody in the three worlds will not dance according to Your wish. In fact, You speak through my mouth, and it is wonderful that You are the audience as well. Therefore, let me say that the transcendental pastimes of Srimati Radharani and Sri Krsna are extremely mysterious and confidential. Even those who are ardently engaged in the service of dasya, sakhya, or vatsalya rasas cannot enter into the essence of Their pastimes. Only the eternal associates of Srimati Radharani, the cowherd girls of Vraja, have the authority to enter into this mystery because this transcendental pastime develops in their association. "The fulfillment of the sweetest of all transcendental pastimes depends on the activities of Sri Radha's female associates. It is they alone who expand these pastimes and relish their development. Therefore, if anyone wants to reach this stage of transcendental life, he has to do so in the ardent service of such female associates. Only one who follows this principle can become a servitor of Srimati Radharani and Sri Krsna in the groves of Sri Vrndavana. There is no other alternative in this regard."

## Deeper Happiness

In the Govinda-lilamrta (10.17), the following description is given:

*vibhur api sukha-rupah sva-prakaso 'pi bhavah  
ksanam api na hi radha-krsnayor ya rte svah  
pravahati rasa-pustim cid-vibhutir ivesah  
srayati na padam asam kah sakhinam rasa-jnah*

"The transcendental pastimes of Radha and Krsna are as self-effulgent as the Personality of Godhead Himself. Yet as the Almighty Godhead is glorified by His manifestation of diverse energies and potencies, the pastimes of Radha and Krsna are glorified in the association of the sakhis or female friends of Srimati Radharani."



The activities of the sakhis are very wonderful. They do not desire any personal enjoyment with Sri Krsna but become happy only by uniting the Divine Couple. By uniting Srimati Radharani with Sri Krsna, the sakhis enjoy a thousand times more happiness than they would derive by direct contact with Sri Krsna. This is another mystery of the transcendental pastimes of Radha and Krsna.

Srimati Radharani is the desire creeper embracing the desire tree of Sri Krsna, and the sakhis are the leaves, twigs, and flowers of that desire creeper. So naturally when the desire creeper is watered at the root by the nectarean water of the pastimes of Sri Krsna, the leaves and twigs and flowers of the desire creeper are automatically nourished. The sakhis therefore do not require any separate arrangement for their enjoyment. On the other hand, the happiness of the flowers and leaves is greater than the original creeper. This is explained in the Govinda-lilamrta (10.16):

*sakhyah sri-radhikaya vraja-  
kumuda-vidhor hladini-nama-sakteh  
saramsa-prema-vallyah kisalaya-  
dala-puspadi-tulyah sva-tulyah  
siktayam krsna-lilamrta-rasa-  
nicayair ullasantyam amusyam  
jatollasah sva-sekacchata-gunam  
adhikam santi yat tan na citram*

"There is no utility in watering the leaves and flowers of a tree without watering the root of the tree. The leaves and flowers are automatically nourished by watering the root of the tree. Similarly, without the unity of Srimati Radharani and Sri Krsna, there is no happiness for the sakhis. When Radha and Krsna are united, the happiness of the sakhis is thousands and thousands of times greater than when they are personally associating with Krsna."

## Great Mystery

There is another mystery within these transcendental pastimes, and it is that Srimati Radharani arranges for the uniting of Her associates with Sri Krsna, although the sakhis have no such desire. By doing this, Srimati Radharani enjoys more happiness than by Her personally uniting with Sri Krsna and for this reason the sakhis accept this arrangement for Her happiness. By all these mutual arrangements of Sri Radha and the sakhis, Sri Krsna

becomes still more happy, and therefore the whole arrangement causes Radha and Krsna to become even more enlivened in their transcendental pastimes.

The natural divine love of the cowherd girls for Sri Krsna is never to be considered as or compared to material lust. The two, love and lust, are explained in similar terms because there appears to be a similarity between them, but the Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu (1.2.285) explains otherwise:

*premaiva gopa-ramanam*

*kama ity agamat pratham*

*ity uddhavadayo 'py etam*

*vanchanti bhagavat-priyah*

"People customarily describe and understand the love of the cowherd girls for Sri Krsna in the light of mundane lust, but in fact it is different because such a standard of love for Sri Krsna was desired even by the highest devotees like Uddhava and others."

Mundane lust is meant for one's personal enjoyment; transcendental love of Godhead is meant for the happiness of the Supreme Personality Sri Krsna. There is therefore a very wide gulf of difference between the two.

The cowherd girls of Vraja had no desire for self-satisfaction by personally contacting Sri Krsna, yet they were always ready to render all varieties of services for the benefit of Sri Krsna. Anything short of this spirit amounts to lust. As confirmed in the Srimad-Bhagavatam, mundane desire is mundane lust. In the Vedas, the three modes of nature - goodness, passion, and ignorance - are described in different terms according to one's desire for different benefits - followers, sons, wealth, and so on. All these are but different categories of mundane lust. Such lust is presented in the flowery language of the Vedas as religiosity. Lust is called by different names: altruism, karma-kanda, fruitive work, social obligations, the desire for liberation, family tradition, affection for kinsmen, and fear of chastisement and rebuke from relatives. All these are different forms of lust passing in the name of religiosity. There is nothing in these activities except one's own sense gratification.

## Surrender

In the Bhagavad-gita, the final instruction is to give up all varieties of religion and follow the Personality of Godhead without reservation. In the beginning of the Bhagavad-gita, the Personality of Godhead proclaimed that He descends to the earth whenever there is a

rise of irreligious activities. He does so to protect the faithful, eradicate the unbelievers, and reestablish the principles of religiosity.

The two declarations mentioned above seem contradictory. The Personality of Godhead descends on earth to protect religiosity, but advises Arjuna to give up all varieties of religion. The explanation, however, is very clear. Complete surrender unto the will of the Personality of Godhead without any reservation is the factual principle of religiosity. All other activities, such as altruism, are not in fact religious. As such, the Personality of Godhead advises Arjuna to give them up. They are all different forms of mundane lust, gorgeously presented in the dress of religiosity.

Therefore, a transcendental conviction of feeling oneself to be the eternal servitor of Godhead and following this conviction means to follow the orders of Sri Krsna as He has advised in the Bhagavad-gita. Whenever there is the feeling that one is the enjoyer of one's own activities, such actions are to be understood as different forms of mundane lust.

To surrender fully unto the desire of Sri Krsna does not turn one into a lifeless machine without any impetus. Rather, the feeling of being eternally engaged in the service of Sri Krsna gives one transcendental impetus for carrying out the will of Godhead through the divine medium of the spiritual master, who is identical in purpose with Sri Krsna. This is only possible when one is inspired by pure love of Godhead called vyavasayatmika-buddhi, supramundane intelligence that assures success in spiritual activities.

## Imitators

The artificial way of decorating oneself in the dress of a sakhi, as is done by a class of mundaners called sakhibheki or gauranga-nagari, is not inspired by supramundane intelligence. Such artificial decoration of the body, which is meant for annihilation, certainly cannot please the transcendental senses of Sri Krsna. It is therefore a mundane wishful desire of the less intelligent, easygoing pseudodevotees, and as such it cannot reach the transcendental stage of the cowherd girls of Vraja.

We have already discussed in detail that the forms of Srimati Radharani and Her various female associates called the sakhis are composed of divine substance and their activities are therefore meant for the service of Sri Krsna. Their activities are never to be compared with the superficial activities in the material world. Sri Krsna is the all-attractive Personality of Godhead known as the enchanter of the universe, and Srimati Radharani is known as the enchanter of the enchanter of the universe. The imitative endeavors of a mundaner

to become a sakhi is strictly forbidden by Srila Jiva Goswami in his commentary on the Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu. The real devotee may thus be warned not to imitate the dress of a sakhi as a means of bhajana or worship. Such activity is offensive and strictly forbidden. The transcendental feelings of the cowherd girls mentioned in the Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.31.19) are as follows:

*yat te sujata-caranamburuham stanesu  
bhitah sanaih priya dadhimahi karkasesu  
tenatavim atasi tad vyathate na kim svit  
kurpadibhir bhramati dhir bhavad-ayusam nah*

"O my dear, Your lotus feet, which are very soft and are placed on our hard breasts, are now treading over the forest of Vrndavana and thereby receiving pain on account of stepping on the fine particles of stone. This fact is giving us anxiety because You are our very life."

This example is the standard sentiment of the cowherd girls of Vraja and demonstrates that their very life is meant for the service of Sri Krsna without any tinge of an idea for sense gratification.

There are 64 different items of regulative devotional service. The devotee gradually develops the right to enter into the transcendental service of Godhead by implicit faith in the observance of the regulative principles. The intense eagerness to serve like the eternal associates of Sri Krsna, such as the cowherd girls, gives the devotee the right to serve Sri Krsna in that way. For this ardent service of Godhead, one is required to give up the practice of the mundane regulative principles of varnasrama-dharma.

## Raganuga

In the transcendental abode of Vraja, the eternal residence of Sri Krsna, the inhabitants serve Sri Krsna in different mellows of loving service. Raktaka Parsada serves in the mellow of dasya-prema. Madhumangala Sakha, Sridama, and Sudama serve in the mood of sakhya-prema, while Nanda and Yasoda serve Sri Krsna in the mellow of vatsalya-prema. Any devotee who is attracted by any of the transcendental moods of service will obtain their desired goal at the time of perfection.

A vivid example of this is the srutis (the personified Upanisads). The srutis were convinced that the transcendental loving service of Sri Krsna is not obtainable without following in the footsteps of the cowherd girls in Vraja. At that time, they adopted the spon-

taneous service of raganuga in pursuance of the footsteps of the gopis with the aim of achieving prema for the son of the King of Vraja.

The srutis, who obtained the transcendental service of Godhead by following in the footsteps of the gopis, are described in the Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.87.23):

*nibhrta-marun-mano 'ksa-drdha-yoga-yujo hrdis yan  
munaya upasate tad arayo 'pi yayuh smaranat  
striya uragendra-bhoga-bhuja-danda-visakta-dhiyo  
vayam api te samah samadrso 'nghri-saroja-sudhah*

"The enemies of the Personality of Godhead, who remembered Him constantly with an inimical feeling, entered into the impersonal Brahman effulgence, which is also obtained by the empiric philosophers and mystics by the process of controlling the mind and the senses strictly by yoga practice and meditating upon the impersonal Brahman. But the cowherd girls, the damsels of Vraja, were hypnotized by the poisonous beauty of the snakelike arms of Sri Krsna, and thus they obtained the nectar of His lotus feet. We have also followed the path of the cowherd girls and are thus drinking the nectarean juice of the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead."

The purport of this verse is that the srutis followed the path of the gopis and when they reached perfection they obtained bodies like those of the cowherd girls. After obtaining such transcendental bodies, they were able to enjoy the company of Sri Krsna in spiritual bliss.

## CONCLUSION Note from Editors:

As noted in the series Introduction, this book was published by Swami B.G. Narasingha, who found Srila Prabhupada's handwritten manuscript in the bottom of a trunk in the Radha-Damodara temple, just prior to Srila Prabhupada's departure.

Swami B.G. Narasingha explains in his introduction to the book:

"...the original manuscript of more than two hundred pages was entitled Lord Caitanya: His Sannyasa and Sankirtana Movement. Unfortunately, 40 pages were missing from the middle section. For several years, we searched for those missing pages but were unable to find them. The manuscript was therefore divided into two parts. The first part describes Lord Caitanya's traveling from Navadvipa-dhama to Jagannatha Puri immediately after His accepting the sannyasa order, the Lord's visiting the temple of Ksiracora Gopinatha, the pastime of the Gopinatha Deity stealing the offering of condensed milk to satisfy His pure devotee Sripad Madhavendra Puri, and the pastime of the Saksi Gopala Deity appearing as a witness to defeat the atheists. The second part of the manuscript describes the talks between Lord Caitanya and Ramananda Raya when the two met on the banks of the river Godavari in South India.

In the second part of the manuscript, Srila Prabhupada preaches very enthusiastically—discussing the varnasrama system, chastising the materialists, condemning the impersonalist conception, exposing the imitationists, praising the virtues and characteristics of pure devotion, and entering into confidential descriptions of the nature of rasa-tattva, the transcendental mellowness of spontaneous love of Godhead.

Because the talks between Lord Caitanya and Ramananda Raya had already been published by His Divine Grace in *The Teachings of Lord Caitanya* and his *Caitanya-caritamrta* purports, we hesitated to publish the manuscript, thinking that Srila Prabhupada had already published what he wanted to say on the subject. However, by the grace of Srila Prabhupada, I was inspired to read the manuscript again and again until finally I realized that my beloved gurudeva had expanded on some very confidential points in his original manuscript, which he did not fully reveal in either *The Teachings of Lord Caitanya* or the *Caitanya-caritamrta* purports.

Swami B.G. Narasingha goes on to describe the manner in which the manuscript was prepared for publication:

"As far as possible, we have tried to present the words of His Divine Grace in such a way as to preserve the original, charming mood of the author, but the readers must take into account that at the time of writing his manuscript Srila Prabhupada had very little formal training in English or extensive contact with English-speaking people. Actually, His Divine Grace has simply allowed the editors of this book to render some menial service to

his lotus feet out of his unlimited mercy, so we earnestly request that the readers try to grasp the spirit of this book and kindly forgive any defects there may be in our attempt to present it."