

### Krishna consciousness: Hindu Cult or Divine Culture?

This question is increasingly being asked not only by devotees but also by spiritual seekers of all shades and colours and even by so called ordinary people. The media has also shown some interest recently. This important question needs to be answered especially in the light of the new consciousness and spiritual awakening that is dawning throughout the world.

Below are some quotes on the topic by Srila Prabhupada, the Founder Acharya of the International Society for Krishna consciousness (ISKCON, or the Hare Krishna movement). The quotes have kindly been compiled by Mahavidya Das (ACBSP):

“There is a misconception that the Krishna consciousness movement represents the Hindu religion ... Sometimes Indians both inside and outside of India think that we are preaching the Hindu religion, but actually we are not ... One will not find the word Hindu in the Bhagavad-gita. Indeed, there is no such word as Hindu in the entire Vedic literature ... people should not think we are preaching a sectarian religion ... The Krishna consciousness movement has nothing to do with the Hindu religion or any system of religion ... One should clearly understand that the Krishna consciousness movement is not preaching the so-called Hindu religion.” ...

“Of course, there are many Indians who may be delighted to have a Hindu temple there, but we are especially interested in something else. Our plan is not to sponsor the Hindus or any other group. Our real purpose is to spread Krishna consciousness.” (*Siksamrita Volume 2: Preaching to the Indian Community, SPL to Yamuna, May 27, 1969*

)

“I am not very interested to establish a Hindu temple, perhaps you know from the very beginning I never described my movement as Hindu religion.” (*Siksamrita Volume 2: Preaching*

*to the Indian Community, SPL to Mukunda, June 10, 1969*

)

“We should not anymore think in terms of Hindu society. If we limit ourselves to Hindus, then there will be many competitors like Christians, Mohammedans, Buddhists and so on. But if we preach the philosophy of Krishna consciousness in right earnest, it will be accepted throughout the whole world.” (*Siksamrita Volume 2: Preaching to the Indian Community, SPL to Sriman Bankaji March 13, 1970* )

“We must avoid the risk of a separatist movement, unity is our purpose; just like in London where the Indians are starting their own Radha-Krishna temple. We want to avoid skin disease and the Indian people are like the tannery expert.” (*Siksamrita Volume 2: Preaching to the Indian Community, SPL to Sriman Hariprasad Badruka, March 05, 1973*

)