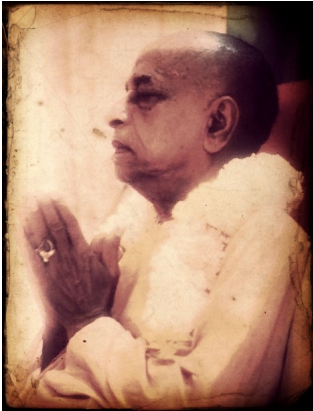


It Is For the Greatest Scholar, It Is For the Innocent Boy... Part Two

By HDG A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada, Back To Godhead Vol. 01, No. 44, Nov 1st, 1971.



Q: Your Grace, how does one attain Krsna consciousness?

Srila Prabhupada: There are several stages in attainment of Krsna consciousness. The first stage is faith, or inquisitiveness just as you have come to me now, this is the first stage. Due to some inquisitiveness or some faith in the people who are teaching Krsna consciousness, who have said that it is very helpful, one comes to the first stage. One should be inquisitive and have a little faith, or a little respect for Krsna consciousness: "It is very nice. They are speaking and working." This is the first stage.

If you find that Krsna consciousness is interesting, then the second stage is to associate with us, to understand more. We have class in the morning daily, but for the public, we are holding classes in the evening from 7 to 9 p.m. at our temple, discussing this book, holding kirtana, distributing prasadam. There is no labor you simply come and hear songs, dance, take offered food, hear philosophy and think, and then you go home. We don't ask anyone to press his nose, to hold his head down or to exercise in a certain way. It is better that people automatically want to dance with us. Although dancing is labor, they like it. So, the next stage is to associate with us, to understand more and more. This is the second stage The first stage is to have faith and respect, and the second stage is association.

If by association, one becomes serious about becoming a regular student, that is the third stage. That is called initiation. In that stage students are guided by me; they follow strictly. For the initiated students there are four principles: we don't allow students to take any foodstuffs which are not offered to the Deity. So we offer foodstuffs to the Deity: grains, fruits, flowers and milk products, but no meat, no eggs, or anything of that sort. Perhaps you have participated in our love feast on Sundays. Yes?

Comment From Audience: It was excellent!

Srila Prabhupada: [Laughing] They like it! There are many hundreds of preparations, at least 300, including many varieties of grains, milk products and fruits. We don't kill animals, but we make very nice preparations, and everyone likes them. It is one of the restrictions that we cannot eat anything which is not offered to Krsna. Another restriction is no intoxication: no smoking, no drinking even no tea or coffee. These American boys are accustomed to all these habits by nature, but they are giving them up. In our temple there is no tea drinking, no coffee, no cigarette smoking, nothing of the sort. This is a restriction. And another restriction is that we cannot take part in gambling or some unnecessary sport because we have to utilize our time. Our time is very short. Do not think that because I am old, I am nearing death, and you are not nearing death because you are young who knows? You may die before me. There is no certainty, and so the principle is that, because this human form of life is so important for perfecting one's self in Krsna consciousness, one should not waste even a minute. Therefore, we don't allow unnecessary sporting, which is simply a waste of time. The rules are: no illicit sex life, no meat eating, no intoxication and no gambling.

Every student has to follow these four principles, otherwise I don't initiate him. I don't take cheap students, who want to do whatever they like and pay me some money for some mantra that will make them "become God." I don't say that. I don't bluff like that. I have not come to your country for money, but I have come to your country to give you something sublime not to take from you, not to exploit you, but to give you something sublime. So initiation is the third stage. If you are situated in the third stage nicely, if you follow the regulative principles under my direction, then the fourth stage automatically comes. After this third stage, the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth stages automatically come, by gradual development. So, in the third stage, if you follow the regulative principles and chant according to the prescribed number, then all your misapprehensions will leave automatically.

What are these misapprehensions? The first misapprehension is to think, "I am this body." Everyone is under the concept of the body. But I am not the body; that is a fact. The body is changing. There are many examples. A very common example is this: Suppose a man is dead; now everyone is crying, and if we ask, "Why are you crying?" they will say, "Oh, my son is

dead!" I can say, "Your son is lying here; why are you saying that he is dead?" "Oh no, he is dead; he is gone. His body is lying there!" Therefore he is different from the body. Immediately people understand. They say, "No, he is gone, his body is left lying there." So you understand how, at the time of death, the man is different from the body! But during his lifetime he was taking care of his body only. Why didn't he take care of himself? Because he did not know himself. You see? This is a misapprehension. In this way there are so many misapprehensions. We are situated on a platform of misgivings only, misunderstanding our present conditional life. For example, since I am different from this body, how can I claim that America is my country? I call myself an American because accidentally this body was born in the land of America, but, if I am not this body, how am I American? This is another misapprehension. Then, I call you my son, you call him your son, but who is he? He is a product of your body. So if you are not your body, how is he your son? In this way, you go on, and as soon as you understand that you are not your body, you will find that you belong to none of this material world. You are free.

This is called Brahman realization, spiritual realization. When you understand that you are not the body, you do not belong to this country, or to a certain family or society. Some philosophers try to make these things void by a negating process, but actually their existence is real; I exist. I am existing in misunderstanding, but that does not mean that I do not exist. I am not void. I exist within this apartment with myself. But simply to understand that I am not this apartment is not perfect knowledge. What is my position? What am I actually? At the present moment I am conscious of this body, of this country, of this society, of this family, but when I perfectly understand that I am not any of these, then my consciousness also changes because at the present moment my consciousness is absorbed in all these things. As soon as I understand that I am not any of these, then my consciousness must change, but it does not stop. If I am in misunderstanding and I come to the right understanding, that does not mean that my understanding has stopped. Rather, my understanding becomes purified. That means that if I am not one thing, then I am something else. And that "something else" is what you have forgotten. What is it? That "something else" is Krsna Krsna consciousness.

So, when you are freed from this illusory consciousness, if you are situated in Krsna consciousness, then you lose attachment to the body, the society, the country and so many things in relationship with the body. When you come to the right point, then you understand that you are Krsna's. Then your attachment is for Krsna and it increases because you transfer the previous attachment to Him, just as a child who is attached to playing later transfers his

attachment to studying. That does not mean that he gives up the attachment for playing. That attachment is not lost. Attachment must be there, but it is transferred or purified.

Krsna consciousness means purified consciousness, real consciousness. And the next stage, after one is freed from misgivings, is attachment for the real identity, then greater attachment, and then ecstasy. That is when I come nearer to God, because I am God's. In the beginning I told you that we had forgotten our relationship with God, but when you are released from misgivings, you come to the platform of increasing attachment for God. The love is here also; but instead of loving God, we are now loving dog. Love is there, but when you are free from misgivings, you transfer your love from dog to God. These are different stages to come to in attaining Krsna consciousness. So, if you follow conscientiously in these six stages of development, you come to Krsna consciousness.

Q: Your Grace, does Krsna consciousness bring in karmic action as part of your belief?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, Krsna conscious activities apparently seem to produce karma. We must understand what the difference is between karma and bhakti. We are using this tape recorder and this microphone, and if you go to a politician you will find the same paraphernalia. I am speaking, and he is also speaking. So apparently we are both the same. But this is bhakti, and that is karma. Then what is the difference between bhakti and karma? In karma, when you do something, for whatever you do, there is a result, and you receive the result. Suppose you do some business. The result may be one million dollars profit, and so you take it. And the result may be one million dollars loss; you take it. This is karma. You act on your own account, and you take the result. But our activity is for Krsna, so when we act, if there is profit, it is Krsna's, and if there is loss, it is also Krsna's. We are unaffected.

We are preaching this Krsna consciousness, and so, if someone joins, he is Krsna's; he is not mine. These boys are serving me, not for my sense gratification, but to develop Krsna consciousness. Similarly, we go to serve a master; we serve the master for the sense gratification of the particular person, and therefore he pays us. So we do not serve that master; we serve that payment. And what is that payment? Sense gratification. Therefore, he serves his sense gratification. Karma is serving one's sense gratification, and bhakti is serving Krsna's sense gratification. Krsna will be satisfied by bhakti. We work in that way, so it is not karma. And as soon as a worker says, "Oh, I will get this money and satisfy my senses," that produces karma. He becomes subject to the result, be it good or bad; but when you work for Krsna, it is all good, and there is no question of bad. All good goes to the All-Good. I am simply His eternal servant, that's all.

Another example is that the finger takes up foodstuff and gives to the stomach; when the stomach is satisfied, the finger is satisfied automatically. It does not need food separately. But the karmis are trying to independently enjoy themselves, just as if the finger were to take a nice cake and think, "Why should I give it to the stomach?" The finger cannot eat, and the cake simply becomes stale; that's all. So we are spoiling our energy without Krsna consciousness, and that's why we are being subjected to the laws of transmigration from one species of life to another. We are simply spoiling our time and energy. If you take to Krsna consciousness, that is proper utilization of your energy given by God. When I am healthy, the finger is also healthy. What, then, is the duty of the healthy finger? To serve the body. Similarly, we received this energy from Krsna, from God, so if we utilize this energy for Krsna, that is proper utilization. If we utilize the energy for our sense gratification, then we are misusing it.

Anyone who is not in Krsna consciousness is spoiling his time, wasting his life and subjecting himself to so many laws of nature. These matters are very clearly explained in this Bhagavad-gita As It Is. This is the preliminary study of Krsna consciousness, and if one studies this book seriously, he goes on to other books. I have the Srimad-Bhagavatam, which is also Krsna conscious philosophy. But the Srimad-Bhagavatam project is very great. It will have to be finished in sixty volumes. About ten to twelve volumes are already finished, and I am working on

this. It is a great subject matter for study. People should take interest in it, it is not anything trifling. People should come to us to understand. We have literature, we have philosophy everything. This Krsna consciousness movement is not a blind, imposing dogma. Everyone who actually wants to give some service to society, to humanity, must study this philosophy. And we are prepared to meet anyone scientists, philosophers, poets, thoughtful men and give the answers to all their questions.

Our method is very simple: We call everyone, even the child, to sit down and chant Hare Krsna. And there will be gradually realization. And if anyone wants to understand this philosophy through knowledge, through books, through philosophy and logic, we are also prepared. But for the mass of people we give the simple method, Hare Krsna. Chant Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare. All these boys are not philosophers, nor are they very highly learned, but they are developing knowledge simply by chanting. Krsna consciousness is so sublime. It is for the greatest scholar, and it is for the innocent boy; therefore it is universal.

