

## **The Acharya - Part 1**

Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.

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People in general always require a leader who can teach the public by practical behavior. A leader cannot teach the public to stop smoking if he himself smokes.

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Lord Caitanya said that a teacher should behave properly before he begins teaching. One who teaches in that way is called acharya, or the ideal teacher.

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Therefore, a teacher must follow the principles of sastra (scripture) to teach the common man. The teacher cannot manufacture rules against the principles of revealed scriptures.

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The revealed scriptures, like Manu-samhita and similar others, are considered the standard books to be followed by human society. Thus the leader's teaching should be based on the principles of such standard sastras.

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One who desires to improve himself must follow the standard rules as they are practiced by the great teachers. The Srimad-Bhagavatam also affirms that one should follow in the footsteps of great devotees, and that is the way of progress on the path of spiritual realization.

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The king or the executive head of a state, the father and the school teacher are all considered to be natural leaders of the innocent people in general. All such natural leaders have a great responsibility to their dependents; therefore they must be conversant with standard books of moral and spiritual codes. (BG 3.21)

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