

SRILA GOUR GOVINDA SWAMI MAHARAJA ON:

## Iskcon and Non-Iskcon

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(A disciple of Srila Gour Govinda Swami)

[ This is a reply to an article published in VNN, August 20, by Rasikananda das Adhikari, called “They should not leave Iskcon”.]

My dear brothers & sisters of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s mission,  
Please accept my humble obeisances. All Glories to Sri Guru and Gauranga!

In the letter quoted by Rasikananda prabhu, wherein Srila Gour Govinda Swami is speaking about “those so-called sannyasis and leaders who have joined the other camp and are criticizing Iskcon, and Srila Prabhupada,” he is specifically referring to those who are actually criticizing. However, we have never heard Srila Narayana Maharaja criticize anyone. Rather, he glorifies Srila Prabhupada, and tells how Srila Prabhupada is his siksa guru. One book was recently released, entitled “My Siksa Guru and Priya Bandhu” ( “My most Dear Friend and Siksa Guru”). This book is all about Srila Prabhupada’s glories and Srila Narayana Maharaja’s personal service to him.)

All over the world, wherever Srila Narayana Maharaja gives classes, he reads from Srila Prabhupada’s books like “Sri Caitanya Caritamrta,” “Srimad Bhagavatam,” “Nectar of Instruction”, etc. It is clearly seen that Srila Narayana Maharaja does not fit into the category of those criticizing Srila Prabhupada or any other Vaisnavas. According to the letter, Srila Gour Govinda Swami is saying how some persons were criticizing Srila Prabhupada, accusing that he only gave “a.b.c.” On the other hand, we have heard Srila Narayana Maharaja preaching boldly that everything is in Prabhupada’s books, even more than we ourselves thought. He has come to uphold the dignity of Prabhupada’s international preaching movement.

Both my diksa and siksa Gurus, Srila Gour Govinda Maharaja and Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Goswami Maharaja, have always preached that one must seek out bona fide Vaisnavas and hear Hari-katha from them – because the scriptures are under lock and key, and the key is with the high class of vaisnavas.

In his purport to Bhagavad-gita 6.8, Srila Prabhupada writes: “Book knowledge without realization of the Supreme Truth is useless.”

atah sri-krsna-namadi  
na bhaved grahyam indriyaih  
sevonmukhe hi jihvadau  
svayam eva sphuraty adah.

“No one can understand the transcendental nature of the name, form, quality and pastimes of Sri Krsna through his materially contaminated senses. Only when one becomes spiritually saturated by transcendental service to the Lord are the transcendental name, form, quality and pastimes of the Lord revealed to him” (Bhakti-rasamrta-sindu) This Bhagavad-gita is the science of Krsna consciousness. No one can become Krsna conscious simply by mundane scholarship. **One must be fortunate enough to associate with a person who is in pure consciousness.**”

In all scriptures it has been told that the first process of devotional service is hearing, and for this one should have Sadhu-sanga. The disciples of Srila Narayana Maharaja are hearing Hari-katha. We are in line with Hari, Guru and Vaisnavas, coming in the line of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Prabhupada, and Srila Bhakti Prajñana Kesava Goswami Maharaja, who is the diksa and sannyasa Guru of Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja, and the sannyasa Guru of Srila A.C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. So we are in the line; we have not left Iskcon. Lord Brahma is Iskcon, as is Sri Jiva Goswami and Sri Bhaktivinoda Thakura. All Gaudiya

Vaisnavas are also Iskcon. Rasikananda prabhu, are you in Iskcon? Srila Gour Govinda Swami sometimes would point at us and ask “Are you in Iskcon?” Then he would answer himself, “Only hypocrites, only posing. Who has become a member of Iskcon society?” And then he would point out that Iskcon means one who is 24 hours engaged in the loving service of Radha and Krsna. He would quote the verse: ”Anyabhilasita Sunyam Jnaan Karm anavaritam, Anukulyena Krsnanushilanam Bhaktir Uttama.”

The above statement would make Srila Narayana Maharaja ‘Iskcon as it is’, because he is engaged in the service of Sri Sri Radha Krsna twenty four hours a day. In America last year someone also accused Srila Narayana Maharaja of not being in Iskcon. Srila Narayana Maharaja asked, “What do I have to do to be a member of Iskcon?”

That person replied, “No intoxication, no meat eating, no illicit sex, and no gambling.” Srila Narayana Maharaja replied, “In this or any birth, I have not done these things. I don’t know what all these things are. Any other requirement?”

That person replied, “One has to chant 16 rounds of the Hare Krsna maha-mantra every day. Srila Narayana Maharaja chants at least 64 rounds every day, and before he started his world preaching he was chanting 2 laks (128 rounds). So he said, “Yes I am chanting. Can I now be a member of Iskcon or do I have to take initiation from you or any Iskcon Guru? Or, is my Guru, Srila Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja a bonafide Guru, and now can I be a member of Iskcon?” That person became speechless.

Rasikanada prabhu, who are you taking siksa from? You must be going somewhere to hear criticism; but Srila Narayana Maharaja is always glorifying Vaisnavas, especially Srila Prabhudada, Srila Gour Govinda Svami, and Srila Puri Maharaja. Why, then, aren’t you coming to hear from him to make your life successful? It is not your godbrothers who are disobeying their Guru, because he has taught us to hear from sadhus? It is you who is disobeying your Gurudeva.

Srila Gour Govinda Swami was quoted as having said in this letter to Gudakesa prabhu: **“It is a fact that if an elevated Vaisnava is there, then one should go and take his association. There is no harm in that.”** He also wrote about ‘the organization of discipline.’ During the time of Srila Gour Govinda Swami, it was not necessary to go ‘outside’ of the Iskcon institution to take siksa, since he himself was a highly qualified rupanuga vaisnava acarya. At that time, therefore, the leaders and sannyasis could have come to take instruction from Him. Now that Srila Gour Govinda Swami has left, however, who does Rasikananda prabhu suggest we take instruction from? In the past I have personally heard Rasikananda prabhu criticize most of the leaders of Iskcon. So what has made him change his mind now? These few letters? Actually, Srila Gour Govinda Swami has told many times that letters are not necessarily siddhanta. In the jiva issue, for example, certain devotees were using Srila Prabhupada’s letters as evidence, and Srila Gour Govinda Swami boldly said that one cannot always quote from letters. Letters are written according to time, place and circumstance, and according to the qualification of the disciple to whom the letter was written. Gurumaharaja asked us, “Can you show me from Bhagavatam where it is stated that jivas fall down from Goloka Vrindavan? “Similarly, can you quote any siddhanta saying “don’t go for Sadhu-sanga?”

Another interesting thing about the jiva Issue: In 1995, in Sridham Mayapur, when the GBC voted on the origin of the jiva, out of a twenty-three-man committee of big leaders, 18 voted by raising their hands, that “we fall,” and five voted that “we didn’t fall.” When my Gurumaharaj went to speak siddhanta, they told him there was no need, since they had already voted on it. After the meeting, in his room, he was very unhappy with their behavior. He told us “What is this? Now they are voting on siddhanta. They are simply husking the husk. Wherefrom does jiva come? I am quoting Sri Jiva Goswami, Sri Viswanatha Chakravarty Thakura and Sri Bhaktivinoda Thakura. These are not my words. But you see the situation now. They are voting on siddhanta.” Previously he had told about a dog who was walking down the street. Ten people voted that the dog was a goat. Does that mean the dog has become a goat simply because ten people have voted? Similarly, whatever we say must be confirmed by Sadhu, Guru and Sastra. Vaisnavas are not interested in the opinion of many conditioned souls. They are only interested in the one Absolute Truth.

“We are the residents of this martya-bhumi, this earth planet, where there is birth and death. The only blessing and boon required here is bhagavat-sangi-sangasya. The association of bhagavat-sangi, the dear devotees of the Lord, is the only thing required in our life. That will give us all perfection -- supreme perfection. So on this day I request

you all to please shower your blessings unto me that I will get such association of sadhus always, throughout my life, and life after life. This is my only prayer unto you. Thank you very much.”

“When the acarya leaves, a dark period comes. But we should just cry and cry, waiting for the rising of the effulgent sun.” The above three quotes are from Sadhu Sanga, The Birthplace of Bhakti”, (from Gurudeva’s Vyasa Puja address).

To 100’s of 1000’s of devotees around the world, and especially in India, based on reference to guru, sadhu and sastra, such an effulgent sun is Srila Narayana Maharaja.

I heard a tape recording of Srila Gour Govinda Swami speaking in 1993 to one devotee. “Why have you left your guru’s institution?

Devotee: “After Srila Bhaktirakshaka Sridhara Maharaja, I could not find anyone like him. And I was looking for a mahabhagavat. Therefore I am coming here.”

Srila Gour Govinda Swami: “Then definitely you have done the right thing. In that case, when it is for sadhu sanga, one can leave.”

It may be noted that Srila Gour Govinda Swami also had a siksa guru in the Gaudiya Matha, whose name was Bhakti Charan das Babaji Maharaja, from the Kendrapura Gaudiya Matha. Gurudeva would visit him sometimes, and sometimes his siksa guru would visit him. Beside this, he had another close friend from the Gaudiya Matha named Sriniketan Maharaja, who would sometimes come and stay in our Iskcon temple. “Does that mean my Guru also left Iskcon (according to Rasikananda.)?” Dear readers please try and understand that leaving Iskcon means giving up Krsna and chanting and instead engaging in sinful activities. It does not mean receiving sadhu sanga from the line of the 6 Gosvamis and Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura and Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura.

In 1995 I was one of the devotees present in a Singapore hotel room, when Ananta Das prabhu asked a question to Srila Gour Govinda Swami: “Gurudeva, so many devotees are asking what is the opinion of Srila Gour Govinda Swami about devotees going to see Srila Narayana Maharaja.”

Srila Gour Govinda Swami replied: “Are you asking this question from a vaisnava point of view or an Iskcon point of view? You make all the distinctions -- Iskcon and non-Iskcon. And you make all the problems. “

In 1994, in Bhubaneswar, 11.15pm, there were only three disciples present with Srila Gour Govinda Maharaja: Ragava Pandit das, Rasikananda das and myself. They asked him, “Gurudeva, you are always saying that one should be mad for sadhu-sanga, like when a person’s hair is on fire, he will only think, “where is water, where is water!” So on one hand you tell us we should take sadhu-sanga, and on the other hand some are saying that one should not go to Srila Narayana Maharaja. Gurudeva, we are confused.”

Srila Gour Govinda Swami replied with a big smile: “Srila Narayana Maharaja is a very elevated Vaisnava.” Then he went into his room.

I had never heard my Gurudeva glorify a living Vaisnava like that. Many times I had heard my Gurudeva speak about the Iskcon GBC’s and sannyasis with terms like “They are not Vaisnavas.” “I cannot speak. They are envious.” He would quote them as saying, “Don’t you know who I am? I’m a GBC sannyasi! I am a temple president.”

It may be noted that Srila Gour Govinda Swami would read all of Srila Narayana Maharaja’s books. He would relish them and would sometimes also even give class on them. In his bookcase today in Bhuvaneshvara, all of Srila Narayana Maharaja’s books are present. In Mathura, in Srila Narayana Maharaja’s temple, all the books of Srila Gour Govinda Swami are there. Srila Narayan Maharaja has also read all the books of Srila Gour Govinda Swami.

In 1995, in an address lecture was delivered in the Bhuvaneshvara Temple after a Mayapura G.B.C meeting. The following is a transcription from the cassette recording:

“I was not willing to become a member of the GBC body. Some old members resigned. Someone gave my name. I was thinking I would be rejected. That would be good fortune for me. But it was bad fortune. I was selected. Very bad fortune for me. Yes. What to do?

“So danger is there to speak the truth, such unpalatable truth. Danger is there on my head. Like a sword is hanging there on my head because I am speaking unpalatable Truth. Yes! I have already sensed, I have heard, Gour Govinda will speak against the GBC. Yes. I Have already heard it. Because I am speaking the unpalatable truth such danger I am facing, like a sword is hanging. At any moment it will be thrust onto my head! Yes, that’s a fact.

“Such is the situation. Therefore I feel suffocated there. Very, very suffocated. I cannot feel happy in Sridhama Mayapura. Mahaprabhu is Prema-purusottama, He who gives Krsna-prema, Patita-pavana, Gaura Hari who delivers the most fallen souls and embraces them, and says: ‘Come to my fold.’ But in that dhama I feel such thing!

“I say that we must hear from a bona fide source who is free from the four defects, free from anarthas, and completely cent percent Krsna concious, a pure vaisnava devotee, who is not envious at all.

“Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura says, ‘Don’t fight. Stay always in friendship and brotherhood. There may be some differences, different countries, different places, something different in time, place and circumstances. There may be some differences, but don’t fight on the issue. Accept what the Mahajanas have said and remain as brothers. Remain as friends and engage yourself in Hari-bhajan. Thereby you’ll get the blessings, the mercy of the Mahajanas. Your life will be successful and you’ll make advancement in Krsna Conciousness. Otherwise bhakti will be lost to you.’ That is a fact.” How wonderful it would be if Iskcon could act like a real brother and invite their big brother, Srila Narayana Maharaja, to their temples.

My Gurudeva was not so much liked in Iskcon because of his bold preaching. Many Iskcon temples in the world banned him from coming to their temples. After the 1994 GBC meeting in Mayapur, Gurudeva held my hand and like a small child told me, “Jagadisa, they want to kick me out of Iskcon. What should I do?” I replied, “Gurudeva, without you there is no Iskcon.” I was so heartbroken. I had met a dear devotee of the Lord who only had Krsna in his heart, and they wanted to throw him out. I thought to myself, “These are devotees, and if they act like this it is very disappointing . The same society members that were against my Gurudeva are now against Srila Narayana Maharaja. How sad.

I was told by Jayantakrita prabhu that he asked Gurudeva, “At what point does it become difficult for you?”

Srila Gurudeva said, “When they change the philosophy it becomes intolerable. On Gaura-tattva they are wrong, on guru-tattva they are wrong, on nama-tattva they are wrong, on Krsna-tattva they are wrong, on jiva-tattva they are wrong. It is intolerable on our part.” At that time Gurudeva was also thinking of leaving Iskcon because they were checking his preaching.

In 1995 the GBC gave him so much trouble on the jiva issue. At that time I was in his room when he said, “After 1996 Kali will have no more strength in Mahaprabhu’s movement. Those who stay in Mahaprabhu’s movement will get prema. But don’t think on the last day of 1995 on the first day of 1996 everyone will get prema. It will take time. Sriman Mahaprabhu started His movement doing Sankirtana behind closed doors, and after 24 years He took sannyasa. In the same way it will take time. Be patient. The same thing that happened with the Gaudiya Matha will happen with Iskcon. They will split and they will pick sides. The kali-chelas (disciples of Kali) will be exposed and many will leave .”

Another time he told us that, “After 1996 the Acarya will be firmly established in the world.” We have no doubt that Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja is that acarya about whom Gurudeva was speaking. Everywhere he goes, hundreds of disciples from Srila Sridhara Maharaja, from Srila Gour Govinda Swami, from Srila Prabhupada, from Iskcon--from the whole world--are coming to his lotus feet and relishing listening to Hari-katha from his lotus-lips.

In Adelaide, 1995, I told Gurudeva that some of Srila Prabhupada’s disciples say that they have Prabhupada and they don’t need to go anywhere else. Srila Gurudeva replied, laughing, “Will they go to the Prabhupada murti, and will the Prabhupada murti catch hold of their ears, slap them and say, ‘Oh, you rascal!’ How will he chastise you? How will he instruct you and how will he give you his merciful glance? Therefore I say ‘disciple means under discipline.’ Eternally he is under guru. One who keeps himself away from guru, who does not voluntarily come forward to receive the chastisement of guru is not a disciple at all.”

Sri Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura Prabhupada has said that when the guru leaves, if the disciple does not again seek out a guru of the same calibre as his guru, he will very quickly lose everything that his gurudeva gave him. In "Ragavartma Candrika" Srila Visvanatha Cakravarty Thakura states that after the disappearance of one's self-realised guru, if the disciple is not yet self-realised, he must take shelter of a living siksa-guru who can teach him what his diksa would have taught him as he became more and more advanced in bhakti.

"If one does not regularly engage in such hari-katha in the association of saintly persons, his sraddha will gradually dwindle and then vanish altogether (Siksastaka, Sanmodana Bhasyam, by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura)."

Sacinandana prabhu, Gurudeva's first disciple, told me that in January, 1996, Gurudeva said that he was very disturbed and related to Sacinandana Prabhu and some other disciples the following: "Prior to his departure, Sri Srimad Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura said that the material world is a nasty place, and not a fit place for any gentleman to live in. I am also thinking of leaving. I will ask my Gopal, and whatever He tells me to do, I will do." Then I myself was there on the next day, when Gurudeva gave a class at Gaddi Giri and told the story about a flock of sheep and band of monkeys. The old monkey was advising the young monkeys that bad days were ahead, and they should leave their places. The old monkey means Sri Gurudeva.... And what was the danger? Leaders of the institution were deviating from the philosophy. For many years Gurudeva was trying to preach to them, but they would not listen to him. Although he sometimes told us, "Don't leave Iskcon", towards his final days, he expressed his own desire to leave, just as the old monkey did. Suppose a master has a servant, and asks the servant to bring sugar. Then he says, "No, wait. Bring honey instead." Here the first order is cancelled, and the last order holds. First he advised not to leave Iskcon, but later he himself expressed the desire to leave. And finally he was so disturbed that he left the institution--and this world.

Srila Saraswati Thakura tells a story: a man once established a sweet-well, and his son would drink from that well every day. After some time that man died. The son continued drinking from that well, but after awhile that water became contaminated. His friends warned him, "Don't drink from this well. It is contaminated." However, even though sweet Ganges water was nearby, he continued to drink that well water, and finally he contracted cholera and died. The moral is that the once-pure institution established by the worshipable superior does not mean that it will remain pure forever. One should exercise one's common sense. When Srila Prabhupada wrote in "Sri Caitanya Caritamrta" that Iskcon is an eternal branch of Lord Caitanya's tree, he clearly meant: Iskcon is the mood, the siddhanta, and the pure devotees; not the buildings, GBC management etc. If there is a qualified Vaisnava speaking sweet Hari-katha, one should run to that place.

A similar situation arose when Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Prabhupada left this world. At that time, 'Abhaya Caranaravinda Prabhu' left the institution and, along with Srila Bhakti Prajnan Kesava Gosvami Maharaja and one other godbrother assisted in forming a new society: the Gaudiya Vedanta Samiti. Srila Bhakti Prajnan Kesava Maharaja later became Prabhupada's sannyasa guru and gave him his sannyasa name, Sri Bhaktivedanta Swami. He also inspired Prabhupada to preach in the West, where he founded a sister society called Iskcon. Twenty-five years later, Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja, who had been a very intimate friend and siksa-disciple of Prabhupada since early 1947, helped in every way, by sending the first books, deities, mrdangas, etc., to the new-born Iskcon. It was Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja who fought the court case in the 80's, when Prabhupada's son took Iskcon to court. The son said that Prabhupada was not really a sannyasi, so all his properties belonged to his family and son. Despite the fact that he was having heart problems at that time Srila Narayana Maharaja spent many days, from early morning till night, in the court room. Srila Narayana Maharaja, who had himself performed Prabhupada's sannyasa ceremony, proved the authenticity of his sannyas ashram, and won the case on behalf of Iskcon. It was Srila Narayana Maharaja who conducted the fire yajna for Prabhupada's Sannyasa ceremony. He made his danda, presented his sannyasa cloth to him and marked his body with tilaka in twelve places. It was also Srila Maharaja who put the transcendental body of Srila Prabhupada in *samadhi* in Sri Vrindavana Dhama in 1977.

Feb 1996 The GBC members were about to present a letter to Gurudeva to 'throw Him out' of Iskcon. Gurudeva knew about the before they could present it to him. He chose to leave this world, and also leave Iskcon. In His last diary entry Srila Gour Govinda Maharaja wrote, "By Gopal's mercy somehow or another I have spent the day in Mayapura. I went to the GBC sub-committee meeting rejecting the primary thing, accepting the secondary thing. For

them, the members of the Iskcon society, it is necessary that they gradually come from secondary to primary. I sat there silently; there was nothing I could do.”

Rasikananda prabhu is also saying that Srila Narayana Maharaja is trying to recruit followers from other spiritual groups. When I asked him about this, Srila Narayana Maharaja replied, “I have not told anyone to leave Iskcon. I have told them to go back, but Iskcon will not have them back. What can I do?” My matha is very small. So many devotees are coming from all over the world. I can only assist them with sadhana and bhakti. We also humbly request Rasikananda dasa to get his story strenght. We did not leave the Iskcon institution; we were kicked out.

One example is myself. I was ordered to leave both North Sydney and Los Angeles temple after they found I was following Srila Gour Govinda Swami-- what to speak of now that I am with Srila Narayana Maharaja. And I have met hundreds of devotees throughout the world who were treated the same as me. Do they think that the founder acarya will be happy by this behavior? In the Iskcon society everyone is allowed--be they Movie stars, prostitutes, Muslims, Buddhists, Mayavadis, meat eaters, drug takers etc. So why is it they ban Vaisnavas from the society? Please help me to solve this great, great mystery. We see in the material world that if a policeman sees another policeman doing the same work he becomes very pleased. If a doctor is saving a life and he sees another doctor saving a life, he becomes very pleased. Why is it you become displeased in your Iskcon society by seeing vaisnavas?

Just after his disappearance, at the time of my Guru Maharaja’s diety installation, we invited Srila Narayana Maharaja to come. He was the guest of honor. His disciple (Subhananda das brahmacari) did the fire yajna. Srila Narayana Maharaja oversaw the entire installation. Why do you say it is an exaggeration to say that Srila Narayana Maharaja installed the murti? Who do you say installed my Gurudeva’s Murti? Besides this, Gurudeva said so many times, that if just one pure devotee is there when prana pratista installation is going on, then it is successful.

Thousands of devotees worldwide follow Srila Narayana Maharaja, and they have therefore not gone outside the Gaudiya Vaisnava Sampradaya coming from Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, nor have they gone outside the association of pure devotees. ‘Taking shelter elsewhere’ means to go to another sampradaya, or to become a Christian, sahajiya, babaji, Muslim or Buddhist; to give up religious principles or to reject those in our line after Srila Jagannatha dasa Babaji Maharaja (as one group does). Does Rasikananda think we belong to these later categories?

Rasikananda is doubting that my Gurudeva met Srila Narayana Maharaja. Sri Naveen Krsna prabhu (he was just recently given sannyasa in Nabadwipa, during Gaura Purnima, and is now known as Sri Bhaktivedanta Madhava Maharaja) narrates the following story [Subal sakha prabhu, (now Sri Vana Maharaja), was also there at the time: “One afternoon in 1995 Srila Gaura Govinda Swami came to the Singhania guest house in Calcutta. Both Satsarupa Maharaja and Srila Narayana Maharaja were staying upstairs in rooms 4 & 2. At that time Satsarupa Maharaja and Madumangala (his servant) were not there. They had moved to the Billa guest house. When Gurudeva went there, Navina Krsna prabhu answered the door and gave him a chair to sit on.

Gurudeva said in Bengali, “I have a big body, I need a big chair.”

Then Navina Krishna prabhu offered him a glass of water.

Gurudeva said, “I have not come to drink water – I have come to drink nectar from Maharaja’s mouth.”

What is Maharaja doing?

Navina Krsna replied: “Gurudeva is taking rest.”

Guru Maharaja replied, “Don’t disturb him.”

But Navina Krsna Prabhu went and woke up Srila Narayana Maharaja. Then, when Srila Narayana Maharaja met Srila Gour Govinda Swami, they embraced each other. Gurudeva said, “I told this boy not to disturb you.”

Srila Narayana Maharaja said, “How can I take rest when a Vaisnava has come?” Gurudeva then told how Iskcon is making so much trouble for him, and how he was in so much pain that he could not preach the way he wanted to”. They say that I am a junior to them. I would also like to bring you to Bhuvaneshvar, but you know the situation in Iskcon. I am fearing they will make problems for me. That’s why I came here when Satsvarupa Maharaja is not here, at two in the afternoon, so that no one would see me. I only came with one servant.”

Srila Narayana Maharaja then said, “My Gurudeva is Sri Acarya Kesari. He was like a lion. I am also like a lion, I don’t fear to invite anyone to my Matha.”

Srila Gour Govinda Swami replied, “Maharaja I would like to discuss with you in detail what is Raganuga Bhakti and what is Rupanuga Bhakti. “ In this way their conversation continued for about one hour. They were engaged in speaking very high siddhanta. Then Srila Gour Govinda Swami said, “ Maharaja, I am so happy to hear from you. In this modern age I have not heard such wonderful examples. I would like to hear more, but it is very difficult. I am also thinking of leaving this world. If I do, Maharaja, please look after my disciples. I will try and come again to see you. Then Srila Gour Govinda Swami left. His servant Virabhadra Brahmachari was waiting down stairs, and they then drove off in a white ambassador.

I interviewed Virabhadra prabhu, who verified the event. Virabhadra never came up to the room of Srila Narayana Maharaja. He had waited down stairs the whole time. But he knew definitely that Gurudeva went to the Singhania Guest House. Rasikananda is saying that this is not written in the diary, but that is because Gurudeva did not want anyone to know he was going there. He wanted to keep it secret. At that time also there were no other devotees with Gurudeva. Srila Narayana Maharaja himself has also personally confirmed to me about this meeting. There is no doubt in my mind at all about this meeting. And, since Rasikananda was not present there, why doesn't he take the word of those who were actually present?

While I was discussing what you are now reading with Srila Narayana Maharaja, he told me a story of a frog inside a well. The frog jumped out one day and saw a big elephant, and then jumped back in the well. He then boasted to his fellow frogs, “I saw the biggest animal.” Then one frog, puffing up his chest asked, “ Was he this big”? That frog said, “No.” Then he puffed his whole body up and again asked, “Was he this big?” Again he said, “No.” The third time he puffed himself so much that his stomach burst. This story ultimately means that devotees should come and hear for themselves.]

Then gurupadpadma Sri Narayan Maharaj told me to invite my godbrothers to come and ask any question about siddhanta. “Any doubts they have, they can come.”

So we are inviting all to come and speak with Srila Narayana Maharaja. We implore our gentle readers to be very careful when it comes to Vaisnava aparadha. Vaisnava aparadha is such that if one commits it knowingly or unknowingly he may lose all his bhakti.

My Gurudeva would say, “You see a guru by hearing. How can you see a guru unless he sees you and he casts his merciful glance on you?”

In C.C. Madhya-lila 6-82 it is written: “Gopinatha Acarya continued: ‘One can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead only by his mercy, not by guesswork or hypothesis’”  
Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya replied: “My dear Gopinath Acarya, what is the proof that you have received the mercy of the lord ?”

Purport; When one's heart is not cleansed, one cannot awaken the transcendental nature of devotional service.

Sri Vrndavana dasa Thakura says; ‘If a person commits an offense at the lotus feet of a Vaisnava, even though he may have received Krishna's mercy, he will never attain divine love, Prema.’

It is inconceivable to me that anybody criticises such an exalted Vaisnava as Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja. It will be so pleasing to all our acaryas if we understand we are all one family.

Your servant Jagadisa Pandit Das.