

Tridandi Gosvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja  
ALL WILL BE IN VAIN  
Oahu, Hawaii: Jan. 19, 2002 (Evening - Part 1)

All glories to Srila Swami Maharaja. I know that he has collected you all and brought you here, and as far as I am concerned, he has dragged me here. All glories to him. Only glorifying will not do, however. We'll have to follow his instructions. It is not enough to say, "All glories to Srila Prabhupada." You have to follow his deep instructions in your life, and then the fruit will come. Otherwise, where you were before, you will remain, and there will be no advancement.

'sadhu-sanga', 'sadhu-sanga'—sarva-sastre kaya  
lava-matra sadhu-sange sarva-siddhi haya

"The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment's association with a pure devotee, one can attain all success." (Cc. Madhya 22.54)

If you have a little sraddha (faith), or even if you have nistha (firm faith), or even ruci (taste), if you have no sadhu-sanga, no high-class association, you will lose whatever you have. Even if you have attained the stage of ruci, if that ruci has not matured, there will be some doubt. Again, so many offences and unwanted mentalities and habits will attack you, as they attacked Bharata Maharaja and others. I know that you are not at the stage of Bharata Maharaja or anyone of his calibra. Whether or not you have even achieved nistha, you can judge yourself by keeping your hands on your heart and asking your heart.

Although you have not attained nistha, still I am discussing with you the topics concerning our aim and how we can achieve it. If you are not in the correct process, even if you think you have so much love and affection, if your feelings and activities are not approved by sastra, then all is in vain.

[Sripad Madhava Maharaja:] Sruti-smrti-puranadi-pancaratra-vidhim vina / aikantiki harer bhaktir utpatayaiva kalpate. ["Devotional service to the Lord that ignores the authorized Vedic literatures—the Upanisads, Puranas, Narada-pancaratra, etc.—is simply an unnecessary disturbance in society (BRS 1.2.101)."] Sruti means Veda, and smrti means smrti-sastras (corollaries to the Vedas) like Manu-smrti. Pancaratra means Narada-pancaratra. The great sages have explained in their books about the goal and process to achieve it. Without the approval of these sastras, and without the proper process, if you do something by your uncontrolled mind and you think, "This is the best process. I have discovered it by myself, and by this process I can achieve krsna-prema," your actions will go in vain and they will also create chaos in your mind. The day will come that you will give up all spiritual practices.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] As much as your bhakti increases, humility will come and you will think, "I'm very low." If your bhakti has not increased, then only false ego will act. If bhakti is gradually developing, then gradually your humility, as told in slokas like 'trnad api sunicena,' will manifest. You will realize, "I really have nothing. I have no

power. I really have no bhakti." At that time you will be able to realize how insignificant you are. Srimati Radhika thinks in this way. She says, "I actually have not even a scent of prema for Krsna. I have not served Him. I have not even seen Him." Only She can speak like this, as this is the symptom of mahabhava. It is very high. You should realize that you are nothing. You are a particle, and that particle can be covered at anytime by maya. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura therefore says in his Sri Bhajana Rahasya that even if you have received nistha, you should hear from high-class devotees.

There are two kinds of bhagavatas. One is the transcendental book bhagavata, which was received by Vyasa in his trance, and in which all kinds of very powerful and sweet pastimes of Krsna have been given. It is under lock and key, however. It can be only opened by the highest class of bhakta-bhagavata. These devotees have the key. Any ordinary bhakta, anyone who is in a stage lower than rati, cannot unlock it. Only one who has received suddha-sattva from an eternal parikara (associate) of Krsna, like Srila Rupa Gosvami, Srila Sanatana Gosvami and all the sad-Gosvamis, Srila Narottama dasa Thakura, and others up to Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura and Srila Prabhupada, can open the lock.

Don't lose the fortune to hear from superiors. Even if your whole business goes down, there is no harm. Even if you lose your job in a government department, that is not a loss. On the other hand, if you lose your opportunity for saddhu-sanga, that is a great loss.

I know so many devotees here, especially from India, who don't avail themselves of sadhu-sanga. They have come to the West to make money. Their money is more important to them than bhakti. On the other hand, you have left all these things and you have come here to hear. You are most fortunate. Continue in this way. To lose any worldly thing is not really a loss, but to lose this opportunity is very unfortunate.

Sometimes, if your friend or relative is a mayavadi, karmi, yogi, or jnani, you try to please him – because he is your friend. Don't associate with such people, even if they are your friends or relatives; otherwise, you yourself will become a mayavada. Don't associate with mayavadis, and especially don't associate with lusty persons and friends of lusty persons. If you want to make advancement, then make friendship with a devotee who is superior to you in bhakti, who has love and affection for you, and who is svajatiya, like-minded. 'Like-minded' refers to one who is like-minded for paramartha (transcendental life)—not for worldly things. He should be an ocean of the type of prema for which you aspire. By hearing from him, you develop increased steadiness in bhakti, and you also develop all the stages beyond that.

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