

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

This Very, Very Critical Time

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Typists: Srimati Premanidhi devi dasi, & Srimati Sulata devi dasi

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I offer my humble obeisances unto the lotus feet of my transcendental guru, om visnupada Sri Srimad Bhaktiprajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja, and also unto the lotus feet of my siksa-guru, om visnupada Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja. By their mercy we are preaching in so many places, and everywhere we go the devotees are inspired. They are now always remembering their Srila Prabhupada. I have come for this purpose. My main objective is to increase the devotees' faith and to re-inspire them in his teachings. My objective is to help the devotees, as he ordered me to do so in his last days.

A question is raised, and intelligent devotees should think it over. Why did so many devotees leave Srila Swami Maharaja's line? Why did they become weak? They took harinama initiation and diksa initiation, they rendered services to him, they remained with him in the brahmacharya asrama, and some even took sannyasa. They served in numerous ways, distributing thousands of books and becoming the 'number one' or 'number two' distributors in the entire world. They also gave abundant assistance with the gurukulas, opened several temples in different parts of the world, and brought vast amounts of money. Either by hook, or by crook, they brought it.

Why did most of them become weak and leave? Why did they enter family life? Almost all of the brahmacharis who were engaged in temple worship entered married life and gave up Krsna consciousness. They returned to a life of materialism, and some of them even became opposed to the line of bhakti. Why did this happen? We must think it over.

I know that most of the senior disciples of your Prabhupada, my siksa-guru, were brahmacharis. When they were with their guru they were very energetic, and they gave their entire strength to serve him. Now, however, even those who took the sannyasa order have left. Why? We should try to understand why, and in the future we should be very careful. This is the most important question to think over. So many senior Vaisnavas who have left the line of bhakti are now present here in this class.

In this connection, I want to tell you something. When we plant the seed of any big tree, like a mango seed or other type of seed, first we give it water. We water it properly and protect it so that grazing animals cannot eat it. Even when it has grown somewhat, we still continue to give proper water and proper care. Later, when the roots go deep and begin to take water from the earth, there is no longer a need to give so much water. At that time, however, we will have to make a fence to protect the plant. Otherwise it can still be destroyed by animals, and even a mad elephant may come to destroy it.

That mad elephant represents offenses, and the fence represents the association of pure devotees. We must associate with gurudeva, and with the high class of devotees who have been taking water from the ground and are self-supported. They are now so big that no elephant can do any damage to them. By associating with them, first nistha, steadiness in bhakti, will come, and after nistha, ruci will come. Ruci means taste in chanting and hearing hari-katha. So much taste will come for hearing hari-katha that if one finds out that any pure Vaisnava is speaking anywhere, that person will come from a thousand miles away, giving up all his other jobs, duties and activities, because he will want to be in such company.

There is a stage in which you have already taken harinama and diksa initiations, you are chanting somewhat, you have given up your worldly life, and you are helping with all the projects of your gurudeva. Anarthas have not yet gone, however, and taste has not yet come. This stage is very critical—very, very critical. If you are not extremely careful about fencing and watering at this time, your bhakti can be uprooted or it will be very weak.

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's personal servant, Kala Krsnadasa, went with Him to South India for about four months. He did not have a taste for chanting, remembering, or hearing hari-katha, but he was helping Mahaprabhu. He was very lucky to serve, but he had no taste. Mahaprabhu was chanting, "Hare Krsna Hare Krsna" in all the temples and making everyone Vaisnavas, but what became of His servant? This fellow had no taste. He had never said to Mahaprabhu, "O, I want to hear hari-katha." He never questioned Him and he never heard His teachings. What became of him? He was attracted by the bhattatharis, gypsy girls, who were so beautiful that in a moment he gave up Caitanya Mahaprabhu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Krsna Himself.

Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami was also an associate of Mahaprabhu, but he had the taste to hear. From the very beginning of his childhood he heard about Krsna in the association of Srila Haridasa Thakura and his gurudeva, Yadunandana Acarya. Restless, he quickly came to Puri to be in the assembly of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His associates. Mahaprabhu became very happy to see him and said, "Oh, you have come out from the ditch of stool. Very good." Mahaprabhu then placed Raghunatha dasa Gosvami in the hands of Srila Svarupa Damodara and told him, "From today you belong to Svarupa Damodara. You can know more by hearing from him than from Me. Treat him as your teacher; your siksa-guru."

Raghunatha dasa gave up all worldly attachments and requirements, and totally surrendered unto the lotus feet of Svarupa Damodara. He was always hearing from him and he noted down everything in his diary and in his heart. He always wanted to hear more and more from Caitanya Mahaprabhu, from Srila Rupa Gosvami, Srila Sanatana Gosvami, Sri Svarupa Damodara, Sri Raya Ramananda, and all other associates. He heard them very patiently, recording everything in his heart, and he followed them fully.

After the disappearance of Caitanya Mahaprabhu, Svarupa Damodara and Gadadhara Pandita, he could not tolerate their separation. He at once left that place and came to Vrndavana to commit suicide. Continually weeping, he thought, "I cannot tolerate the separation from my Gurudeva, all the Vaisnavas, and Caitanya Mahaprabhu. They have left me and I am now alone." He came to Vrndavana to give up his life by jumping in the Yamuna or by jumping from Govardhana, but instead he attained the association of Rupa Gosvami, Sanatana Gosvami, and all the Gosvamis. He resided on the bank of Radha-kunda twenty-four hours a day, and he always engaged in the following way:

sankhya-purvaka- nama-gana- natibhih kalavasini-krtau
nidrahara-viharakadi-vijitau catyanta-dinau ca yau
radha-krsna-guna-smrter madhurimanandena sammohitau
vande rupa sanatana raghu-yugau sri jiva gopalakau

["I worship the Six Gosvamis, who passed all their time in chanting the holy names, singing songs, and offering dandavat pranama, thereby humbly fulfilling their vow to complete a fixed number daily. In this way they utilized their valuable lives and conquered over eating and sleeping. Always meek and humble and absorbed in the highest bliss, they were enchanted by remembering Sri Sri Radha-Krsna's sweet qualities." (Sri Sad-Gosvami-astakam.)]

Raghunatha dasa was following these principles. You can see the difference between Kala Krsnadasa and Raghunatha dasa Gosvami.

Also, Mahaprabhu also rejected one of His very high class of devotees, Chota Haridasa. Chota Haridasa was always with Caitanya Mahaprabhu, but Mahaprabhu saw that he had some

connection with a lady—Sikhimahiti's sister, Madhavi devi. Although she was very old, Chota Haridas used to think, "Oh, she is my dharma ma, my religious mother, my new mother." He had given up his own mother, father, and everyone else, and now he was making a relationship with her. He thought, "Oh, she is my mother." This is a very bad thing. Don't make anyone your 'religious' sister, mother, brother, or father. Your guru is your mother and father. He is everything. Why do you need these new relationships? You will be destroyed by them. Always be careful about this.

We should try to do as Raghunatha dasa Gosvami did, and we should try to understand and follow Sri Sukadeva Gosvami. Though He was previously a nirvisesavadi, absorbed in the feature of the Supreme Truth that has no variety or characteristics, Sukadeva Gosvami became attracted to Sri Krsna by the association of his father, Sri Dvaipayana Vyasadeva. Vyasadeva was a very elevated devotee, and he was like Narayana. Narayana had invested His bhakti-sakti in him. He was therefore like Narayana, but he was not Narayana. He was a saktyavesa-avatara of Narayana.

How qualified Vyasadeva was! He divided the Veda into four, he wrote Brahma-Sutra and all the Puranas, and still he was not satisfied. By the mercy of Srila Narada Rsi, his gurudeva, he arose from his depression and Srimad Bhagavatam entered his heart. Srimad Bhagavatam is transcendental and Bhagavad-gita is transcendental. They are not like ordinary books which, if you put them in a fire they will be burned. The Gita cannot be destroyed, but sometimes its teachings are covered and sometimes they are manifest. These teachings are sabda-brahma, transcendental sound, coming from Krsna, God Himself. They are the vani, the words of Krsna. Sri Vyasadeva taught the entire Srimad Bhagavatam to Sukadeva Gosvami who, in the assembly of Srila Pariksit Maharaja, repeated it. All those who heard his recitation became advanced devotees.

So this stage is very critical. When a devotee has left his wealth, reputation, his wife, children, his position and so on, but he has no taste—it is a very critical time. At this stage you should not give up the association of high-class devotees. If you always try to be far away from such association, you will become very weak, and after some time maya will come and attract you.

This was the case after Srila Swami Maharaja left this world and joined his Prabhu in conjugal service. The devotees became very weak, and they could not understand what to do. There were not so many advanced devotees to save them and to tell them hari-katha, and therefore they became weaker and weaker and weaker. They began to think, "What will happen in the future?" This was a problem for them. They thought, "Previously we were in the institution of Krsna consciousness. What will be our future?" They had no faith in Krsna, no saranagati, surrender, and thus they became weaker and weaker and left everything.

They began to depend on wealth and became concerned with how to collect money and be materially happy. They were very intelligent in this, because they had previously served their gurudeva in that way. By that, they have now become so wealthy. They think, "We are doing very well", but we think they are not doing well. Of what use is all one's wealth without krsna-bhakti? If krsna-bhakti is there, and nothing else is there, it is very good. Even to be poor, but to somehow maintain our life, is very good — if bhakti is there.

Now we are in the iron-age of computers and all other technologies, and it is flourishing. We are discovering so many ways in which to be happy — but no one is happy. Only two kinds of persons can think themselves happy. One kind consists of those who really have some taste in Krsna's name and hearing hari-katha. Those persons can be somewhat happy, and the other kind consists only of mad persons. These mad persons take many drugs and fall down in a gutter, and dogs come and lick their faces. Still, they are thinking, "We are the monarch of all. We are very happy." Only these two can be happy. There is no third kind of person.

We should be very careful about this. One day, very soon, old age will be coming — running, running. Now you are beautiful, but one day your faces will dry. So many problems will come very quickly, and at the time of death you will not be able to take anything you are now collecting.

Remember all these things. Again you should be very inspired and chant more. If you are chanting, you should have strong faith in the words of Caitanya Mahaprabhu:

ceto-darpana-marjanam bhava-maha-davagni-nirvapanam
sreyah-kairava-candrika-vitaranam vidya-vadhu-jivanam
anandambudhi-varadhanam prati-padam purnamrtasvadanam
sarvatma-snapanam param vijayate sri-krsna-sankirtanam

["Let there be all victory for the chanting of the holy name of Lord Krsna, which can cleanse the mirror of the heart and stop the miseries of the blazing fire of material existence. That chanting is the waxing moon that spreads the white lotus of good fortune for all living entities. It is the life and soul of all education. The chanting of the holy name of Krsna expands the blissful ocean of transcendental life. It gives a cooling effect to everyone and enables one to taste full nectar at every step." (Antya-lila 20.12)]

You have forgotten this, and therefore you should again hear about it. We have so much faith in this. Only by this can you be happy. Otherwise, you can never, never, never be happy. You should know that Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the Supreme Lord. He is very powerful — very, very powerful. Even His manifestations can create thousands and thousands of universes in a second. They can then destroy them, and again they can create them. At the same time, Krsna is very merciful, He is very sweet, He is very beautiful, and He is the abode of all good qualities. In kali-yuga, He has invested all His qualities, all His power, and all His mercy in these sixteen names. All the names are Radha and Krsna Themselves. They are very powerful, more so than Radha and Krsna Themselves. By chanting you can fulfill all your desires. If you can see Radha-Krsna, automatically all your desires will be fulfilled. You should know, however, that Radha and Krsna will not come and we cannot take Their darsana without the help and mercy of Their holy names.

Krsna has made it so, but we don't have very much faith. Srila Haridasa Thakura has faith, Sri Prahlada Maharaja has faith, and all our acaryas, from top to bottom, have faith. Srila Swami Maharaja and my Gurudeva also have faith. We also have faith, and therefore we don't want any worldly things. We only want to have some love and affection in chanting the holy name. If you follow this principle, you will not fall down.

At times you do not do kirtana, what to speak of sankirtana, and your heart becomes like the books kept in a glass almirah bookcase. We have kept some books in this almirah which is covered by very fine glass. You can see what books are there and you can read the names, but you cannot touch them because they are under lock and key. If one is in high association, chanting with relation and giving up all of their anyabhilasa, material desires, karma, jnana, yoga, tapasya, and attachment to worldly things, what becomes of him? The mirror of his heart becomes clear, even if it is locked.

Sripad Aranya Maharaja: "When the conditioned soul, being in this world, begins his process of nama-sankirtana and his heart becomes clear..."

Srila Narayana Maharaja: You can ask the question to Aranya Maharaja, "You are telling this to us, but have you first realized it? We have been chanting the name for as long as twenty years with Prabhupada, and we have heard so many things. You are like a very young boy, and yet you

are teaching us? Have you realized something of what you are speaking? Have you realized ceto-darpaṇa-marjanam bhava-maha-davagni-nirvapanam?"

I can tell you that I have some realization — yes. Srila Swami Maharaja has realization and I also have some realization. You can therefore believe in me and chant the name.

You fell down because you have not chanted and heard in the real process, as we are doing. We are in the real process. From the beginning of my life, and when I was a child, I used to chant, "Rama Rama. Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare." I don't know from where it came. I then came in the association of my Gurudeva when I was about twenty-four or twenty-five years of age, and I was so attracted!

At that time I had a very good job as an officer. I had not been initiated, but I was chanting one lakh of names — 64 rounds — without any fail, daily. You cannot imagine. Very soon I came in the association of my Gurudeva. In 1946 I was initiated and had the association of Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja, your Gurudeva, Pujyapada Sridhara Maharaja, Pujyapada Srauti Maharaja, Pujyapada Vaikāṇasa Maharaja, Pujyapada Nemi Maharaja, and Srila Bhakti Pramoda Puri Maharaja. In due process I used to chant and hear hari-katha and serve them. Quickly, all kinds of bhava-maha-davagni-nirvapanam, all kinds of miseries felt in worldly life — disappeared.

I am very happy now. I have thousands and thousands of children, but I am not attached. I only want their welfare. I want that they should be devotees. Srila Svami Maharaja was like this, as was my Gurudeva, and I am following their line.

I may therefore tell you that I have realized that all my problems have gone. Bhava-maha-davagni nirvapanam. Also, sreya kairava-candrika. This has also come. You can realize this if you can follow your Gurudeva. You can also follow me, because he Srila Swami Maharaja has told me, "You should help my devotees."

Sreyah-kairava-candrika-vitaranam. All the good qualities possessed by high-class devotees will manifest in that devotee who follows. Bhakti has six leaves or six symptoms. If you are really chanting under the guidance of a bona fide guru, with a sense of a relationship with Kṛṣṇa and giving up all worldly desires, then all kinds of bad things will easily disappear. All kinds of attachments will disappear at once, very quickly. No attachment for maya will remain if you are chanting the names, hearing hari-katha, and serving gurudeva. However, if so many worldly desires are there, and so much lust is there — what is the meaning? You are not following the process in a good way. There is a loophole. You should try to repair it; otherwise all the water of bhakti will drain out.

We read Srimad Bhagavatam so many times, and we become teacher and tell others about it. In India there are so many professional Bhagavatam reciters. When such reciters explain Srimad Bhagavatam, all are attracted and charmed, and all may weep. Their own eyes, however, are always on money. They are always wondering how much money is coming. Such professional reciters are not pure devotees, and they are not even devotees. They may be Sankara mayavadis. All their offenses and attachments will remain. None will go.

The first symptom of bhakti is that all your worldly attachments will go. If they are not going, you can know that there is a loophole, and you should try to repair it very carefully. If you do not do this, you will go down and you are bound to be weak. We are seeing that seniors are very weak. They cannot give up worldly attachments. Therefore, this should come first. Second, all kinds of good qualities will come. We should be very careful to see that this is developing.

Then, vidya-vadhu-jivanam. What is vidya-vadhu-jivanam? Seven symptoms are the results of taking harinama. If they are not coming, you should be very careful to search where your loopholes are — and try to repair them. Otherwise, you cannot realize anything:

trnad api sunicena
taror api sahisnuna

amanina manadena
kirtaniyah sada harih

["One can chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind, thinking himself lower than the straw in the street. One should be more tolerant than the tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige and ready to offer all respect to others. In such a state of mind one can chant the holy name of the Lord constantly." (Siksastaka 3)]

These four qualities will come. If they are not present, there is no pure name. So try to first be like this.

What is vidya? You should know that vidya is Srimati Radhika Herself. Her activities of love and affection can control Krsna. She is actually transcendental vidya — learning. What is this learning? How to serve Krsna and Radhika, and especially Krsna. Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Srimati Radhika's love goes up to sneha, mana, pranaya, raga, anuraga, bhava, mahabhava, modana, and madana. Krsna does not have all these qualities. He has no madana. Srimati Radhika has madana, and therefore She is really vidya — paravidya. Svarupa-sakti, hladini-sakti, is Radhika, and She is called vadhu. Vadhu means beloved. If you are chanting the name in the correct process, then, after some days, in the fifth stage, you will realize vidya vadhu-jivanam. You will realize that this name is the most beloved, the life and soul, of Radhika. That is bhakti.

The sixth stage is anandambuddhi vardhanam. You should realize these things and from today begin chanting the holy name like this. You will then very soon be able to realize what Caitanya Mahaprabhu has taught.

Sripad Aranya Maharaja: At this time powerful bhakti will come in the heart and one will realize practically how this nama is Krsna Himself and is the life and soul of Srimati Radhika. Those who have eligibility and potential within their hearts can realize, "I am a palya dasi, a maidservant of Srimati Radhika." What, then, will be the result as they go on chanting? Mahaprabhu explains this here: anandambuddhi vardhanam, an ever-increasing ocean of bliss.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: At this stage Caitanya Mahaprabhu used to go to the temple of Jagannatha, but He never saw Jagannatha, Baladeva, and Subhadra. What did He see? Vrajendra-nandana Syamasundara. Sometimes, when He was in His external consciousness, He could see Jagannatha, Baladeva, and Subhadra. Usually, however, He used to see only Vrajendra-nandana Syamasundara with a flute in His hand. Vrajendra-nandana vina pate mora. "My heart is going to break. Where is Krsna? Where is Krsna?" When Mahaprabhu was going to Vrndavana through the dense Jarikhanda forest, so many elephants, tigers, bears, snakes, and other very furious animals were there. Many elephants came when Mahaprabhu was taking bath, and a very big miracle occurred. Mahaprabhu took some water and sprinkled it on them, at which time all the mad elephants raised their trunks and went down on their knees and began to chant, "Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare."

This is the case at that stage. Mahaprabhu did not know who He was. He was only searching for Krsna, "O Krsna, where are You, where are You? My beloved Krsna, where are You?" When this stage manifests, even a little bit, your life is successful. Try to search for this Krsna — Sri Nandanandana with Srimati Radhika — in this process. Very soon you will realize what you would not realize up to the age of sixty or seventy. You will realize all these things very soon.

Sripad Aranya Maharaja: Here the devotee is chanting in ecstatic bliss: anandambuddhi vardhanam prati-padam. There is blissfulness at pratipadam, every step, and this has a very deep

meaning. Pratipadam means that this Hare Krsna maha-mantra has eight sections, and in these eight sections all the nitya-lila of Radha-Krsna are present. The first Hare Krsna is nisyanta-lila, pre-dawn pastimes, the next Hare Krsna is morning pastimes, and then midday pastimes, afternoon pastimes, and so on. When the devotee is chanting in the stage of anandambuddhi vardanam pratipadam, he sees Radha and Krsna in every letter and syllable of the names.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: How will you realize all this? Caitanya Mahaprabhu Himself is the example. When He was in Kasi, Varanasi, He met with Prakasananda Sarasvati. Prakasananda asked, "You are in a good disciplic line. Being a sannyasi, in the renounced order, why are You chanting, dancing and singing? We don't do this. Why are You doing this?"

Mahaprabhu said, "I am very foolish. My Gurudeva told Me, 'You are not qualified to study Vedanta. You should only remember one sloka:

harer nama harer nama
harer namaiva kevalam
kalau nasty eva nasty eva
nasty eva gatih anyatha

["In this age of quarrel and hypocrisy the only means of deliverance is chanting the holy name of the Lord. There is no other way. There is no other way. There is no other way." (Adi 17.21)]

"Only by chanting the name, chanting the name, and chanting the name. There is no other process. You can never be happy by any other process." Mahaprabhu continued, "My Gurudeva gave Me the holy name, Hare Krsna Hare Krsna, and he also gave Me the krsna-mantra. I began to chant these mantras, and very quickly I became mad — totally mad. I could not understand why was I becoming so mad.

"I saw a boy. These names became like a very beautiful teenaged syama-colored boy. I saw that He was playing on a flute and smiling towards Me with side-long glances. At once I was charmed. I wanted to follow Him. I quickly ran toward Him, but He was moving backwards. Oh, I ran very fast, but He quickly moved here and there and I could not touch Him. When I came very near, just about to catch Him, He at once disappeared. I then became mad and fell down, rolling on the earth and crying, 'Where is My Krsna, where is My Krsna?'

"I don't know how My heart realized all these things. When I chant the name, I see My beloved Krsna and I cannot check Myself. Sometimes I chant and sing, sometimes dance, and sometimes roll down on the earth and cry, 'Alas, Krsna! Alas, Krsna! Where are You?' I went to My Gurudeva and told him, 'O Gurudeva, what kind of mantra have you given that has made Me so mad?' The whole world is telling Me that I am mad, and I also realize that I have become mad, mad, and mad. Why did you give Me this mantra?'

"Gurudeva then at once embraced Me and said, 'Your life is successful. This is the reality of chanting harinama. I am so proud to have You as a disciple.'"

We should try to be a disciple like this, so that your guru will have great pride in you. If you do not this, you are going to hell and you will be very weak. Then, instead of being proud, he will be very worried for you. Perhaps he will have to come again for you. Or, he will have to send any of his representatives and say, "Go and help him." He will be very worried.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu and His Rupa Gosvami and Raghunatha dasa Gosvami were always swimming in the waves of anandambuddi vardanam, the ever-increasing, endless ocean of love and affection.

In separation from Krsna, Caitanya Mahaprabhu became totally mad and jumped in the sea. He was there throughout the night, and, due to all His joints being separated by eight inches, He became very long. He was like a dead person, but He was not dead. Svarupa Damodara went with his colleagues to search for him, and they finally discovered Him on the seashore.

Surrounding Him, they began to perform sankirtana. Gradually Caitanya Mahaprabhu became conscious and began to dance and chant, "Hari bol! Hari Bol!"

How will you realize these stages? The wonderful, powerful devotees have written about them in their books. Anandambuddhi vardanam. You cannot realize this now. Raghunatha dasa Gosvami was at the bank of Radha kunda. What was he doing? Always tears, always tears. You cannot imagine this at present. You can imagine it if you are chanting in the real process. Otherwise it will never, never be possible.

Sripad Aranya Maharaja: Purnamrtasvadanam. The devotee tastes complete nectar. Krsna has four qualities that are not present in any other incarnation of the Lord. They are His rupa-madhuri — the sweetness of His form; venu-madhuri — the sweetness of His flute playing; lila-madhuri — the sweetness of His pastimes; and prema-madhuri — the sweetness of the love He shares with His devotees. These are four kinds of sweetness and they can be tasted at every step. Really, this is nectar, and this can be tasted through the chanting of harinama when all the pastimes are coming in the heart.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: There was once a marriage party. The wedding was fixed to take place the next day at the bank of the Ganges. The family decided that the party should go to the house of the bride by boat. They hired a boatman, and so many family members of the bridegroom got into the boat. They took with them wine, a prostitute to sing and dance, and also marijuana. They then went inside the boat, downstairs, and they began to enjoy. The head of the groom's family gave money to the boatman and told him that he should reach the place of marriage by the next morning — otherwise the marriage could not take place. The auspicious time was the next morning at 4:00 am. The boatman told him that he should also give him some money for marijuana and other drugs.

Everyone on the boat was enjoying, and at the same time the boatman's five, six, or eight rowers were rowing — and perspiring. At four o'clock the next morning the father of the family came out to the deck of the boat to see if they had reached their destination. He looked in wonder when he saw that they were in the same place. The boat had not moved one inch. He became very angry at them and said, "We are in the our own village. The same coconut palms are here, our houses are here, and the same river bank is here." He called out, "I gave you so much money. I gave you what you wanted; so why is our boat still here? How is this possible? We have missed the auspicious time for the marriage."

The boatman came forward and told him, "O master, you have given us all these things and we have been rowing for the whole night, without taking any rest. We were rowing with great effort, and you can see that we have not rested." When they looked around, they could see what was wrong. The anchor was down, and it had been going deeper into the mud as they were rowing. The boat had only been rocking back and forth all night.

In the same way, if you are doing so much chanting, and at the same time taking marijuana and other drugs, and at the same time being absorbed in your body, wife, sister, and so on, it will be like rowing your boat with the anchor down. You will not be able to go forward. If anyone has attraction to worldly things, he cannot advance.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu therefore says:

namnam akari bahudha nija-sarva-saktis
tatrarpita niyमितah smarane na kalah
etadrsi tava krpa bhagavan mamapi
durdaivam idrsam ihajani nanuragah

["My Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, in Your holy name there is all good fortune for the living entity, and therefore You have many names, such as Krsna and Govinda, by which

You expand Yourself. You have invested all Your potencies in those names, and there are no hard and fast rules for remembering them. My dear Lord, although You bestow such mercy upon the fallen, conditioned souls by liberally teaching Your holy names, I am so unfortunate that I commit offenses while chanting the holy name, and therefore I do not achieve attachment for chanting." (Antya 20.17)]

First of all you should give up your bad association:

asat-sanga-tyaga, ei vaisnava-acara
stri-sangi eka asadhu, krsnabhakta ara

["A Vaisnava should always avoid the association of ordinary people. Common people are very much materially attached, especially to women. Vaisnavas should also avoid the company of those who are not devotees of Lord Krsna." (Madhya 22.88-90)]

What is the meaning of this sloka? If you are lusty, if you are weak, and if you have so many unwanted habits — no harm. You should be sincere. What you are, you are. Don't hide anything. There is one thing, however. You should give up the association of mayavadis.

Mayavadi association is like a very dangerous, ferocious tigress. Raghunatha das Gosvami and Mahaprabhu have told us, and Srimad Bhagavatam has also told us — if you want to be happy and if you want to be a devotee, never associate with persons who are mayavadis. No harm if you are lusty. Lust may go away and all anarthas may also go away, but if you are being devoured by this ferocious tigress of mayavadi sanga, no one can help you. Even Krsna will not be able to help you, and no devotee will be able to help you. You should therefore very carefully cut all connections with those who are mayavadis.

Even if those mayavadis are friends and relatives, they should be given up quickly for your whole life. Secondly, the association of those who are attached to worldly lust, and those who are the friends of lusty persons, should also be abandoned.

It is better to die in a burning fire. If we embrace a fire, there is relatively no harm in that. It is even better to enter the mouths of crocodiles and tigers than to associate with these two types of persons, because that suffering is only for this life. In the next life we can again be okay. For one who is associating with mayavadis — his devotion will go away for thousands of lives, or forever.

My dear friends, my dear brothers and sisters: make up your minds. If you are associating with any friends who are mayavadis, promise that "I will not continue to do this." I am telling you this to save you; otherwise you will go to hell. Not only will you go to hell, but your life will be ruined forever and ever. Even in the future you will not be able to come in this line. So my dear friends, you should remember these things. Don't mix with mayavadis. If they come to you, you should do pranama to them with folded palms and say to them, "O prabhu, please remain far away."

Devotee: Maharaja, you have inspired fear in my heart. How do I recognize a mayavadi?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: You will know. He will tell you, "There is no God", or "God has no shape. I am God, and you, yourself, are God. Aham brahmasmi. Sarvam kalvidam brahma." Such a person is not chanting and remembering, and he is not coming to associate with any high-class devotee. You will recognize him very easily.