

Tridandi Swami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

BE CAREFUL

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Srila Vallabhacarya's bhajana, Sri Madhurastakam, tells us that everything is sweet (madhura) about Krsna, the original lord of sweetness. His Yamuna is madhura, His nikunjas (groves wherein Radha and Krsna perform their confidential amorous pastimes) are madhura, and His flute playing and sidelong glances are also very sweet.

Who is actually speaking about the sweetness of Krsna here? Is it Kamsa Maharaja, Aghasura, Bakasura, or Putana? Radhika herself is telling this; She alone is qualified to speak in this way. The history behind Her words is that a sakhi once told Her, "Krsna has left Vrndavana. He now has 16,108 queens, and millions of others also want to marry Him. Why do you have so much love and affection for that crooked Krsna? He has no love for you and no love for Vrndavana. Give Him up and try to forget Him forever." Srimati Radhika replied, "O sakhi, what you are saying is true, but I cannot forget Him. Everything about Him is so sweet"

Demons like Kamsa, Jarasandha, Duryodhana, Putana, Bakasura, Aghasura, Kesi, Canura, and Mustika were seeing that very same Krsna, but they thought of Him as a very cruel, powerful, and dangerous enemy. They did not see or experience His sweetness.

Do you know why I am speaking in this way? These demons are against Krsna. Therefore instead of experiencing His sweetness, they simply experience their own enmity. Similarly, if we imagine that we are meditating on Krsna's asta-kaliya-lila and we have not reached the stage of rati, we will also not experience His sweetness. Rather, we will experience our own lusty and other material desires. In this connection, Kamsa and other demons represent our material desires. Krsna, and the realization of the sweetness of Krsna, is our goal, but do not try to "jump up to the top of the tree." Begin from the root of the tree and climb up from there; then you can realize your goal.

One must follow the proper process of his bhakti from the beginning:

adau sraddha tatah sadhu-
sango 'tha bhajana-kriya
tato 'nartha-nivrttih syat
tato nistha rucis tatah
athasaktis tato bhavas
tatah premabhyudancati
sadhakanam ayam premnah
pradurbhave bhavet kramah

["In the beginning one must have a preliminary desire for self-realization. This will bring one to the stage of trying to associate with persons who are spiritually elevated. In the next stage one becomes initiated by an elevated spiritual master, and under his instruction the neophyte devotee begins the process of devotional service. By execution of devotional service under the guidance of the spiritual master, one becomes free from all material attachment, attains steadiness in self-realization, and acquires a taste for hearing about the Absolute Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna. This taste leads one further forward to attachment for Krsna consciousness, which is matured in bhava, or the preliminary stage of transcendental love of God. Real love for God is called prema, the highest perfectional stage of life." In the prema stage there is constant engagement in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. So, by the gradual process of devotional service, under the guidance of the bona fide spiritual master, one can attain the highest stage." (Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu 1.4.15–16)]

You must also be able to follow these principles:

ksantir avartha-kalatvam
viraktir mana-sunyata
asa-bandhah samutkantha
nama-gane sada rucih
asaktis tad-gunakhyane
pritis tad-vasati-sthale
ity-adayo 'nubhavah syur
jata-bhavankure jane

["When the seed of ecstatic emotion for Krsna fructifies, the following nine symptoms manifest in one's behavior: forgiveness, concern that time should not be wasted, detachment, absence of false prestige, hope, eagerness, a taste for chanting the holy name of the Lord, attachment to descriptions of the transcendental qualities of the Lord, and affection for those places where the Lord resides—that is, a temple or a holy place like Vrndavana. These are all called anubhava, subordinate signs of ecstatic emotion. They are visible in a person in whose heart the seed of love of God has begun to fructify." (Caitanya-caritamrta Madya lila 23.18-19)]

If you can follow these above-mentioned two slokas, then you can realize something of the goal – otherwise not. I know, and I see, that in Western and Eastern countries, here and there, many of the devotees, especially lady devotees, want to enter asta-kaliya-lila (Sri Sri Radha-Krsna's eight-fold daily pastimes, from morning to next morning) although they do not even know what it is. We must be very careful. Our Gosvamis have warned us not to delve very much into this subject matter. This topic is truly our goal, but we can only realize it by following the proper process for advancement in bhakti. If a person has many worldly desires and is attached to women, wine, and wealth, how can he properly meditate on asta-kaliya-lila? If one misunderstands his own identity and considers himself to be his body, he will not be able to properly think about asta-kaliya-lila.

Suppose a man or a woman try to think about Radha-Krsna's pastimes at midnight, for example. Suppose they try to remember how all the gopis left their homes and met Krsna alone, and moreover how Krsna left all the gopis at night and took only Srimati Radhika in a kunj, where they played together. What will he or she think about it? Moreover, if such a man and woman meet together at night "to discuss these topics", what will be the ultimate result of their "love"? They are bound to feel lust, and thus they will not be able to control their minds. Their characters will be ruined and they will ruin their entire spiritual lives. Do you understand what I am saying? We should not even think about this topic.

A young – or old – person may remember the following verse:

Pramada-madana-lilah kandare kandare te
Racayati nava yunor dvandvam asminn amandam
Iti kila kalanartham lagnakas tad-dvayor me
Nija-nikata-nivasam dehi Govardhana! Tvam

["O Govardhana! Please grant me a dwelling near your side so that I can easily witness and serve the youthful lovers Sri Radha-Krsna as They perform newer and newer secret, amorous lilas within your many caves where They become completely maddened from drinking prema. You are present and making everything possible" (Srimad Raghunatha dasa Gosvami's Sri Govardhana-Vasa-Prarthana-Dasakam, verse 2)]

In this verse it is suggested that Radha and Krsna are meeting together and embracing. If a devotee who is not very advanced tries to meditate on this, a worldly conception is bound to come. Therefore, always be careful. Sri Sukadeva Gosvami, who is a maha-mahabhagavata, is so detached from material consideration and possessions that he does not even wear a dor and kaupin (loincloth), nor does he even have a bhajana kutir. He is totally renounced. For him, there is no difference between the most beautiful naked lady and a dry wooden tree. He has no interest at all in the affairs of men and women; yet, that Sukadeva Gosvami offers reverential pranama to rasa-lila and asta-kaliya-lila. Although service to that madhura Krsna like that of the gopis is our goal, we cannot pretend to be close to it at our stage.

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura has written:

aradhyo bhagavan vrajesa-tanayas tad-dhama vrndavanam
ramya kascid upasana vraja-vadhu-varga-ya kalpita
srimad-bhagavatam amalam puranam prema pumartho mahan
sri-caitanya mahaprabhor matam idam tatradarah na parah

["Bhagavan Vrajendra-nandana Sri Krsna and His transcendental abode Sri Vrndavana-dhama are my worshipable objects. The most excellent method of worshipping Krsna is that adopted by the goparmanis, the young wives of Vraja. Srimad-Bhagavatam is the flawless and most authoritative scripture, and Krsna-prema is the fifth and highest achievement of human life beyond dharma, artha, kama, and moksa. It is thus known as pancama-purusartha or parama-purusartha. This is the opinion of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. We have supreme regard for this conclusion. We have no inclination or respect for any other cheating opinions."]

The highest examples of love and affection in service to Krsna are the gopis – but this does not apply to all the gopis. This highest service cannot even be performed by Srimati Lalita or Srimati Visakha, or by others like them. Such service can only be executed by gopis like Sri Rupa-manjari and Sri Rati-manjari. Lalita and Visakha cannot enter a kunjā in which Radha and Krsna are alone and engaged in Their most intimate amorous pastimes, but the manjaris can enter without hesitation and they can serve both Radha and Krsna there.

We must be very careful. We should not discuss the confidential matters of Sri Sri Radha-Krsna before the general public. Be careful, otherwise ladies, especially, will be charmed by hearing from you, they will weep, they will run after you, and your character will be lost.

Always try to follow the teachings of the eleventh canto of Srimad Bhagavatam, and try to follow Srila Rupa Gosvami's Upadesmrta and Srila Raghanaatha dasa Gosvami's Sri Manah-Siksa. Then, try to gradually come to the stage of rati, at which time all of Krsna's pastimes will automatically manifest in a very pure form. Try to follow my instructions. Follow the proper procedures delineated by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, by our guru-varga, and especially by Sri Rupa Gosvami and Srila Raghanaatha dasa Gosvami.

Sri Krsna-dvaipayana Vyasa and Srila Sukadeva Gosvami have somewhat explained about the goal of our life in the descriptions of the incarnations Matsya, and Kurma, and in descriptions of Varaha, Narasimha, Rama, Paursarama, Vamana, and Kalki. They have kept all the madhura-lila in the tenth canto, and there they have explained our aim and object fully.

Krsna Himself became each of the incarnations, like Matsya, Kurma, Varaha, Narasimha, Vamana, Balarama, and Kalki. They are all Him; but He is playing the role of being them.

Sri Jayadeva Gosvami sings in his Sri Dasavatara-Stotram:

Sri-jayadeva-kaver idam uditam udaram
Sru sukha-dam subha-dam bhava-saram
kesava dhrta-dasa-vidha-rupa! jaya jagadis a! Hare

["O Kesava! O You who assume these ten forms! O Jagadisa! O You who remove Your devotees' material desires! All glories to You! My humble supplication at Your lotus feet is that You please here this Dasavatara-Stotra composed by the poet Jayadeva, because it describes the essence of Your incarnations and is most excellent, bestowing happiness and auspiciousness." (Sri Dasavatara-Stotram, verse 11)]

In this connection Kesava means Vrajendranandana Sri Krsna. That same Krsna is our goal, and to serve Him like the gopis is certainly our goal. But be very careful, otherwise you will follow the path of Putana, Aghasura, Bakasura and Kamsa. You will be bound to be like them. Sri Sukadeva Gosvami began

speaking about the topics of bhakti from its beginning stages, as well as the processes to achieve the various stages of bhakti. Then, in the eleventh canto, they discussed Sri Narada Muni's explaining to Vasudeva about the topics instructed by the Navayogendras to Maharaja Nimi. For example, the Navayogendras explained about the 24 gurus including the air and the earth. From the air one can learn detachment and from the earth one can learn tolerance. In those texts the processes to achieve the highest goal given in the tenth canto has also been explained.

The same goal of life has been expressed in a still better way in Sri Caitanya Caritamṛta. In the very beginning of that sastra, Srila Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvami explained our ultimate aim and object as follows:

anarpita-carim cirat karunayavatimah kalau
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasam-bhakti-sriyam
harih purata-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandipitah
sada hrdaya-kandare sphuratu vah saci-nandanah

["May the Supreme Lord who is known as the son of Srimati Sacidevi be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has appeared in the Age of Kali by His causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation has ever offered before: the most sublime and radiant mellow of devotional service, the mellow of conjugal love." (Adi lila 1.4)]

sri-radhayah pranaya-mahima kidrso vanayaiva-
svadyo yenadbhuta-madhurim kidrṣo va madiyah
saukhyam casya mad-anubhavatah kidrsah veti lobhat
tad-bhavadhyah samajani saci-garbha-sindhau harinduh

["Desiring to understand the glory of Radharani's love, the wonderful qualities in Him that She alone relishes through Her love, and the happiness She feels when She realizes the sweetness of His love, the Supreme Lord Hari, richly endowed with Her emotions, appeared from the womb of Srimati Saci-devi, as the moon appeared from the ocean." (Adi lila 1.5)]

radha kṛṣṇa-pranaya-vikṛtir hladini saktir asmad
ekatmanav api bhuvī pura deha-bhedam gatau tau
caitanyakhyam prakatam adhuna tad-dvayam caikyam aptam
radha-bhava-dyuti-sualitam naumi kṛṣṇa-svarupam

["The loving affairs of Sri Radha and Kṛṣṇa are transcendental manifestations of the Lord's internal pleasure-giving potency. Although Radha and Kṛṣṇa are one in Their identity, They separated Themselves eternally. Now these two transcendental identities have again united, in the form of Sri Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. I bow down to Him, who has manifested Himself with the sentiment and complexion of Srimati Radharani although He is Kṛṣṇa Himself". (Adi lila 1.6)]

Srila Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvami especially explained the goal and process to achieve it in the fourth chapter of Adi-lila and in Sri Raya Ramananda Samvada. Also, Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu instructed the process to Srila Rupa Gosvami and Srila Sanātana Gosvami in chapters 19 and 20-23 respectively. Be careful about being at the bottom of the tree and, from there, jumping to the top. Do not go in the direction of fire; otherwise you will be burned.

It is not sufficient merely to speak about the proper established philosophical truths (siddhanta) and processes of bhakti. Try to be actually realized in this. If you do not follow, you cannot advance in actual Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Suppose a disciple is always glorifying Kṛṣṇa and His sweet pastimes. That disciple is always chanting, but he does not have very much faith in his guru. Suppose he is chanting one lakh of names daily and is always reading about the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and glorifying Him, but he is not following his gurudeva's orders. He sometimes follows his guru's orders and sometimes does not. Sometimes he follows his

uncontrolled mind and not the process and teachings of Srila Rupa Gosvami and Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, and Srila Prabhupada, and he does not behave as his guru desires. What will be the result? He will not get perfection.

yasya deve para bhaktir
yatha deve tatha gurau
tasyaite kathita hy arthah
prakasante mahatmanah

["Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed." (Svetasvatara Upanisad 6.23).]

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