

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

## **AN INTERFAITH MESSAGE**

(A lecture given at Birmingham's famous Custard Factory)

Birmingham, England June 14, 2003

Several distinguished guests, including the Lord Mayor, attended Srila Narayana Maharaja's program to honor his visit to Birmingham. The Lord Mayor, Mr. John Alden, was the first of the dignitaries to welcome Srila Narayana Maharaja. After thanking Srila Maharaja for returning to Birmingham, he said that he believed that Birmingham was the premier city of England and therefore deserved to have Srila Maharaja's presence in its midst. He concluded his speech by saying, "Birmingham is a great cultural and diverse city, especially when people like you grace us with your presence. Thank you for coming and thank you for inviting me here today."

The next speaker was the Indian Consulate General, Mr. Sapra, who meets Srila Maharaja at the Ratha Yatra festival in Birmingham every year. He stated that he is always charged with peace and happiness whenever Srila Maharaja visits Birmingham. He said that he was happy that there was a large gathering to hear the message of such peace and happiness that Srila Maharaja is spreading all over the world, and he concluded his speech by thanking Srila Maharaja for coming each year to bless everyone.

Mr. O.P. Sharma, MBE, President of Hindu Counsel of Temples, UK, and chairperson of the National Interfaith Conference was next to welcome Srila Maharaja. Being familiar with Vedic philosophy, Mr. Sharma began by giving a brief history of sanatana-dharma. He said that the word 'Hindu' was a name that foreigners had given to the devotees of sanatana-dharma who lived on the other side of the river Indus, and that their religious practices then came to be known as Hinduism. He said that sanatana-dharma is not a religion or a sect, but rather, a way of life meant for the well-being of the whole universe, and therefore it does not conflict with any religion. He concluded his speech by saying that this world is the Lord's creation, and that we are one world, one family. He then expressed his gratitude to Srila Maharaja for coming to Birmingham to bless everyone, adding that it was a great pleasure and privilege to be among those in the divine gathering.

The Bishop of Birmingham, Dr. Chris Hewer, Theologian of the Church of England, was the next speaker. After welcoming Srila Maharaja, he said that both England and Europe were in need of the wisdom of how to live with diversity. He said that history demonstrated that the dealings of Christianity with different religions, and different religions with each other, had been far from the ideal of creating a harmonious humanity. He added, "Ultimately there is only one

humanity and therefore we have much to learn from one another." He concluded by thanking Srila Maharaja for coming to share his spiritual wisdom, and he prayed that all would learn from him how we can better live in unity with respect for our diversity.

After welcoming Srila Maharaja, the spokesman for the Muslim community, Mr Ahmed, said that these meetings were very important to learn about different peoples customs as it helped to break down barriers. Barriers create hatred, and in the Muslim community there is a saying, "Love for all, hatred for none." He concluded by saying that the best way to attain peace is to learn about one another, and he thanked Srila Maharaja for inviting them on that occasion.

Elder Hunter was next to speak. He said that he was the representing the leader of the Western European Church of Jesus Christ, Latter Day Saints, in his welcome to Srila Maharaja. He said that his community had always appreciated the courtesies that it had received from the Gaudiya Matha's Hare Krsna community over the years. He then said that although his community does not totally understand the Vaisnava culture and the methods of worship, it does understand the universal language of love, peace, devotion and respect. He concluded by saying that he felt these qualities were in Srila Maharaja, and that he was sitting at the feet of a great leader in his presence.

Lastly, Susan Haliday, Interfaith Peace Worker and intermediary between Palestine and Israelites in Jerusalem, thanked Srila Maharaja for coming and said that she is always happy to be with gatherings of people of different faiths, because that is where peace starts, "With us, in our hearts, today."

[After the guests made their presentations, Srila Narayana Maharaja began his talk:]

I am very happy that the organizers of this festival have invited the representatives of Birmingham City here today. I am especially happy that the Lord Mayor is here. He represents all of the citizens of Birmingham, from top to bottom, and therefore I think that all are here. The same is true regarding the representative of India, the Counselor General, our Sanatana-dharmist. Because he is here, I feel that all those who are originally from India are also here. I am also happy that the representatives of Christianity, my brother Muslims, Sikhs, and other representatives are here today.

Hearing them speak about 'Universal Unity in Diversity' has made me very happy, and I especially appreciate the words of my Om Prakashji, O.P. Sharma. He has studied the Indian scriptures and is a learned person. I am especially happy that he quoted our Vedas and Upanisads, and said that the word "Hindu" has not been used anywhere in Vedas. The word used is "Sanatana", referring to that eternal religion which is one without a second. Another word is Aryan, which means one

who knows the goal of life and strives for that goal. Some of you may think that we are a sectarian religion, but this is not so. We believe that all are in the family of the one God. Some think that only humans are members of God's family, but this is also not true. All creatures: plants, creepers, grasses, fish and animals are also created by God. They are all children of the same, one God. Therefore, why should we not have love for all – creepers, cows, elephants, pigs and all other varieties of animals. We should not only love humans.

There are good instructions in the Vedas of India, the Koran of Islam, and also in the Bible, but we disobey their advice to some extent. We wrongly think that animals and birds exist only for us to eat, and that we should not feel love and affection for them. Earlier, the Counselor General said that "God is Love and Love is God." Similarly, in Indian Vedic culture it is said, "Sarve sukhino bhavantu" – everyone should be happy; not only humans, but creepers and other plant life, as well as pigs, birds and all other animals and all types of aquatics. They are also in the family of the same God.

There are not many gods; there is only one, the Supreme Lord. Allah, Brahma, Bhagavan, Yahweh and the many other names are names for the same, one God, but according to differences in language and culture, He is known by these different names.

Allah means "the greatest". All universes and all creation are within Him. Millions upon millions of universes are present within every pore of His skin. He can destroy all universes in a moment, and in a moment He can create millions of new universes.

If we have love for the Supreme Lord, why do we quarrel amongst ourselves? He is the same one God, and yet we are quarreling. This is because we don't know what actual love and affection is. If there is real love and affection for the one God, we would naturally have love and affection for each other. That is why it is said in Indian Vedic culture, "Sarve sukhino bhavantu. All should be happy."

Our Scriptures are called Vedas. Do not think that the Vedas are a sectarian Hindu set of scriptures. "Veda" means knowledge. What is knowledge? Who we are, who is the Supersoul, the Supreme Soul, and what is our relationship with Him. What is this mortal body? It is a bag of urine, blood and many other unclean substances. This body is not the soul. We, the soul, are not this body. We are all part and parcel of the same Supreme Lord. All species, from top to bottom, such as animals, plants, humans, and demigods, are part and parcel of Him. The Vedas say, "Ekam eva advitiya, God is one. Everything in this world is only an expansion of His power or energy."

We must know what is happiness, and therefore we must try to follow the instructions of the Vedas, Bible, Koran, and other bona fide holy scriptures. The

teachings of all scriptures are basically the same, with some small differences due to the different languages.

It has been said in the Veda: "Na āpam sukham asti, bhuma eva sukham -worldly things cannot give us happiness." It is said in the Sanskrit language that the Supreme Lord is both ananda and anandamāya. This means that He Himself is unlimited happiness, and He is also the container and sum total of happiness. He is happiness personified, the reservoir or abode of all happiness. We are all children of the same God, and we are also therefore the same in essence. We are part and parcel of that happiness – embodiments of His qualities. The only difference between us, the living beings, and the Supreme Lord is that He is great (vibhu), whereas the living entity is small (anu). We are minute, whereas He is akhanda-tattva, unlimited.

We are all part and parcel of the same Supreme Lord, yet we have divided up this earth, saying, "This is my country, this is your country." The sun is one, the air is one, and we should therefore also be as one. This is unity in diversity. We are like the Supreme Lord, created in His image, but unfortunately we have deviated from the Him and have forgotten who we are. We think of these material bodies as the self. We spend our days in collecting money and gold, and in securing positions, thinking that these things will make us happy. But this conception is totally wrong. These bodies are mortal, and all the doctors and scientists in the entire universe cannot stop old age from approaching. You should always remember that one day, after 20, 30, or 50 years, you will become old. Your beauty and power will disappear, you won't be able to walk without the help of a stick, and after some time you will die. You will have to give up everything you have accumulated in this world. Nothing can save you; only God can save you – if you are really serving Him.

God is all attractive; He is very beautiful. The Bible states, "God created man after His own image." What does this statement mean? If God has no image, or form, then why is this written in the Bible? His body is transcendental; it is not mortal. God means: G – generator; the generator of this world; O – operator; the operator of this world, and D – destroyer; the destroyer of this world. God nourishes and supports everything in the universe. If God were formless (nirakara), without a transcendental form, and if He were without transcendental qualities such as the quality of mercy, then what would be the use of worshipping such a bogus God? God is all powerful; He has the power to have a form. He is also very merciful. He has created this entire world for us, because we deviated from Him. His illusory energy, called maya, has kept us in the prison-house of this body and mind. We should always remember this.

In the Upanisads (part of the Vedas) there is a history. There was once a self-realized soul, named Yajnavalkya, who served in the council of the great and celebrated king, Janaka Maharaja. He was very learned and expert in the Vedas, and he had two wives, Maitreyi and Katyayani. When Yajnavalkya reached old age he called his two wives and said to them: "For a long time we have lived in

the grhastha asrama. I have amassed so much gold and so many cows, and have also given each of you several children. I now want to divide all my property between you two so that you can be happy for the rest of your life. After this, please permit me to go to the forest to meditate deeply on Para-brahma the Supreme Absolute Truth, Personality of Godhead."

Hearing this, Katyayani became happy and said: "Oh yes, you can go. You want to meditate on the Supreme Lord, and this is a good aim. You are my husband, and I should try to help you."

But Maitreyi said: "Please allow me to ask you a question. Why is it that you are going to the forest? Are you not satisfied with the gold and property you have collected during your life and with your wives, children and friends? Do you have no faith that these things will make you happy?"

Yajnavalkya replied: "By asking this question you have made me very happy. You are truly a chaste wife. This question is the topic discussed in all the Vedas and Upanisads.

"Gold and property cannot give real happiness. Position in society, learning, reputation, friendship and family can never make one truly happy. Money and whatever may be bought in this world with money cannot give us what we are hankering for. We are parts and parcels of the Supreme Lord and He is anandamaya, the reservoir of all happiness. Therefore, we can find happiness only in Him. The Supreme Lord alone can satisfy us. So I wish to go now to the forest to attain Him."

Yajnavalkya also told her: "The service of brahma is actually real happiness. Therefore the Vedas state, "Na alpam sukham, bhuma eva sukham. The happiness we taste in this world is very minute (alpa). It is also perishable." Also, "Raso vai sah. Para-brahma – that is to say, the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna – is an ocean of rasa and the embodiment of supreme happiness. So I am going away to endeavor for that."

It is written in the Koran, "Inallah kalaka mein suratihi" [Allah or Kudda has shape, and from that shape He fashioned man.] Surht means "form". We find the same truth in our Indian scriptures:

aho bhagyam aho bhagyam  
nanda-gopa-vrajaukasam  
yan-mitram paramanandam  
purnam brahma sanatnam

["How greatly fortunate are Nanda Maharaja, the cowherd men and all the other inhabitants of Vrajabhumi! There is no limit to their good fortune, because the

Absolute Truth, the source of transcendental bliss, the eternal Supreme Brahman, has become their friend." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.14.32)]

In the Vedas and Upanisads it is written that we are all children of that "Happiness", the Supreme Lord. We should try to realize this truth. My request is that you should not quarrel with other religious parties. As the Counselor General said earlier, this is the way to live happily in this world. Our religion is one without a second, and that religion is love. We should love each other.

How can we do so? The Supreme Lord has created cows, and those cows give milk to all, without distinction or discrimination. They don't consider caste or creed. In the Vedas, the cow is referred to as go – go mata – mother cow. As far as I have read, nowhere in the translations of the Bible is it written that you should kill cows, or any animal. I think that after some time the Roman Catholics added something and changed the meaning of the Bible's original texts, and I think that in the original Old Testament it is not written like that.

This is also true of the Koran. Some modern Muslims think that if one is Kafir, a non-believer, he should be killed. If one thinks "Everyone outside of Islam is a non-believer, that we are the only religious persons, the only sons of Allah", this thinking is quite wrong. Everyone should act according to his scriptures. He should follow according to his religion, and he should not have any objection to the religion of others. Only then can there be unity in diversity.

What is the meaning of unity in diversity, or diversity in unity, if there is no faith or love and affection for God and for all living entities? One can call the Lord by different names, in any language, but God is one without a second. We should try to realize this fact, and try to have love and affection for all humans, all animals, trees, plants, creepers, and so on. Indian Vedic culture states that if a field has been plowed, you should not walk on it. A seed has been planted in that field, and if you walk there the seed will die. Don't cause pain and suffering to anyone. Our mission is the same as that of the respected Mayor and other honored guests present.

[At this time the Mayor and a few other dignitaries had to leave for their previously made appointments. Before they left, however, Srila Maharaja formally presented each of them with gifts of his own books and those of Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. After their departure Srila Maharaja called for bhajans to be sung, and after that he continued speaking:]

I am very happy to see that so many devotees have come from the many European countries, from America, and also from several other parts of the world. My hearty blessings to you all. I have come here to inspire you, to give you krsna-tattva, bhakti-tattva and all of other tattvas (established truths). Try to put them in your pocket; don't return to your homes empty-handed. Don't be weak; try to develop faith in our guru-parampara, in our scriptures like Bhagavad-gita, Sri

Caitanya Caritamrta and Srimad-Bhagavatam, and thus you will become strong. You should preach the mission of love and affection that I have explained.

We should try to help all others. We should not fight amongst ourselves. If we are fighting amongst ourselves and maintaining differences of opinion, how can others learn anything from us? My desire is that you love one another – love other Vaisnavas according to their gradation of devotion. I have been to America, to European countries like Holland, and next we will go to Spain and then onto Germany. All our festivals have been very successful, and several hundred devotees came to each festival and became very inspired.

You should attend our classes; don't miss this opportunity. You should distribute our books, like Bhagavad-gita, Jaiva Dharma and others. This will be a very great help and a high class of service. I am very happy; my hearty blessings to you all.

[The day before this Interfaith Gathering speech, Srila Narayana Maharaja dictated a similar speech to his assistant, Sundar Gopal dasa, and requested him to transcribe it, edit it, and print it out so that Srila Maharaja could use it as notes for his Interfaith speech. Outwardly, Srila Maharaja thought his speech would be given after two days. Since it later turned out that he would be giving the speech the next day, the transcription was not ready to print out. Thus, although Srila Maharaja spoke some of the points from the previous day's dictation, many points were different. So now there are two very nice classes. Where there were exact repetitions, as in the story of Yajnavalkya and his two wives, we took it out from the transcription that follows:]

## **[Previous day's dictation for the Custard Factory lecture:]**

In this world, all living beings are searching for happiness. Why? Because we are all parts and parcels of the same origin, Para-brahma. It is written in our Vedas and Upanisads that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is called Brahma. He is both ananda (happiness) and anandamaya (the abode or embodiment of all happiness). Therefore, we are all children of ananda, or pure happiness. We come from that ananda-brahma, and it is therefore in our nature to enjoy happiness. In the Vedas it is stated, "Raso vai sah. God, the Supreme Person, is an ocean of rasa, or mellows."

In Taittiriya Upanisad it is also said: Yato va imani bhutani jayante yena jatani jivanti yat prayanti abhisam- visanti tad brahma tad vijijnasasa. That entity from whom this whole universe has come, by whom it is supported and nourished, and in whom it returns once again, is known as Brahma."

Because we are all children or parts and parcels of that anandamaya brahma, it is natural that we also want happiness. That is why in the Vedas it has been written, "Sukham me bhuyat. I should always be happy." and "Dukham me ma bhut. Misery should not come to me." All living beings want to be happy.

The Vedas also say, "Ma tamasah jyotir gamaya – Don't go towards darkness; go towards light." What is meant by darkness here? It means ignorance. And what is meant by light? It means our true spiritual form, the Supreme Entity of whom we are atomic parts and parcels, and the eternal relationship of service we have with that Para-brahma Sri Krsna. This is jyoti, or light. By this light we can attain happiness. Otherwise, we can never attain it.

Attachment to this body and to objects related to this body is nothing but tamah, or darkness. The sense of possessiveness, or "my-ness", which we have towards the things of this world, is also tamah. On the other hand, to serve Krsna in our constitutional form is light, and it brings complete and eternal happiness. Why? Because that Para-brahma is ananda and anandamaya – He is an endless ocean of happiness. In Sri Brahma-sutra it is stated, "Anandamayo 'bhyasat. If you practise bhakti-yoga to attain anandamaya, the embodiment of all happiness, then you can have real happiness."

Why is it that we are struggling so hard to find happiness? We are all suffering in this world. Every person, in whatever position he may be, is unfulfilled. Even if one is wealthy, young, beautiful, educated, famous and influential, he will still be looking for something more to make him happy. Even the presidents and prime ministers of great nations remain unfulfilled. Rich and powerful persons throughout history, like Ravana, Hiranyakasipu, Napoleon Bonaparte and the kings and queens of England, France and Germany were deeply unhappy.

There is some happiness in this world, but it is momentary and mixed with suffering. The happiness here is not continuous. It is not complete or pure. From the lowest planet to the highest, there are so many types of miseries and no eternal happiness.

Nowhere has Brahma or Para-brahma been described using the word sukha, meaning material happiness. Rather, He has been described as ananda (meaning transcendental happiness) and anandamaya. He has also been described as rasa-svarupa, the embodiment of sweet mellows. Why is this? We should know what sukha is. Sukha does not have both an asraya (repository) and a visaya (object or recipient). It has only an asraya. A person wants sukha for himself alone. But ananda has both an asraya and a visaya – the jiva is the asraya and God, the Supreme Lord, is the visaya. When one serves the Supreme Lord he experiences ananda, and through this he also experiences sukha. By pleasing Krsna we can be happy; otherwise we cannot.

Our scriptures state that the Supreme Lord Sri Krsna is the embodiment of love and affection. In the Bible too it has perhaps been written that "God is love, and love is God." Ananda comes from love. If there is no pure love and affection, there can be no ananda; and if there is no ananda there can be no sukha. So we will have to direct our love and affection towards the Supreme Lord, and then ananda and sukha will automatically come to us.

At the present time we are in an age called Kali-yuga, the Iron Age, and now we are in the "Age of the Machine". Today we are making many inventions and discoveries in such areas as transportation and communication. Now we can easily cross the world in just a few hours. Astronauts are trying to travel to other planets, like the Moon, Mars and Jupiter. By sitting in our living room, we can see what is happening on the other side of the world – from Birmingham we can watch cricket being played in Australia or India and we can see the President of America speaking from the White House in Washington. If a person's eyes are defective, surgeons can replace them with the eyes taken from a dead body. Despite these and other advances, however, people are suffering more than ever before. They have become more materialistic and greedy. They still cannot check old age and death. They cannot prevent war and terrorism, or the spread of illness and disease. New diseases continue to appear, like SARS, which has killed many people in China and other countries. Everyone has become very fearful now.

Why is our modern science failing us? This is because it is not in fact very developed. Scientists cannot see the atma, the soul, which has a body that is transcendental. This present science cannot realize this. It cannot even see the mind. We think we are very advanced nowadays, but the needs of this body have greatly increased while the needs of the soul are being neglected completely. Why? Because people no longer have love for the Supreme Lord, and so they no longer have any real love and affection for each other. They are only interested in their own selfishness.

These days husbands and wives don't remain together. Divorce has become like a fashion. Parents reject their children and children reject their parents. People have more trust in their dogs and cats than in their family and friends. Everyone is engrossed in lust and engaged in different kinds of sense gratification. No soul can be happy while being in this body. This human life is meant for finding a way out of the prison of this body, which is destined to grow old and die. But the soul is eternal. People don't understand this, and they spend their time eating meat, fish and eggs; drinking alcohol; and trying to satisfy their lust. In this way they want to be happy, but very soon old age will come running to embrace them and they will lament. They are receiving some sukha, or happiness, but really it is not sukha; it is condensed misery.

When the vijñana, or scientific knowledge, of today will develop to a much more sophisticated level, then people may finally be able to control old age and the

endless chain of birth and death; otherwise not. To attain this vijnana, modern society must learn from our ancient Vedic culture. It is written in many places in the Vedas and Upanisads that we come from the Supreme Lord – we are His parts and parcels. Mamaivamsa jiva-loke jiva-bhutih sanatanah. Now a question arises. Who is God? Who is this Supreme Lord?

The word "God" has three letters – G-O-D. "G" stands for Generator, "O" for Operator and "D" for Destroyer. This same conclusion is found in the Hindu scriptures: atato brahma jijnasa and janma adi yasya yatah. It is the same teaching.

We should know that the Supreme Lord has a body, or form, and qualities. He is sarva-saktiman, endowed with all potency, and akhanda, indivisible. He is ekam eva advitiam, one without a second. Thus, there are not many Brahmas – one here, one in America, one in India. The God of the Christians, Muslims and Hindus are not different from each other. God is one. He has many names according to different languages, cultures and societies. Nastikas, or atheists, don't believe in God, but they believe in prakrti, Nature. They believe that everything has come from Nature and will return to Nature. In any case, the Nature they have faith in is the energy of the Supreme Lord. And the nirakara brahma of the mayavadis, or impersonalists, is also a shadow of that Supreme Lord. Thus, God is one.

In the Bible too, it has been written that God has a transcendental form: "God created man in His own image." God's image is transcendental; He has a spiritual body, and from this form, He created man. It is also said that Jesus Christ is the son of God. If the son has shape, then His father must have shape too. Thus, God has form, He has all good qualities, and He has all potencies.

The same teaching is to be found in the Koran: "Inallah kalaka mein suratihi. Allah or Kudda has shape, and from that shape He fashioned man." Allah means brhat, "the greatest". There is nothing equal to Allah in greatness. Moreover, our conception of God is still higher than this. Krsna is both the greatest of the great and the smallest of the small, and therefore it is said in sastra:

om purnam adah purnam idam  
purnat purnam udacyate  
purnasya purnam adaya  
purnam evavasisyate

[The Supreme Lord is full and complete, and if a part emanates from Him, that part is also perfect and complete. Even after so many parts have emanated from Him, He remains undiminished. Brahma is always full and complete. (Sri Isopanisad invocation)]

This is known as akhanda-tattva.

The jiva, however, is not full. This is because he is not coming directly from the Supreme Lord, but from His energy. The jiva is anu, atomic. He is a minute part of God. As a part and parcel of that Supreme Lord, he also has a transcendental form and qualities, and he has eternal existence. But he has now forgotten the Supreme Lord and therefore he is suffering in this world. If he realises this and engages in God's service, then he may be happy.

Words in sastra like arupa (formless), nirguna (without qualities) and nirakara (without features) have come from the words rupa (form), guna (qualities) and akara (features). These words are not root words. Arupa has come from rupa. Without the concept of something having form, there can be no concept of something having no form. Thus, it must be concluded that the Supreme Lord, the Original Entity, has rupa (form), guna (qualities) and akara (features).

In the Vedas it has occasionally been said that God is nirguna and arupa. Why? The meaning is that God has no material form, no material qualities and no material features. His shape and features are spiritual.

In one sense it may be said that we Vaisnavas are pure Christians, because we follow the teachings of the original Bible. We are pure Muslims, because we follow the Koran too. In his young age, Jesus went to India. He traveled to Vrndavana, Puri and other places, and was very attracted to the deities of Krsna. In north India, Krsna is called Krsna, but in Puri and the south He is called Krsna. From Krsna came Krista and then Kristus, and from Kristus came the name Christ. Thus, the term Christian actually means "devotee of Krsna". Jesus had taken that word Krista and brought it with him to Palestine.

If the Supreme Lord has no form, no qualities, no attributes, no power and no mercy, then what need is there of such a God? He would be like zero; He would be unable to help us or hear our prayers, what to speak of give us eternal bliss. We don't believe in a God devoid of mercy, power and qualities. The Bible and the Koran state that God has a form. Christians and Muslims cannot deny this.

Also, the Bible does not say that we can eat meat and eggs and drink alcohol. Similarly, the Koran does not sanction the slaughtering of cows and the eating of beef. A cow gives milk to everyone, including Muslims. She is therefore like our mother. God will not be happy if we harm any of His children, what to speak of killing our own mother. The Old Testament clearly states, "Thou shall not kill". This means we should not kill humans or animals.

God has not created animals for us to eat. He has created fruits, roots, milk, butter, grains and vegetables for this. In the original Aramaic language of the Bible, the word brosimus has been used more than twenty times. Brosimus means "food", but it has been translated as "meat". This is because in Old English "meat" did not mean "flesh"; it meant "food". But the English language has changed, and today most people wrongly believe that the Holy Bible supports meat eating.

I think that the Roman Catholic Church has changed the original teachings of the Bible. By vote they have changed the meaning of Jesus Christ's message. In the Vatican, the Pope and bishops have made all these changes. But if someone is eating meat and causing innocent animals to suffer, he will have to suffer the reactions of his cruelty. Meat means "Me eat". If you eat an animal, that animal will return to eat you. This is called the law of karma. You will eat, and you will be eaten.

In this way, Vaisnavas, who are naturally peaceful and non-violent, are pure Christians. They are also pure Muslims, pure Jews and pure Hindus.

If you want to be happy, then please take up the practice of bhakti-yoga (uniting with the Supreme Lord by means of devotional service). This bhakti is divided into sadhana (the stage of practice), bhava (the stage of spiritual emotion) and prema (the stage of pure love). To achieve prema, you should begin with sadhana. And in sadhana, the most powerful method is the chanting of God's name:

harer nama harer nama  
harer namaiva kevalam  
kalau nasty eva nasty eva  
nasty eva gatir 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."] It has been declared in the Kali-santaran Upanisad (as mentioned above) that in this Kali-yuga, the Age of Quarrel, the best method to find happiness is to chant the Hare Krsna mantra:

hare krsna hare krsna  
krsna krsna hare hare  
hare rama hare rama  
rama rama hare hare

So you should all chant this mantra and be happy.

Editorial advisors: Pujoyapad Madhava Maharaja and Sripad Brajanatha dasa  
Editors of the Custard Factory lecture: Premavati dasi, Syamarani dasi  
Transcriber of Custard Factory speech: Vasanti dasi  
Typist: Anita and Vasanti dasi

Transcriber and Editor of the previous day's dictation: Sundara Gopala dasa