

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

Meeting by the Ocean

January 14, 2007: Kona, Hawaii

[Devotee:] He has a question about following Srila Swami Prabhupada's mood. Is that in vaidhi-bhakti [*See endnote 1] or raganuga-bhakti [*See endnote 2]?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] If one follows us in vaidhi-bhakti, practicing bhakti-yoga in our line, reading Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta, Srimad-Bhagavatam and hearing classes on all these subjects, he will automatically come to raganuga. If anyone practices bhakti as Srila Rupa Gosvami explained it in Bhakti-rasamṛta-sindhu, he will surely come to raganuga. All the principles explained by Srila Rupa Gosvami are connected to raganuga. One should begin from vaidhi-bhakti – and then they can easily come to raganuga.

[Devotee:] So, a new devotee, someone who is just beginning to practice, should not try to practice raganuga? It will naturally come?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] They should hear hari-katha. [*See endnote 3] By hearing they should gradually begin vaidhi-bhakti, and then gradually they will become qualified for raganuga.

[Devotee:] Are any of us qualified for raganuga-bhakti?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] I think they will become qualified.

Do you want to go to Vaikuntha to serve Lord Narayana?

[Devotee:] No.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Do you want to go to Dvaraka to be a queen?

[Devotee:] No.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Do you want to go to Mathura?

[Devotee:] No. I want to be a servant of Radha.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] This is raganuga, because greed has come. [*See endnote 4] To those who come to me, I give a very powerful injection that will never go in vain. This will gradually take them up to radha-dasyam (personal service to Srimati Radhika). But they must follow. It has been told in Bhagavad-gita:

tad vidhi pranipatena
pariprasnena sevaya
upadeksyanti te jñanam
jñāninas tattva-darsinah

["Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized souls can impart knowledge unto you because they have seen the truth." (Bhagavad-gita, 4.34)]

Intellectually knowing everything of the philosophy will not suffice. If one knows all the scriptures, like Srimad-Bhagavatam, the Puranas, the Vedas, Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu and Ujjvala-nilamani, but if he cannot satisfy his Gurudeva, his erudition has no value. On the other hand, even if one does not have much scriptural knowledge, but he always satisfies his Gurudeva, it is certain that he will become qualified.

vikriditam vraja-vadhubhir idam ca visnoh
sraddhanvito 'nusrnuyad atha varnayed yah
bhaktim param bhagavati pratilabhya kamam
hrd-rogam asv apahinoty acirena dhirah

["Anyone who faithfully hears or describes the Lord's playful affairs with the young gopis of Vrndavana will attain the Lord's pure devotional service. Thus he will quickly become sober and conquer lust, the disease of the heart. (Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.33.39)]

The word 'anusrnuyad' in this verse means that the disciple will hear from Gurudeva. Then, by serving and pleasing him, he will become qualified to speak and preach. If a well-learned person is preaching but is not pleasing Gurudeva, he is not qualified. His speaking will not produce any good result.

[Devotee:] How do we continue to serve you when we leave here and go back to our normal lives?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] You should remember the hari-katha you are hearing this week. Try to understand it and incorporate it into your life. Always think about it, and do what I am telling in my hari-katha.

[A guest, meeting Srila Narayana Maharaja for the first time:] How do I sever worldly ties and become free to come to the spiritual realm?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] The holy name is even more powerful than the Supreme Lord Himself. If you will chant the holy name, Krsna will mercifully arrange everything. You will have the time to engage more fully in Krsna consciousness. You should chant the very powerful holy name of Krsna.

[Devotee:] Because she is so new, she still eats meat. Can you tell her something to encourage her to give that up?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] You should know that within the word 'meat' there is ME-EAT – "those who I eat, will eat me." If you eat an animal in this life, that animal will eat you in the next. That may happen even in this life. The animals will surely take revenge. So don't take meat, wine, eggs and fish – all are the same. Be careful to avoid this, beginning from today.

[Devotee:] Here is my Vyasa-puja offering. I am giving it to you now, because on

Vyasa-puja day (4 days later) there will be so many people coming to you.

[Srla Narayana Maharaja:] All can come. I am the father of all of you. The father has affection for all his children, so don't be fearful.

[Devotee:] Are the scriptures of other religions also sabda-pramana (transcendental evidence)?

[Srla Naryana Maharaja:] Yes, but so-called followers do not actually understand or follow. In the Bible it has been told, "God created man after His own image." 'After His own image' means that He has a very beautiful transcendental form. The so-called followers don't agree with that. They say, "God has no form."

This is true for Muslims also. It is not written anywhere in the Muslim scriptures: "Those who do not follow Mohammad are the enemy, and you should kill them." This is not written anywhere in the Koran. Some Muslim leaders want the entire world to become Muslim and chant Allah, Huda – by force. In the Koran it has been written that Allah has a form, and according to that form He created man – but the so-called followers don't agree.

[Devotee:] Are the Vedic scriptures in the three gunas also sabda-pramana, or only the scriptures in sattva-guna?

[Srla Narayana Maharaja:] Yes, they are sabda-pramana. Especially, Srimad-Bhagavatam is amala-pramana, the spotless evidence. If you follow Srimad-Bhagavatam, you will see that all pramanas (Vedic evidences) are there. The real meaning of sabda-pramana is Bhagavatam.

[Devotee:] Do you still have affection for me, even though I am acting so bad?

[Srla Narayana Maharaja:] Why?

[Devotee:] I am so dry in my heart.

[Srla Narayana Maharaja:] Try to make it rasastha (flavorful), as others have done and as I have done. Always be happy, sinking in the ocean of Radha-Krsna's love. Do as the other devotees are doing. Give your entire energy to that, and be happy. If you do not give your energy to that, your energy will automatically go to sense gratification – and then you cannot be happy.

[Devotee:] But the pulling is so strong.

[Srla Narayana Maharaja:] Be like us, and be happy. You should control your mind and heart.

[*Endnote – "Those who have not attained the platform of spontaneous attachment in devotional service render devotional service under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master according to the regulative principles mentioned in the revealed scriptures. According to the revealed scriptures, this kind of devotional service is called vaidhi bhakti. (Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya-lila 22.109)

Endnote 2 – “The original inhabitants of Vrndavana are attached to Krsna spontaneously in devotional service. Nothing can compare to such spontaneous devotional service, which is called ragatmika bhakti. When a devotee follows in the footsteps of the devotees of Vrndavana, his devotional service is called raganuga bhakti. (Caitanya-caritamrta, Madhya-lila 22.149)

Editorial Advisors: Sripad Madhava Maharaja and Sripad Brajanath dasa
Editor: Syamarani dasi
Transcriber and typist: Vasanti dasi