

The *dīkṣā* and *śikṣā* gurus

—Illuminations from Śrīla Prabhupāda—

Only out of His immense compassion does the Personality of Godhead reveal Himself as the spiritual master. Therefore in the dealings of an *ācārya* there are no activities but those of transcendental loving service to the Lord. He is the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead.

— CC Ādi 1.46p



Although others give help in showing the way to beginners, the guru who first initiates one with the *mahā-mantra* is to be known as the initiator, and the saints who give instructions for progressive advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are called instructing spiritual masters. The initiating and instructing spiritual masters are equal and identical manifestations of Kṛṣṇa, although they have different dealings. Their function is to guide the conditioned souls back home, back to Godhead.

— CC Ādi 1.34p



A devotee must have only one initiating spiritual master because in the scriptures acceptance of more than one is always forbidden. There is no limit, however, to the number of instructing spiritual masters one may accept. Generally a spiritual master who constantly instructs a disciple in spiritual science becomes his initiating spiritual master later on.

— CC Ādi 1.35p



There are two kinds of instructing spiritual masters. One is the liberated person fully absorbed in meditation in devotional service, and the other is he who invokes the disciple's spiritual consciousness by means of relevant instructions.

— CC Ādi 1.47p



Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī is the ideal spiritual master, for he delivers one the shelter of the lotus feet of Madana-mohana. Even though one may be unable to travel on the field of Vṛndāvana due to forgetfulness of his relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he can get an adequate opportunity to stay in Vṛndāvana and derive all spiritual benefits by the mercy of Sanātana Gosvāmī. Śrī Govindajī acts exactly like the *śikṣā-guru* (instructing spiritual master) by teaching Arjuna the *Bhagavad-gītā*. He is the original preceptor, for He gives us instructions and an opportunity to serve Him. The initiating spiritual master is a personal manifestation of Śrīla Madana-mohana *vigraha*, whereas the instructing spiritual master is a personal representative of Śrīla Govindadeva *vigraha*.

— CC Ādi 1.47p