

Why Do We Get the Guru We Get?

—Insights from Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura—

By the Lord's will, everyone receives a spiritual master according to his own qualification, just as the Christians received Jesus Christ and the Muslims Prophet Mohammad. Moreover, according to their luck, materialists remain attached to material life by accepting family priests as their spiritual masters. But if we are fortunate and search sincerely for a bona fide spiritual master, and if we humbly pray to the Lord to attain the mercy of such a guru, then by the Lord's mercy we will certainly receive a bona fide guru in this lifetime. Then by taking shelter at his lotus feet our life will become successful.

— *Amṛta Vāṇī*, **The Spiritual Master**, 61



We are given a spiritual master according to our fortune. Different people have different mentalities, and the omniscient Lord sends each an appropriate spiritual master. There are those who desire the Lord's non-duplicitous mercy and who completely depend on Him for their success. These souls please the Lord with their simple sincerity. To bestow His mercy upon them, He appears before them personally. To those who want something else from the Lord, who are not actually aspiring for His complete mercy, the Lord sends through His illusory energy a spiritual master appropriate to their mentality.

— **Op. cit.**, **The Spiritual Master**, 3



We think that now that we have received *mantras* from our spiritual master, we are saved. But if we are not prepared to take complete shelter of our spiritual master, we will be cheated in proportion to our duplicity.

— **Op. cit.**, **The Spiritual Master**, 23



If we live with the spiritual master out of pretense, we may find ourselves in trouble. Similarly, if we live away from the spiritual master, we may also be in trouble. But if we maintain staunch faith and love for our spiritual master and the Vaiṣṇavas, we will certainly be benefited regardless of whether we stay with them or live far away from them.

— **Op. cit.**, **The Spiritual Master**, 42



The *caitya-guru* bestows mercy in two ways, and it is because of these two forms of mercy that some people become materialists and others become devotees. Materialists are people who have accepted sense gratification as their ultimate goal. Instead of searching for devotional service, which is the ultimate goal of life, such people seek temporary happiness. This is the *caitya-guru's* tricky mercy. Only a cheater is fit to receive such tricky mercy. Pious, sincere devotees, however, become glorious by receiving the *caitya-guru's* true mercy.

— **Op. cit.**, **The Spiritual Master**, 78



If our minds remain unregulated after having received *mantras*, it means we have not actually received the *mantras*. Giving *mantras* is more than whispering something or blowing air into someone's ears. Accepting *mantra* initiation means to accept transcendental knowledge. This transcendental knowledge smashes to pieces the pillars of the nescience we have accumulated since time immemorial, then builds pillars of eternal truth out of transcendental knowledge. When Lord Kṛṣṇa gave Brahmā transcendental knowledge, he said, "I am the Absolute Truth." Only an empowered personality can reveal the Absolute Truth. This empowered personality is the spiritual master. Many insignificant agents or messengers come into this world, but the most powerful messengers are sent by God. Kṛṣṇa adapts them to the needs of the recipients and calls them spiritual masters. Such expert personalities reveal the Absolute Truth. Only such spiritual masters can destroy our mental speculation and bring about a radical change in our spiritual propensity.

— Op. cit., *The Spiritual Master*, 79



The Supreme Lord is present in our heart as the internal spiritual master and outside our heart as a pure devotee. If we are sincere, the Lord will guide us to a pure devotee. We may approach Him and beg for such mercy, but He is the sole in-charge for granting our wish. We cannot question Him if He refuses to grant it. Kṛṣṇa is not the caretaker of our garden. Our duty is to wait patiently for His mercy. In the meantime, we should give up material desire and engage in His service. If we sincerely seek His mercy, He will certainly bestow it upon us. Simply by His mercy we will obtain a bona fide spiritual master.

— Op. cit., *The Spiritual Master*, 75

There is no scarcity of instructors in this world. People in this world advise us to pay special attention to our immediate needs, but this creates more bad than good because our needs go on increasing. While trying to fulfill our temporary needs we drown in the ocean of unlimited needs and difficulties. It is neither beneficial for us to live in this world with attachment nor to display detachment. We should become free from the cheaters who, in the guise of saints, induce ordinary people to aim for religiosity, economic development, sense gratification, and liberation and who are busy trying to make ordinary people as apparently religious as themselves. Instead, we should become intelligent enough to concentrate our mind on topics about Śrī Caitanyadeva.

— Op. cit., *The Spiritual Master*, 51