

AM I A DEVOTEE OR A DEMON?

Who Is a Demon?

One who does not accept Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead is certainly a demon. Similarly, anyone who does not accept Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as Kṛṣṇa, the same Supreme Lord, is also to be considered a demon. – CC Ādi 8.9

What Does It Mean to Accept Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead?

It means to accept that He is the supreme doer, the supreme controller and the supreme enjoyer. No one is equal to Him, nor greater than Him.

“Under the spell of illusion, living entities are trying to be lords of all they survey, but actually they are dominated by the material energy of the Lord. The Lord is the master of material nature, and the conditioned souls are under the stringent rules of material nature. Unless one understands these bare facts, it is not possible to achieve peace in the world either individually or collectively. This is the sense of Kṛṣṇa consciousness”.

– Bg 5.29 p

Do I Have this “Sense of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness?”

Let’s Take a Reality Check!

(Check your heart’s honest response to the following purports.)

- 1) Devotees should always be happy with all the dealings of their master, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. A devotee may be put into difficulty or opulence, but he should accept both as gifts of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and jubilantly engage in the service of the Lord in all circumstances. – CC Ādi 12.37 p
- 2) One should not be unhappy when reverses come upon him by the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. A devotee should always be happy to receive the fortune awarded him by the Supreme Lord, which seems pleasant or unpleasant according to one’s judgment. – CC Ādi 12.38 p
- 3) A devotee understands that the happiness and distress he undergoes due to performing *bhakti* and committing *aparādhās* are special mercy from the Lord. It is like the father who sometimes makes his child drink milk and sometimes makes him drink bitter *neem* juice. Sometimes the father embraces and kisses his son and other times he beats him. The devotee accepts whatever happens to him as the arrangement of Lord acting for his benefit. The devotee thinks, “The Lord certainly knows what is best for me, even if

I don't know. *Karma* and time have no effect on a devotee, so this is Kṛṣṇa's personal arrangement for me. Out of His mercy, Kṛṣṇa sometimes gives me happiness and sometimes gives me distress, considering how to engage me in His service.” –

***Sārārtha-darśinī* (Brahmā's Prayers to Lord Kṛṣṇa – Text 8 p)**

Hmmm! Food for Thought, Isn't it?!

AM I LIVING IN ŚRĪ VRNDĀVANA-DHĀMA?

What Does the Word “*Dhāma*” mean?

The appearance of the form of Kṛṣṇa anywhere, and specifically within the heart, is called *dhāma*. *Dhāma* refers not only to Kṛṣṇa’s form but also to His name, His qualities and His paraphernalia. Everything becomes manifest simultaneously.

– **Kṛṣṇa Book (Prayers by the Demigods for Lord Kṛṣṇa in the Womb)**

What Does It Mean to Live in Vṛndāvana?

When a self-realized soul acts in his transcendental position, his situation is called Mathurā. In other words, when one acts in the process of *bhakti-yoga*, he may live anywhere, but actually he lives in Mathurā, Vṛndāvana. Devotion to Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda Mahārāja, is the essence of all knowledge, and wherever such knowledge is manifested is called Mathurā. Also, when one establishes *bhakti-yoga*, excluding all other methods, one’s situation is called Mathurā.

– **ŚB 10.1 (Śrīla Prabhupāda’s additional Notes)**

What Does It Mean to Be a *Vraja-vāsī*?

The *Vraja-vāsīs* use their egos to identify themselves as servants of Kṛṣṇa, their intelligence to make up their minds to act always for His satisfaction, their eyes to see Him, their tongues to chant, and their ears to hear His glories.

– **Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.7.99 p**

The cowherds of Vṛndāvana had their minds fixed on Kṛṣṇa. That is the symptom of perfect knowledge. And because their minds were always engaged in Kṛṣṇa, they were automatically freed from all material activities. This stage of life is called *yukta-vairāgya*, as enunciated by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Knowledge and renunciation, therefore, do not mean dry speculation and renunciation of activities. Rather, one must start speaking and acting only in relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

– **Kṛṣṇa Book (Lord Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma Meet the Inhabitants of Vṛndāvana)**

The difference between the pure devotees of Vṛndāvana and devotees in other places is that the residents of Vṛndāvana have no other desire but to be associated with Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa, being very kind to His devotees, fulfills their desire; because they always want Kṛṣṇa’s association, the Lord is always prepared to give it to them. The devotees of

Vṛndāvana are also spontaneous lovers. They are not required to strictly follow regulative principles because they are already naturally developed in transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa. Regulative principles are required for persons who have not achieved such a position of spontaneous love. Brahmā is also a devotee of the Lord, but he is an ordinary devotee subject to following regulative principles. He prays to Kṛṣṇa to give him the chance to take birth in Vṛndāvana so that he might be elevated to the platform of spontaneous love. –

Kṛṣṇa Book (Prayers Offered by Lord Brahmā to Lord Kṛṣṇa)

The superexcellent quality of the service rendered by the residents of Vṛndāvana is due to their spontaneously engaging all natural instincts in Your loving service. It is said that attachment for material objects and home is due to illusion, which makes a living entity conditioned in the material world. But this is only the case for persons who are not Kṛṣṇa conscious. In the case of the residents of Vṛndāvana, such obstructions as attachment to hearth and home are nonexistent. Because their attachment has been directed unto You and their homes have been converted into temples by Your constant presence there, and because they have forgotten everything for Your sake, there is no impediment. For a Kṛṣṇa conscious person, there is no such thing as impediments due to attachment for hearth and home. Nor is there illusion.

– **Kṛṣṇa Book (Prayers Offered by Lord Brahmā to Lord Kṛṣṇa)**

In Vṛndāvana there is no distinction between material and spiritual because everything is dedicated to Your loving service.

– **Kṛṣṇa Book (Prayers Offered by Lord Brahmā to Lord Kṛṣṇa)**

If cruel Kṛṣṇa can pass His time without us, why can't we pass our time without Kṛṣṇa? Of course, Kṛṣṇa is passing His days without us very happily, but we cannot pass our days happily without Him.

– **Kṛṣṇa Book (Lord Balarāma Visits Vṛndāvana)**

When Kṛṣṇa Killing Demons Is Joyful!

May 1972, ISKCON Los Angeles, California

Śrīla Prabhupāda's Garden

I went to New Dvārakā for about one week with Kīrtanānanda Mahārāja, to receive *brāhmaṇa* initiation. Each evening at dusk, Śrīla Prabhupāda went to his garden to hear Kṛṣṇa Book. A few fortunate disciples were able to join him.

By Kṛṣṇa's grace, I was asked to read. I spent each day in anticipation of this blissful activity. Seated on his asana under the arch of a vine-covered trellis, Śrīla Prabhupāda usually kept his hand in his bead bag. Sometimes we heard him softly chant the *Mahā-mantra*. He carefully listened to Kṛṣṇa Book and sometimes smiled as he heard the delightful activities of Kṛṣṇa and His brother Balarāma.

One evening as I read the story “Deliverance of Dvidida Gorilla,” Śrīla Prabhupāda smiled broadly while hearing the mischievous nature of Dvidida. He chuckled when I read the passage, “Often he would go to the hermitages of great saintly persons and sages and cause a great disturbance by smashing their beautiful gardens and orchards.”

I sensed the story was going to get better, and it did.

“Not only did he create disturbances in that way,” I continued, “But, sometimes he would pass urine and stool on their sacred sacrificial arena.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda laughed so hard I stopped reading for a moment. Seeing his reaction we all experienced incredible bliss. He ecstatically slapped his leg. He liked hearing about Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma killing the demons.

– “What’s the Difficulty?” – Śrutakīrti Prabhu

We never tire of hearing the transcendental pastimes of the Personality of Godhead, who is glorified by hymns and prayers. Those who have developed a taste for transcendental relationships with Him relish hearing of His pastimes at every moment.

– ŚB 1.1.19