

DEAR MIND, REJECT CHEATING DEVOTEES!

Oh, my dear mind, you are certainly most restless and flickering. You are not attracted by unalloyed devotees of the Lord who are free from crooked complications, but instead you remain strongly attached to the company of sly, hypocritical cheaters.

Those strange, deviant imposters are considered by you to be *sādhus*, and their association causes you to dance obediently. These men, who have a cruel and hard-hearted nature are your most worshipable objects of reverence. In great devotion you fall down at the feet of such rascals.

The real fruit of devotion ripens for one who associates with the true devotees of the Lord in a peaceful mood devoid of cheating propensities. My dear mind, giving up your unsteady flickering nature, and abandoning the association of sly deceitful cheaters in a far distant place, just worship the beautiful lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.

FAULT FINDERS OF THE DISCIPLIC SUCCESSION ARE CHEATERS!

My dear mind, I have this message to convey to you. Alas, how remorseful it is that you have sold your own independence due to being cheated by deviant rascals who turn you away from the process of spiritual life given to you by your *guru*. At your tender immature stage of spiritual realization, you foolishly listen to such cheaters, only to be misled from the true path.

You now have a new talent for finding fault with the society of devotees and the whole disciplic succession as well. Constantly remembering these supposed faults that you find, you very carefully try to “purify” yourself. Wearing neck beads no longer, marking your forehead with *tilaka* no longer, you have now made up your own new set of rules and regulations. You have rejected your initiating spiritual master (*dīkṣā-guru*), because you now experience his influence as a burning sensation in your heart.

Dear mind, you artificially agree with your former philosophy, but you don't really accept or follow it; instead, you broadcast your own whimsical concoctions just to establish yourself as some sort of incarnation. Trying to find mistakes in the devotional process established by the great devotees, you completely toss out your previous spiritual path as rubbish, neglecting all your former vows and practices.

You have become most displeased because you think that *tilaka*, initiation, and neck beads are accepted only by sly, cunning cheaters. You become angry when you find some insignificant fault with the process of the great souls, and thus you reject all attachment to the path.

Now just see here, dear brother, your present life as well as your future life are at stake. You have renounced pure gold simply to take some worthless ashes. You say that everyone else is bogus, but if you don't accept the true process of devotional service, then how will you be delivered at the time of your death?

— from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*

SUCH AN UNFORTUNATE CALAMITY!

Alas! Now I realize that all of my days passed uselessly, for I never had the great fortune of associating with the devotees of the Lord. Therefore instead of hearing from them about the process of attaining the topmost goal of human life, I have wasted my time simply working hard to earn money.

This is such a unfortunate calamity, for I now consider that I have rejected pure gold simply to become attached and devoted to a small clod of dirt. In other words, I have abandoned the bright-faced golden devotees of the Lord to associate with filthy dirty persons who are averse to Kṛṣṇa. Thus in their company I have passed my entire life dazed in madly intoxicated vanity.

Whenever I saw someone decorated with the signs of a Vaiṣṇava like *tilaka*, neck beads and *śikhā*, I would laugh at them within my mind, considering them to be completely insane. Regarding this attitude of mine to be the most highly cultured behavior, I have thereby robbed myself of the transcendental association of those touchstone-like devotees. So now in the end I am wondering. . . where has all this nonsense led me?

On the strength of my material education, I became puffed up and completely overlooked the most auspicious form of spiritual life, which is available only by devotional service. Thus I have completely steered clear of the ultimate goal of life. But now in my old age, all of this polluted material knowledge I worked so hard to attain is dwindling as my memory gradually fades away. Just see how I am captured and tormented by enjoying the fruits of my previous material activities!

Now I have just one last hope. If only the devotees would be merciful to this sinful rogue by sprinkling me with one drop from the *bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, (the nectarean ocean of pure devotion), then I will be satisfied. By the sweet influence of that single drop, I will instantly and effortlessly become liberated from the strong grip of this material world, and thus I will finally be able to cross over the ocean of nescience.

— from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*,
(Bereft of Devotees' Association)

