

Mundane Knowledge – An Obstacle to Devotion

1. Oh mind, why do you give such importance to mundane knowledge? Your discussion and deliberation on the *smṛti* scriptures, various languages and grammar certainly increases the sweet fragrance of your own material reputation, name and fame.
2. But just look here and consider this for your judgement. If you have not worshiped Lord Hari, then all your so-called knowledge is just like a vicious hell. True devotional service actually takes its birth from the seed of attraction and affection for Kṛṣṇa. Such a seed is impossible to get by the cultivation of ordinary worldly knowledge.
3. I feel that the hair-splitting scrutiny of mundane knowledge is actually harmful. On the other hand, everyone will appreciate the cultivation of that transcendental knowledge which awakens love and attachment for Kṛṣṇa within the mind.
4. Among all the obstacles to devotion, this mundane knowledge is certainly the foremost. You must sincerely kick it out, dear mind, for the real understanding is that Mother Sarasvatī, the Goddess of learning, is very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and devotion to Him is her very heart. This very devotion is indeed the sanctifying grace of Bhaktivinoda.

– Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Kalyāṇa-kalpataru*, Song 10