

WHEN ATTACHMENT MEANS DETACHMENT

Illuminations by Śrīla Prabhupāda on Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's
yukta-vairāgya principle

Consciousness Is the Key

The real elevation of human life rests on knowledge and renunciation. As stated in the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, devotional service rendered to Kṛṣṇa automatically produces perfect knowledge and renunciation. The family members of the Yadu dynasty and 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.

— KB, Ch. 82



Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has warned us that if we do not see everything as a manifestation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, we shall become victims of *phalgu-vairāgya*, or immature renunciation. Whatever we see as disconnected from Kṛṣṇa will have in our mind no relationship to Kṛṣṇa's service. But if we see everything as connected to Kṛṣṇa, we shall use everything for Kṛṣṇa's satisfaction. This is called *yukta-vairāgya*.

— ŚB 11.2.41p



To see God everywhere and in every living entity is not the final word in self-realization; one needs to see Him in all events, in every activity, in every thought influencing everyone's life, including one's own. Two things are indispensable for acquiring such a vision: first we must offer the results of all our activities to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and second, every action we perform must be done exclusively as devotional service to Him. We must constantly meditate on the fact that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the only enjoyer and proprietor of every action.

— Renunciation Through Wisdom, Ch. 5

Always Remember, Never Forget

If you always remember that everything, whatever you are using, is Kṛṣṇa's energy, you will be in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

— **The Quest of Enlightenment, Ch. 2**

Although this material energy is separated from Kṛṣṇa, it can be used for Kṛṣṇa. And when it is, it becomes spiritual. It is no longer material. **It is material only when it is used in forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa.** When the *karmīs* [fruitive workers] construct a big, big skyscraper building, their purpose is to enjoy it themselves. They are using the same things we are using to build the temple — earth, water, fire, and air. They are mixing them together to make bricks and cement. But since the building is not being used for Kṛṣṇa, it is material. Only if the building is used for the purposes of Kṛṣṇa is it spiritual. This is proper renunciation, *yukta-vairāgya*.

— **The Quest of Enlightenment, Ch. 2**



The object as it is is spirit. In one sense, the sunshine is not the sun, but at the same time, it is not different from the sun because it is the sun's heat and light. Therefore our philosophy is *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*: simultaneously one and different. **All these objects are actually spirit, but if we have no sense of Kṛṣṇa, we consider them to be material.** Sometimes people criticize us for using material devices like dictaphones, typewriters, and airplanes, but we reply that these things are spiritual. If they are used for our sense gratification, they are material, but if used in relation to Kṛṣṇa, they are spiritual. **It is the consciousness that is important.**

— **Dialectic Spiritualism, Ch. 7**

Is Renunciation Possible?

Actually, renunciation is not possible. If one renounces his palatial building and goes to a forest, there is actually no renunciation, for the palatial building is the property of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the forest is also the property of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If he changes from one property to another, that does not mean that he renounces; he was never the proprietor of either the palace or the forest. Renunciation necessitates renouncing the false understanding that one can lord it over material nature. When one renounces this false attitude and renounces the puffed-up position that he is also God, that is real renunciation. Otherwise, there is no meaning of renunciation. Rūpa Gosvāmī advises that if one renounces anything which could be applied in the service of the Lord and does not use it for that purpose, that is called *phalgu-vairāgya*, insufficient or false renunciation. Everything belongs to the Supreme Personality of Godhead; therefore everything can be engaged in the service of the Lord.

— ŚB 3.31.47p



There is no such thing, attachment, detachment. We must know that everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa, and we are servants of Kṛṣṇa. This knowledge is required. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And when you understand that everything is belonging to Kṛṣṇa, then the next sense is that “Why not everything be used for Kṛṣṇa?”

— Morning walk, 11th July 1975, Chicago



A transcendentalist is eager to execute his service to the Lord, and therefore he is grateful when the Lord provides material facilities for such service. Mere renunciation of the material world is *phalgu-vairāgya*, or an immature stage of spiritual understanding. One must come to the stage of *yukta-vairāgya*, engaging everything in the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

— ŚB 11.8.4p



A Kṛṣṇa conscious person well knows that everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa, and thus he is always free from feelings of personal possession. As such, he has no hankering for anything on his own personal account. He knows how to accept things in favor of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and how to reject things unfavorable to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

What's All This Got to Do with Surrender?!

Kṛṣṇa-ize everything favorably. That is called *śaraṇāgati*. Just like Kṛṣṇa says, *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja* [Bg. 18.66]. That does not mean that it was told to Kṛṣṇa..., Arjuna... So Arjuna did not give up his profession as a fighter, but he submitted to Kṛṣṇa. He Kṛṣṇa-ized the fighting principle. He fought for Kṛṣṇa, not that he gave up fighting. In the beginning of *Bhagavad-gītā* he was a fighter, soldier. And at the end of his understanding *Bhagavad-gītā* he remained a fighter and a soldier, but his consciousness was changed. That is the difference.

— SPL, 26th March 1971, Bombay



One who acts in Kṛṣṇa consciousness under superior direction is called *yukta*. The technical term is *yukta-vairāgya*. This is further explained by Rūpa Gosvāmī as follows:

*anāsaktasya viṣayān
yathārham upayuñjataḥ
nirbandhaḥ kṛṣṇa-sambandhe
yuktaṁ vairāgyam ucyate
(Brs 1.2.255)*

Rūpa Gosvāmī says that as long as we are in this material world we have to act; we cannot cease acting. Therefore if actions are performed and the fruits are given to Kṛṣṇa, then that is called *yukta-vairāgya*. Actually situated in renunciation, such activities clear the mirror of the mind, and as the actor gradually makes progress in spiritual realization he becomes completely surrendered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

— Bg 9.28p