

Bhakti Sangha Bhagavatam Class

5.26.22-23

Youtube Link of the Session:

Verse, Translation and Purport

|| 5.26.22 ||

ye tv iha vai rājanyā rāja-puruṣā vā apākhaṇḍā dharmā-setūn bhindanti te samparetya
vaitaraṇyām nipatanti bhinna-maryādās tasyām niraya-parikhā-bhūtāyām nadyām yādo-
gaṇair itas tato bhakṣyamāṇā ātmanā na viyuḥkṛtānāś cāsubhir uhyamānāḥ svāghena
karma-pākam anusmaranto viṇ-mūtra-pūya-śoṇita-keśa-nakhāsthi-medo-māmsa-vasā-
vāhinyām upatapyante.

A person who is born into a responsible family—such as a kṣatriya, a member of royalty or a government servant—but who neglects to execute his prescribed duties according to religious principles, and who thus becomes degraded, falls down at the time of death into the river of hell known as Vaitaraṇī. This river, which is a moat surrounding hell, is full of ferocious aquatic animals. When a sinful man is thrown into the river Vaitaraṇī, the aquatic animals there immediately begin to eat him, but because of his extremely sinful life, he does not leave his body. He constantly remembers his sinful activities and suffers terribly in that river, which is full of stool, urine, pus, blood, hair, nails, bones, marrow, flesh and fat.

॥ 5.26.23 ॥

ye tv iha vai vṛṣalī-patayo naṣṭa-śaucācāra-niyamās tyakta-lajjāḥ
paśu-caryām caranti te cāpi pretya pūya-viṇ-mūtra-śleṣma-malā-
pūrṇārṇave nipatanti tad evātibībhatsitam aśnanti.

The shameless husbands of lowborn śūdra women live exactly like animals, and therefore they have no good behavior, cleanliness or regulated life. After death, such persons are thrown into the hell called Pūyoda, where they are put into an ocean filled with pus, stool, urine, mucus, saliva and similar things. Śūdras who could not improve themselves fall into that ocean and are forced to eat those disgusting things.

Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura has sung,

**karma-kāṇḍa, jñāna-kāṇḍa, kevala viṣera bāṇḍa,
amṛta baliyā yebā khāya
nānā yoni sadā phire, kadarya bhakṣaṇa kare,
tāra janma adaḥ-pate yāya**

He says that persons following the paths of karma-kāṇḍa and jñāna-kāṇḍa (fruitive activities and speculative thinking) are missing the opportunities for human birth and gliding down into the cycle of birth and death.

Thus there is always the chance that they may be put into the Pūyoda Naraka, the hell named Pūyoda, where one is forced to eat stool, urine, pus, mucus, saliva and other abominable things.

It is significant that this verse is spoken especially about śūdras.

If one is born a śūdra, he must continually return to the ocean of Pūyoda to eat horrible things.

Thus even a born śūdra is expected to become a brāhmaṇa; that is the meaning of human life.

Everyone should improve himself. Kṛṣṇa says in Bhagavad-gītā (4.13), cātur-varṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam guṇa-karma-vibhāgaśaḥ: "According to the three modes of material nature and the work ascribed to them, four divisions of human society were created by Me."

Even if one is by qualification a śūdra, he must try to improve his position and become a brāhmaṇa.

No one should try to check a person, no matter what his present position is, from coming to the platform of a brāhmaṇa or a Vaiṣṇava.

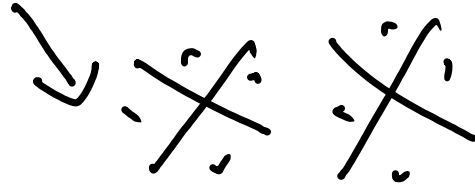
Actually, one must come to the platform of a Vaiṣṇava.

Then he automatically becomes a brāhmaṇa.

This can be done only if the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is spread, for we are trying to elevate everyone to the platform of Vaiṣṇava.

As Kṛṣṇa says in Bhagavad-gītā (18.66), sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja: "Abandon all other duties and simply surrender unto Me."

One must give up the occupational duties of a śūdra, ksatriya or vaiśya
and adopt the occupational duties of a Vaiṣṇava, which include the
activities of a brāhmaṇa.



Kṛṣṇa explains this in Bhagavad-gītā (9.32):

mām hi pārtha vyapāśritya
ye 'pi syuḥ pāpa-yonayah
striyo vaiśyās tathā śūdrās
te 'pi yānti parām gatim

"O son of Pṛthā, those who take shelter in Me, though they be of lower
birth—women, vaiśyas [merchants], as well as śūdras [workers]—can
approach the supreme destination."

Human life is specifically meant for going back home, back to Godhead.

That facility should be given to everyone, whether one be a śūdra, a vaiśya, a woman or a kṣatriya.

This is the purpose of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

However, if one is satisfied to remain a śūdra, he must suffer as described in this verse: tad evātibībhatsitam aśnanti.

Section-I

Understanding the Role of Varnāśrama
Duties in our Practice of Bhakti

Definition of Uttama Bhakti

||1.1.11||

anyābhilāsitā-śūnyam

jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam

ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-

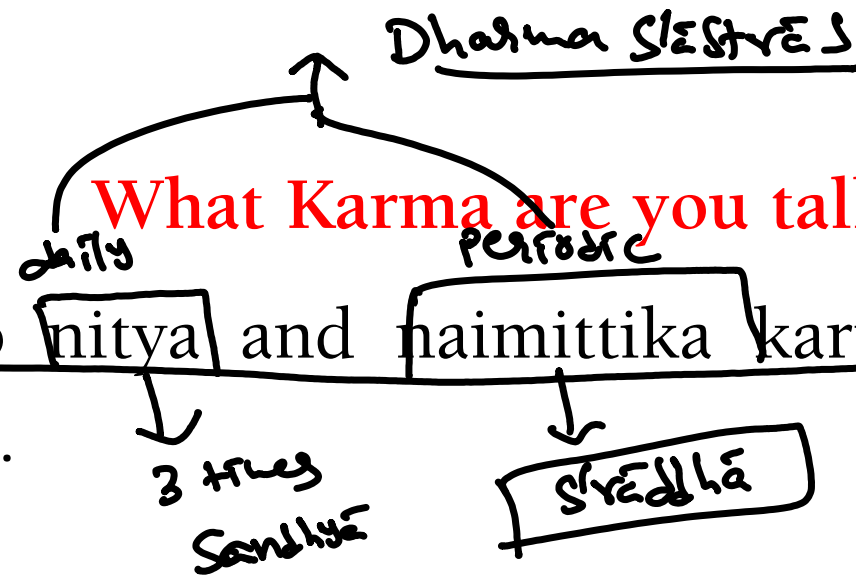
śīlanam bhaktir uttamā

The highest *bhakti* (bhaktir uttamā) is defined as continuous service or emotions (anuśīlanam) directed towards Kṛṣṇa, His expansion forms or others related to Him (kṛṣṇa), with a pleasing attitude towards Kṛṣṇa (ānukūlyena). It should be devoid of desires other than the desire to please the Lord (anyābhilāsitā-śūnyam), and unobstructed by impersonal jñāna, the materialistic rituals of karma or other unfavorable acts (jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam). (BRS)

Jnana karmadi anavrtam – Uncovered by Jnana, Karma and other Processes

What Jnana are you talking about?

- Jnana refers to knowledge of impersonal Brahman and other such knowledge that can cover one's appreciation of bhakti.

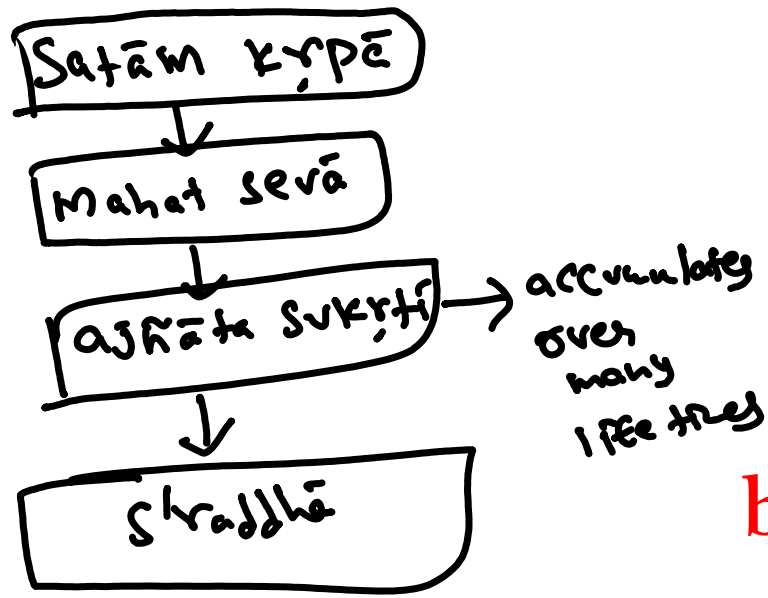


- Karma refers to nitya and naimittika karmas and not actions related to serving the Lord.

What is the meaning of Adi?

- Adi refers to vairagya, sankhya and yoga. Such things obstruct pure bhakti.

Qualification for Taking up to
Vaidhi Sadhana Bhakti



yaḥ kenāpy atibhāgyena
jāta-śraddho 'sya sevane
nātisakto na vairāgya-
bhāg asyām adhikāry asau

The person (yaḥ) who has developed faith (jāta-śraddhah)^{faith} in serving the Lord (asya sevane) by impressions arising from previous association with devotees (kenāpy atibhāgyena), who is not too attached to material objects (na ati saktah), and who is not too detached (na vairāgya-bhāg), is qualified for vaidhi-bhakti (asyām adhikāry asau).

Types of Persons Qualified for Vaidhi Sādhana Bhakti

The Three Adhikaris

Uttama Adhikari

śāstre yuktau ca nipuṇaḥ
sarvathā dr̥ḍha-niścayaḥ
praud̥ha-śraddho 'dhikārī yaḥ
sa bhaktāv uttamo mataḥ

The person who is skilful in scripture and logic (śāstre yuktau ca nipuṇaḥ), completely firm in his belief (sarvathā dr̥ḍha-niścayaḥ), with deep faith (praud̥ha-śraddho adhikārī yaḥ), is considered qualified as uttama in vaidhi-bhakti (sa bhaktāv uttamo mataḥ).

Madhyama Adhikari

yaḥ śāstrādiṣv anipunaḥ
śraddhāvān sa tu madhyamaḥ

The person who is not fully conversant with scriptures like the uttamādhikārī (yaḥ śāstra ādiṣu anipuṇaḥ) but has firm conviction in them (tu śraddhāvān) is known as the madhyama adhikārī (sa madhyamaḥ).

Kanishta Adhikari

yo bhavet komala-śraddhaḥ
sa kanisṭho nigadyate

He who has weak faith (yah bhavet komala-śraddhaḥ)
because of even less knowledge of scriptures than the
madhyamādhikārī (**implied**) is called the kanisṭha (**sa**
kanisṭhaḥ nigadyate).

Kaniṣṭha Adhikari

The person's faith is just conviction in the meaning of the scriptures
(without knowing much).

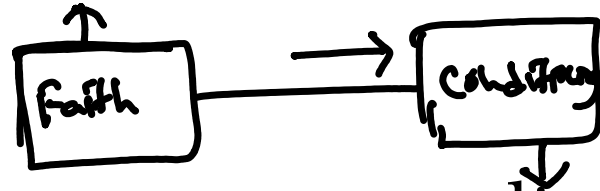
Anipuṇaḥ in this case means a little knowledgeable (less than the
madhyama).

Having weak faith (komala-śraddhā) means that it is possible to
break his faith by different scriptural reasoning.

Other persons using scriptural logic can defeat a person with tender faith.

Kauṣṭha → pure but weak faith

However, the person is not completely unconvinced, because in that case the person would not even be considered a devotee.



“Weak faith” means temporary unsteadiness of the heart when defeated by strong materialistic opponents.

Later the person regains faith in what the guru has taught by his own judgment.

Kaṅṅṅṅṅṅ, medicine & offere



**Duties Expected of a Qualified
Practitioner of Vaidhi Sadhana
Bhakti**

Prava-patya chikitsa

It has been established that bhakti should be without other desires (anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam).

It has also been shown that all humans, regardless of social position, are qualified for this type of bhakti.

But, isn't there a problem with this?



If all people who are qualified for bhakti start neglecting Varnasrama duties, then isn't it sinful?

If they do not perform their prescribed duties, (and they simply perform bhakti), all people will be engaging in sinful activity.

That being the case, how can they become pure, if they are sinful?



Should they perform some kind of atonements?

Let us SEE

Duties Expected of a Qualified Practitioner



anauṣṭhānato doṣo
bhakty-aṅgānām prajāyate
na karmanām akaranād
eṣa bhakty-adhikāriṇām

niṣiddhācārato daivāt
prāyaścittam tu nocitam
iti vaiṣṇava-śāstrāṇām
rahasyam tad-vidām matam

The person qualified for bhakti (^{Kaniṣṭha → Uḥcwa} eṣa bhakty-adhikārinām) is at fault (doṣah prajāyate) for failing to perform all of the important aṅgas of bhakti (bhakty-aṅgānām akaraṇād). But he is not at fault for failing to perform the duties of varṇa and āśrama (na karmaṇām akaraṇād).

First 20 + Last 5 aṅgas

If he, by chance (daivāt), happens to commit some sin (nisiddha acarato), there is no atonement prescribed for him (prāyaścittam tu na ucitam). This is the opinion (iti matam) of those who know the secret of Vaiṣṇava scriptures (vaiṣṇava-śāstrāṇām rahasyam tad-vidām).

It is a fault if those qualified for bhakti fail to perform the required āngas of bhakti such as observance of Ekādaśī or Janmāṣṭamī.

It is not a fault if they do not perform varṇāśrama activities.

If they commit forbidden acts because of influence of previous vaiṣṇava-aparādhā, atonement is not required, since these (pure devotees) do not have a natural tendency for sinful actions.

↓
pure faith.

↓
(K + M + U)

Bhakti alone acts as atonement. This is the conclusion of the
Vaiṣṇava scriptures.

There is no fault if a person does not perform all the sixty-four aṅgas
of bhakti.

The essential aṅgas are the first twenty and the last five are: chanting,
hearing Bhāgavatam, association with devotees, living in a holy place
and deity worship.

Summary of the Duties Expected of a Sadhaka

1. He is at fault for failing to perform the essential angas of Bhakti.
2. He is not at fault for failing to perform the duties of Varna and
Asrama
3. If he commits a forbidden activity, he need not perform the
Karma-Kandiya Prayascitta.
4. For such a person, Bhakti alone acts as his atonement.

What does it mean to not perform
Varnasrama Duties?

Is a devotee irresponsible or
Ungrateful?

Did Arjuna really follow the
Instruction of “sarva-dharman
parityajya”?

Did Krsna want Arjuna to give up
all his Varnasrama duties?

OR

Was it a Clarion Call for a Change
of Paradigm?

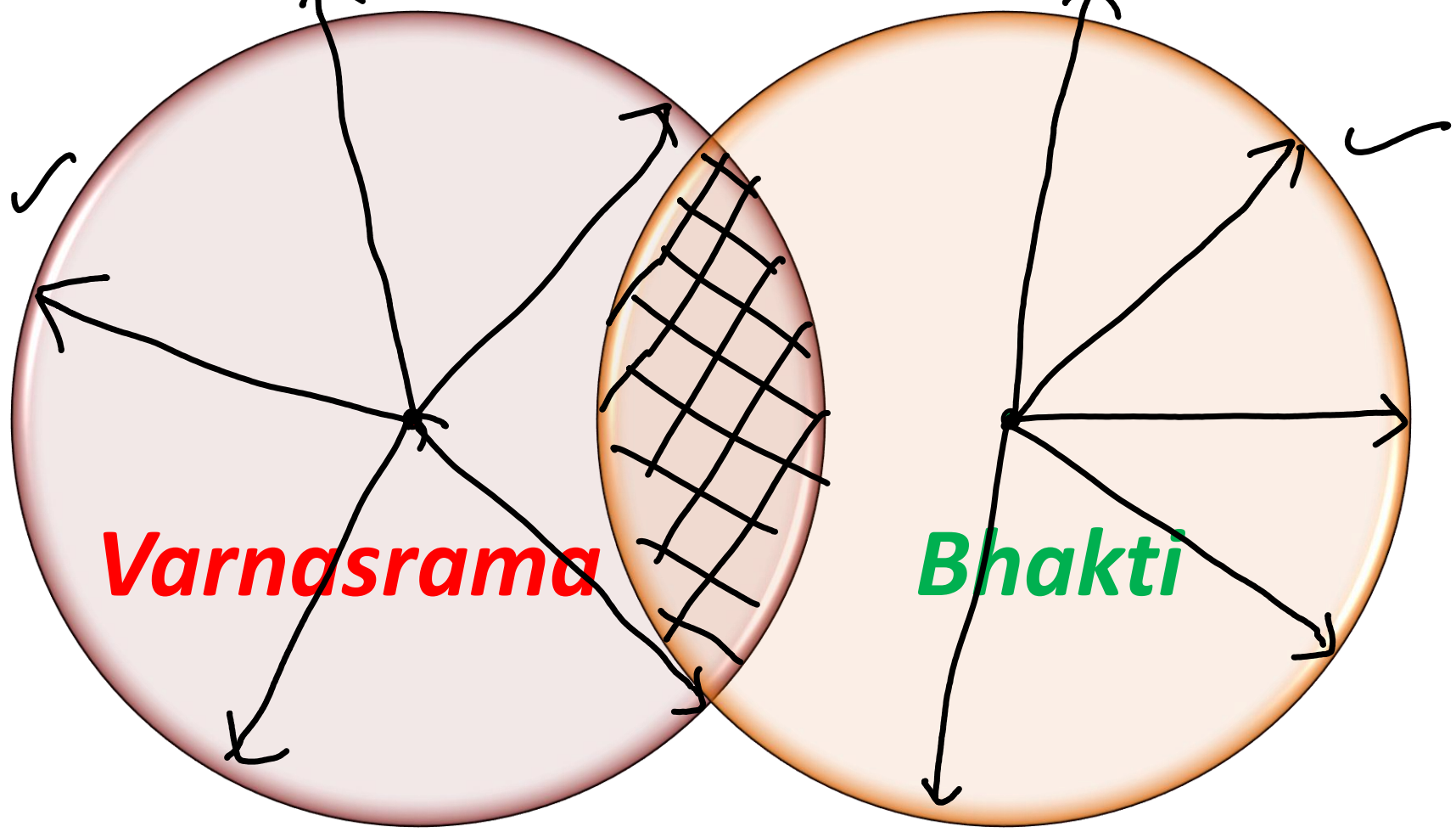
na dharmam nādharmam śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṁ kila kuru
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa-pracura-paricaryām iha tanuḥ
śacī-sūnum nandīśvara-pati-sutatve guru-varam
mukunda-preṣṭhatve smara param ajasraṁ nanu manah

Indeed (**nanu**), do not perform (**na kila kuru**) any pious acts (**dharmam**) prescribed in the Vedas and supporting literature (**śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṁ**), or sinful acts forbidden in them (**na adharmam**). Staying here in Vraja (**iha vraje**), please perform (**tanuḥ**) profuse service (**pracura-paricaryām**) to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa (**rādhā-kṛṣṇa**). O mind (**manah**), unceasingly remember (**ajasraṁ smara**) the son of Śacī (**śacī-sūnum**) as the son of Nanda Mahārāja (**nandīśvara-pati-sutatve**), and Śrī Guru (**guru-varam**) as the dearest servant of Lord Mukunda (**param mukunda-preṣṭhatve**).

	QUALIFIED FOR	ACCEPT <i>Santana?</i>	REJECT <i>Vajhana.</i>	PRAMANA ✓
1	KARMI MATERIALIST	WHAT HE LIKES (RAGA)	WHAT HE DISLIKES (DVESHA)	SELF ↓ <i>experience</i>
2	KARMA YOGI <i>JY</i> <i>A-1</i>	<i>Narayan & Ashram</i> DHARMA	ADHARMA	✓ DHARMA SASTRAS
3	BHAKTI YOGI	BHAKTI ANUKULA	BHAKTI PRATIKULA	BHAKTI SASTRAS

*dharmasya sankalpo
adharmasya varjanam*

*anukulyasya sankalpo
pratikulyasya varjanam*

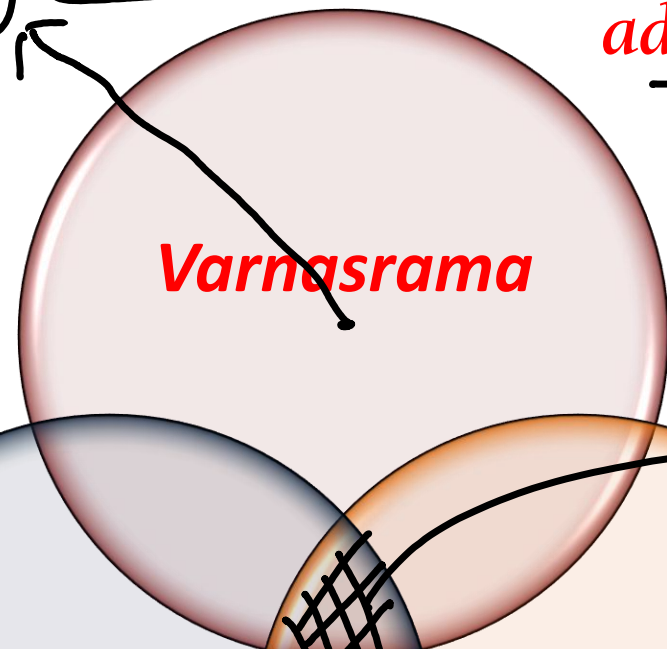


Varnasrama

Bhakti

dharmasya sankalpo
adharmasya varjanam

Bhūtiśravaṣaḥ
prety
gṛhastha



Varnasrama

Materialism

Fighting

Arjuna → Bhakti
↓
Spiritual credits

Bhakti

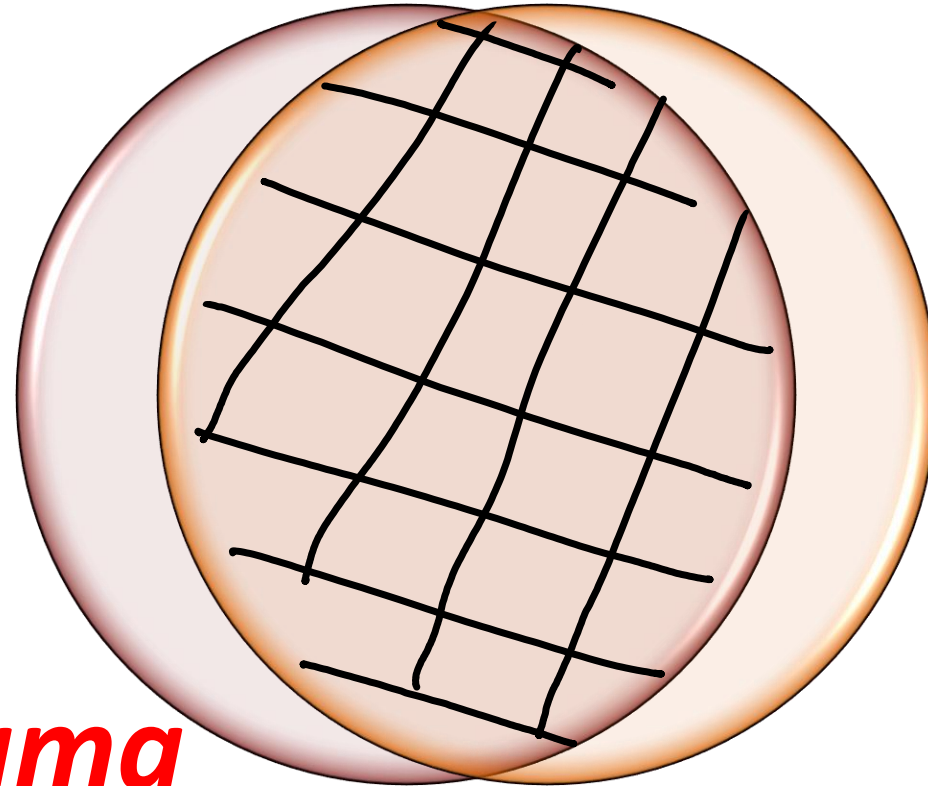
anukulyasya sankalpo
pratikulyasya varjanam

Sinful reactions
Ekalavya

raga sankalpo
dvesha varjanam

*dharmasya sankalpo
adharmasya varjanam*

*anukulyasya sankalpo
pratikulyasya varjanam*



Varnasrama

Bhakti

**What is the Basis of
Varnasrama System?**

Basis of Varnasrama – Visnu Worship

|| 1.2.13||

ataḥ pumbhir dvija-śreṣṭhā
varṇāśrama-vibhāgaśaḥ
svanuṣṭhitasya dharmasya
saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam

O best of the brāhmaṇas (**dvija-śreṣṭh**)! The complete perfection of dharma (**svanuṣṭhitasya dharmasya saṁsiddhih**), according to divisions of varṇāśrama (**varṇāśrama-vibhāgaśaḥ**) by men (**pumbhih**), is pleasing the Lord (**saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam**).

Basis of Varnasrama – Visnu Worship

|| 1.2.8 ||

dharmah svanuṣṭhitaḥ puṁsām

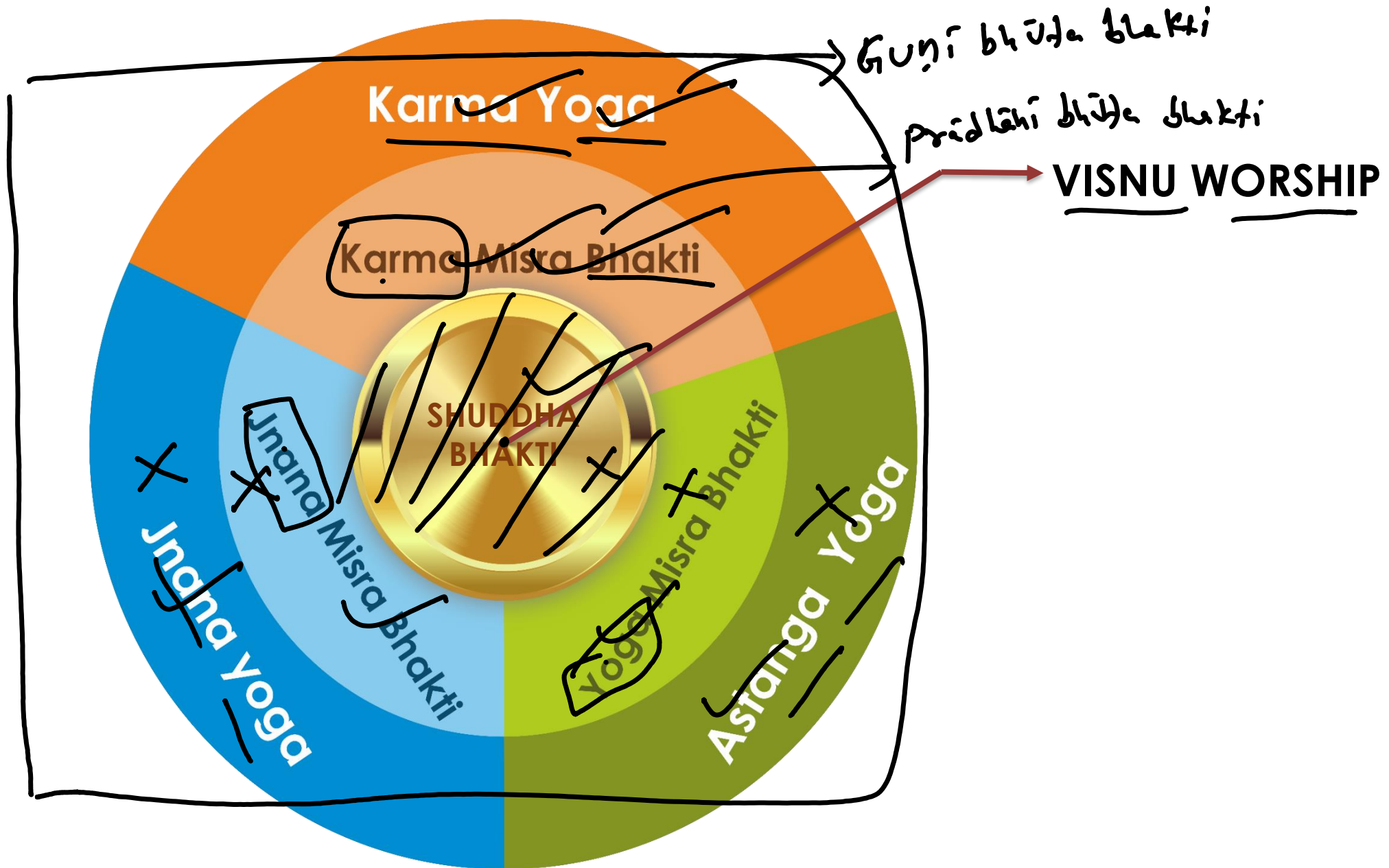
~~viṣvaksena-kathāsu yaḥ~~

~~notpādayed yadi ratim~~

śrama eva hi kevalam

Varnāśrama-dharma of the human being (**dharmah svanuṣṭhitaḥ puṁsām**), which does not produce attraction (**yadi yaḥ notpādayed ratim**) for topics of the Lord (**viṣvaksena-kathāsu**), is only wasted effort (**śrama eva hi kevalam**).

The Varnasrama System



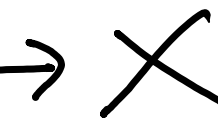
Do the Sastras recommend that
everyone within the “Varnasrama
system” perform “Varnasrama duties”
as prescribed in the “Dharma Sastras”?

What about the Jnana Yogi?



JMB

yas tv ātma-ratir eva syād
ātma-tr̥ptaś ca mānavaḥ
ātmany eva ca santuṣṭas
tasya kāryam na vidyate

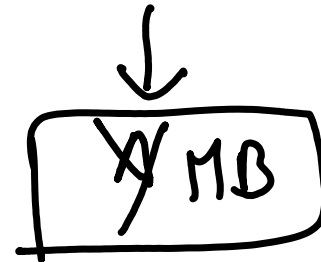


The human (**mānavaḥ**) who is attracted to the ātmā (**yaḥ tu ātma-ratir eva syād**), satisfied in the ātmā (**ātma-tr̥ptaḥ**), and completely satisfied with ātmā alone (**ātmany eva ca santuṣṭaḥ**), has nothing to do in regard to fulfilling desires (**tasya kāryam na vidyate**).

naiva tasya kṛtenārtho
nākṛteneha kaścana
na cāsya sarva-bhūteṣu
kaścid artha-vyapāśrayaḥ

He does not gain (**na eva arthaḥ**) by performance of action(**tasya kṛtena**), nor lose by not performing action (**na akṛtena iha kaścana**). For him (**asya**), nothing in this world (**na kaścid sarva-bhūteṣu**) is worthy of pursuing for fulfilling his desires (**artha-vyapāśrayaḥ**).

What about the Astanga Yogi?



- ① Yogārurukṣu → ✓
② Yogārūḍha → ✗

ārurukṣor muner yogam
karma kāraṇam ucyate
yogārūḍhasya tasyaiiva
śamaḥ kāraṇam ucyate

For the sage wishing to attain yoga (**yogam ārurukṣor muner**), action is said to be the cause of elevation (**karma kāraṇam ucyate**). For the sage who has already attained yoga (**yogārūḍhasya**), cessation of action is said to be the cause of maintaining that state (**tasya eva śamaḥ kāraṇam ucyate**).

What about the Bhakti Yogi?



sarva-dharman parityajya
mām ekam śaraṇam vraja |
aham tvām sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā sucaḥ

Giving up all dharmas (**sarva-dharman parityajya**), surrender
to Me alone (**mām ekam śaraṇam vraja**). I will deliver you
(**aham tvām mokṣayiṣyāmi**) from all sins (**sarva-pāpebhyo**).
Do not worry (**mā sucaḥ**). (**BG 18.66**)

What is the role of Varnasrama



Prescribed Duties?

What is the role of Varnasrama Prescribed Duties?

The Lord explains that this renunciation of fighting does not lead to liberation, svarga or fame.

It is not practiced (justam) by those aspiring for liberation (ārya), because those who are ārya practice their designated duties for purification of the heart. (BG 2.2 Commentary by Baladeva Vidyabhusana)

✓ 4 duties

What is the role of Varnasrama Prescribed Duties?

The renounced order of life can be accepted when one has been purified by the discharge of the prescribed form of duties which are laid down just to purify the hearts of materialistic men.

↓ V A duties.

Without purification, one cannot attain success by abruptly adopting the fourth order of life (sannyāsa). (BG 3.4 Purport by Srila Prabhupada)

↓
fy

What is the role of Varnasrama Prescribed Duties?

Work should not be given up capriciously, without purification of materialistic propensities.

Anyone who is in the material world is certainly possessed of the impure propensity for lording it over material nature, or, in other words, for sense gratification. Such polluted propensities have to be cleared.

Without doing so, through prescribed duties, one should never attempt to become a so-called transcendentalist, renouncing work and living at the cost of others. (**BG 3.8 Purport by Srila Prabhupada**)

What is the role of Varnasrama Prescribed Duties?

Now, if you are a saniṣṭha bhakta, you perform dharma for purification of the heart.

If you are a pariniṣṭhita bhakti, you perform dharmas to teach others.

Performance of dharma is required for these types of bhakti. (**BG**
18.66 Commentary by Baladeva Vidyabhusana)

How would a Bhakti Yogi's Heart be
Purified if he neglects his Varnasrama
Duties? ?

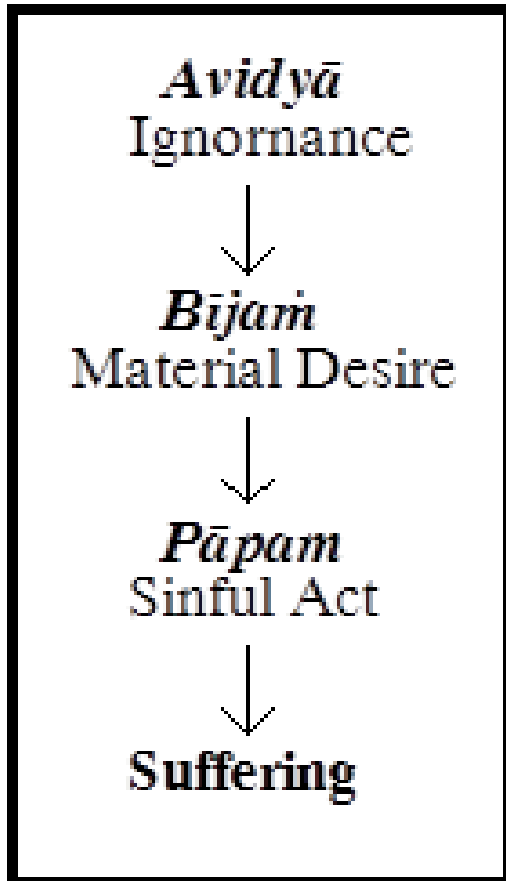
Kleśāghnī – Destruction of Suffering

↓ Prārabdhā & ābhīrabdhā

↓
Sinhful desires
Sinhful vāśānāḥ

Kleśaghñī – Destruction of Suffering

- Kleśa or suffering is three fold.



- Sinful reaction (*Papam*) is of 2 types.
- Effects that are to be experienced in future lives (*Aprarabdha*).
- Effects that are to be experienced in this life time (*Prarabdha*).

Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam Śloka One

ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam bhava-mahā-dāvāgni-nirvāpaṇam
śreyaḥ-kairava-candrikā-vitarāṇam vidyā-vadhū-jīvanam
ānandāmbudhi-varḍhanam prati-padam pūrṇāmṛtāsvādanam
sarvātma-snapanam param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam

How would a Bhakti Yogi's Heart be Purified?

|| 9.31 ||

kṣipram bhavati dharmātmā
śaśvat-chāntim nigacchati
kaunteya pratijānīhi
na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati

Very quickly he becomes a righteous person (kṣipram bhavati dharmātmā), and becomes completely devoid of contamination (śaśvat-śāntim nigacchati). O son of Kuntī (kaunteya), you declare (pratijānīhi) that My devotee never perishes (na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati).

Summary of the Duties Expected of a Sadhaka

1. He is at fault for failing to perform the essential angas of Bhakti.
2. He is not at fault for failing to perform the duties of Varna and Asrama
3. If he commits a forbidden activity, he need not perform the Karma-Kandiya Prayascitta.
4. For such a person, Bhakti alone acts as his atonement.

Proof for the Duties Expected of a
Qualified Practitioner

Proof for the Duties Expected of a Qualified Practitioner

sve sve 'dhikāre yā niṣṭhā
sa guṇaḥ parikīrtitaḥ |
viparyayas tu doṣaḥ syād
ubhayaor eṣa niścayaḥ

Steadiness in one's own position (**sve sve adhikāre yā niṣṭhā**) is declared to be actual piety (**sa guṇaḥ parikīrtitaḥ**), whereas deviation from one's position is considered impiety (**viparyayah tu doṣaḥ syād**). In this way the two are definitely ascertained (**ubhayaor eṣa niścayaḥ**). (SB 11.21.2)

Proof for the Duties Expected of a Qualified Practitioner

With the words *sve sve ādhikāre*, different qualifications are signified for karma, jñāna and bhakti.

For the person qualified for pure bhakti, performance of the actions of karma or jñāna, and failure to perform bhakti are both faults.

sva-pāda-mūlam bhajataḥ priyasya
tyaktānya-bhāvasya hariḥ pareśaḥ
vikarma yac cotpatitam kathañcid
dhunoti sarvaṁ hr̥di sanniviṣṭaḥ

One who has thus given up all other engagements (**tyakta anya-bhāvasya**) and has taken full shelter at the lotus feet of Hari (**sva-pāda-mūlam bhajataḥ**), the Supreme Personality of Godhead (**pareśaḥ**), is very dear to the Lord (**hariḥ priyasya**). Indeed, if such a surrendered soul accidentally commits some sinful activity (**kathañcid yad vikarma**), the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is seated within everyone's heart (**sarvaṁ hr̥di sanniviṣṭaḥ**), immediately takes away (**dhunoti**) the reaction to such sin (**yat utpatitam**). (SB 11.5.42)

tasman mad-bhakti-yuktasya
yogino vai mad-atmanah
na jnanam na ca vairagyam
prayah sreyo bhaved iha

Therefore (**tasman**), for a devotee engaged in My loving service (**yogino mad-bhakti-yuktasya**), with mind fixed on Me (**mad-atmanah**), the cultivation of knowledge and renunciation (**jnanam ca vairagyam**) is generally not (**na prayah**) the means of achieving the highest perfection within this world (**sreyo bhaved iha**).(**SB 11.20.31**)

tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta
na nirvidyeta yāvatā
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā
śraddhā yāvan na jāyate

One should continue to perform the Vedic ritualistic activities (**tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta**) until one actually becomes detached from material sense gratification (**na nirvidyeta yāvatā**) and develops faith for hearing and chanting about Me (**mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā śraddhā yāvan na jāyate**). (SB 11.20.9)

tyaktvā sva-dharmam caraṇāmbujam harer
bhajann apakvo 'tha patet tato yadi
yatra kva vābhadram abhūd amuṣya kim
ko vārtha āpto 'bhajatām sva-dharmataḥ

If a person having given up his duties in varṇāśrama (**tyaktvā sva-dharmam**), begins the worship of the Lord's lotus feet (**hareh caraṇāmbujam bhajann**), and happens to deviate or not reach perfection (**yadi apakvah atha tato patet**), there is no misfortune for him at all in the future (**yatra kva vābhadram abhūd amuṣya kim**). But what does (**kah vā arthah**) the person who follows all duties of varṇāśrama (**sva-dharmataḥ**) but does not worship the Lord (**abhajatām**) gain (**āptah**)? (**SB 1.5.17**)

ājñāyaiva guṇān doṣān

mayādiṣṭān api svakān |

dharmān santyajya yaḥ sarvān
mām bhajet sa ca sattamah

He perfectly understands (**ājñāya**) that the ordinary religious duties prescribed by Me in various Vedic scriptures (**mayā ādiṣṭān**) possess favourable qualities that purify the performer, and he knows that neglect of such duties constitutes a discrepancy in one's life (**guṇān doṣān**). Having taken complete shelter at My lotus feet, however, a saintly person ultimately renounces such ordinary religious duties (**dharmān santyajya yaḥ sarvān**) and worships Me alone (**mām bhajet**). He is thus considered the best among all living entities (**sa ca sattamah**). (SB 11.11.32)

devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛṇām pitṛṇām
na kiṅkaro nāyam ṛṇī ca rājan
sarvātmanā yaḥ śaraṇam śaraṇyam
gato mukundam pariḥṛtya kartam

Anyone who has taken shelter of the lotus feet of Mukunda (**yaḥ gato mukundam śaraṇam**), the giver of liberation (**śaraṇyam**), giving up all kinds of obligations (**pariḥṛtya kartam**), and has taken to the path in all seriousness (**sarvātmanā**), owes neither duties nor obligations (**na kiṅkaro na ayam ṛṇī**) to the demi-gods, sages, general living entities, family members, humankind or forefathers (**deva-rṣi-bhūta-āpta-nṛṇām-pitṛṇām**). (SB 11.5.41)

Giving up all obligations (parihṛtya kartam) here means that the devotee rejects the distraction of one's attention caused by thinking that Indra or Candra must be worshipped.

Having surrendered (śaraṇam gataḥ), that person has destroyed all prārabdha-karmas and consequently destroys being situated in varṇāśrama (since he has no material guṇas).

That person is no longer obliged to perform regular varṇāśrama duties.

sarva-dharman parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja |
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā sucaḥ

Giving up all dharmas (**sarva-dharman parityajya**), surrender to Me alone (**mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja**). I will deliver you (**ahaṁ tvām mokṣayiṣyāmi**) from all sins (**sarva-pāpebhyo**). Do not worry (**mā sucaḥ**). (BG 18.66)

“Am I supposed to perform the meditation and other processes along with my varṇa āśrama duties or without them?”

“Giving up all duties of **varṇa and āśrama** (sarva-dharmān parityajya), surrender only to Me.”

One should not say that parityaja means sannyasya, to adopt the sannyāsa order, because Arjuna was a kṣatriya, not qualified for sannyāsa.

As well it should not be said the Lord used Arjuna just to instruct all other people who are not kṣatriyas to take sannyāsa, for Arjuna was qualified to be the recipient of the Lord's instructions which could not be taught to others.

Nor should one explain the meaning of parityajya in this verse as merely “give up all the results of activities.”

devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛṇām pitṛṇām
nāyam kiṅkaro nāyam ṛṇī ca rājan
sarvātmanā yaḥ śaraṇam śaraṇyam
gato mukundaṁ parihṛtya kartam

martyo yadā tyakta-samasta-karmā
niveditātmā vicikīrṣito me
tadāmṛtatvam pratipadyamāno
mayātma-bhūyāya ca kalpate vai

tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta
na nirvidyeta yāvatā
mat-kathā-śravaṇādaḥ vā
śraddhā yāvan na jāyate

ājñāyaiva guṇān doṣān
mayādiṣṭān api svakān
dharmān santyajya yaḥ sarvān
mām bhajet sa ca sattamaḥ

The meaning of the word should thus be explained using all these statements of the Lord with no contradiction.

The meaning can indeed be understood correctly by the prefix pari which means “completely.”

“Surrender only to Me (mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja).”

This means that there should be no worship of devatās, aṣṭāṅga-yoga, jñāna or dharma or other elements in that surrender.

“And by following My orders you should not fear some loss on your part in giving up nitya and naimittika-karmas.

The order to perform these nitya-karmas was given by Me in the form of the Vedas.

Now, I am ordering you to give them all up completely.

Is there sin in not performing your nitya-karmas?

No, rather the opposite—in performing nitya-karmas you will commit sin, because of disobeying My direct order.”

Then starting today, if I surrender to You, I should then do whatever You say whether it is good or bad.

If You make me perform dharma, then I will not worry at all.

But if You engage me in adharma, since You are the Supreme Lord and can do what You want, then what will happen to me? Please tell me.”

“I will free you from all sinful reactions—from whatever reactions exist from the far past and recent past, and from whatever reactions arise from acts I will make you perform in the future.

This is not impossible for Me to do, though it cannot be done by anyone else to whom you surrender.

Taking you as the means, I am giving instructions to the whole world.

Do not feel grief for your own welfare or that of others.

May you and all other people, giving up all dharmas—your own and everyone else’s—absorbing your thoughts and actions in Me, surrendering to Me, remain in contentment.

I Myself have accepted the burden of freeing you from sin, and freeing you from saṃsāra.

**ananyāś cintayanto mām
ye janāḥ paryupāsate
teṣām nityābhiyuktānām
yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham**

But I carry the burden of supply and maintenance of those who desire constant association with Me, and who, thinking only of Me, worship only Me. BG 9.22

Do not lament thinking ‘Oh, I have thrown my own burden on my master!’

It is no strain at all for Me, who am most affectionate to My devotee.

Nothing else remains to be instructed.”

Thus the scripture has been concluded.

Proof of Duties Expected of a Qualified Practitioner

The word pari (fully) should be understood to mean that the rejection (tyāga) should be complete.

“I will free you from all sins (sarva-pāpēbhyaḥ)” means, “I will free you from all impediments to bhakti.”

There is no sin for them because those with faith in bhakti give up the duties of dharma by the order of the Lord.

Varnāśrama duties are not Limbs of
Bhakti

Varnāśrama duties are not Limbs of Bhakti

sammatam bhakti-vijñānām
bhakty-aṅgatvam na karmaṇām

The consensus of those knowledgeable of bhakti (sammatam bhakti-vijñānām) is that karma (varnāśrama duties) is not an aṅga of bhakti (karmaṇām na bhakty-aṅgatvam). (BRS)

Vaṛṇāśrama duties are not Limbs of Bhakti

Someone may argue as follows.

“True, there is a glorification of all the aṅgas of pure bhakti (above all other processes), but Parāśara has glorified karma as well:

varṇāśramācaravatā
puruṣeṇa paraḥ pumān |
viṣṇur ārādhyate panthā
nānyat tat-toṣa-kāraṇam ||

The Supreme Lord Viṣṇu (**paraḥ pumān viṣṇuh**) is to be worshipped by man (**puruṣeṇa ārādhyate**) through the duties of varṇāśrama (**varṇāśrama ācaravatā**). There is no other path for satisfying the Lord (**na anyat panthā tat-toṣa-kāraṇam**). (**Viṣṇu Purāṇa 3.8.9**)

This Viṣṇu Purāṇa verse substantiates that karma is an aṅga of bhakti, for in that verse there is evident approval for worshipping Viṣṇu in combination with varṇāśrama activities.”

However, the author states that the consensus (sammatam) of those thoroughly experienced in bhakti, the pure devotees, including even Parāśara, is otherwise.

Parāśara has also said:

yajñeśācyuta govinda mādhavānanta keśava |
kṛṣṇa viṣṇo hr̥ṣīkeśety āha rājā sa kevalam |
nānyad jagāda maitreya kiñcit svapnāntareṣv api

O Maitreya (**maitreya**), King Bharata (**rājā**) simply said (**āha kevalam**), “O master of sacrifice (**yajñeśa**), O Acyuta, Govinda, Mādhava, Ananta, Keśava, Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu, Hr̥ṣīkeśa (**acyuta govinda mādhava ananta keśava kṛṣṇa viṣṇo hr̥ṣīkeśa ity**)!” He said nothing else (**nānyad jagāda kiñcit**), even in his dreams (**svapnāntareṣv api**).
(**Viṣṇu Purāṇa 2.13.10**)

Thus, the statement quoted from Viṣṇu Purāṇa that approves varṇāśrama as bhakti, has been spoken only to encourage those persons who are not qualified for pure bhakti.

tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta
na nirvidyeta yāvatā |
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā
śraddhā yāvan na jāyate

One should continue to perform the daily and periodic varṇāśrama activities (**tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta**) until one actually becomes detached from material sense gratification (**na nirvidyeta yāvatā**) and develops faith for hearing and chanting about Me (**mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā śraddhā yāvan na jāyate**). SB 11.20.9

This verse explains the circumstances in which the performance of varṇāśrama is applicable.

Because one should perform varṇāśrama duties until one reaches detachment from enjoyment and develops faith in bhakti, directions are given to engage in varṇāśrama.

The verse spoken by Parāśara thus means that because Viṣṇu is worshipped by a person who follows varṇāśrama duties, that path and no other is satisfying to Viṣṇu (This, of course, refers to a person with no faith in bhakti).

But Parāśara also says:

sā hānis tan mahac chidram
sa mohah sa ca vibhramah |
yan muhūrtaṁ kṣaṇaṁ vāpi
vāsudevaṁ na kīrtayet ||

If even for a moment (**yad muhūrtaṁ kṣaṇaṁ vāpi**) the remembrance of Vāsudeva, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is missed (**vāsudevaṁ na kīrtayet**), it is the greatest loss (**sā hānih**). It is the greatest fault (**tad mahad chidram**), the greatest illusion (**sa mohah**), and the greatest anomaly (**sa ca vibhramah**). (**Viṣṇu-dharma 1.16**)

The commentary says karmāṇi means daily and periodic duties of varṇāśrama.

The scriptures say:

śruti-smṛtī mamaivājñe
yas te ullāṅghya vartate |
ājñā-cchedī mama dveṣī
mad-bhakto'pi na vaiṣṇavaḥ ||

Whoever disregards the śruti and smṛti scriptures (**yah śruti-smṛtī ullāṅghya vartate**) that are mine (**mama eva ājñe yas te**) is a breaker of My order (**ājñā-cchedī**), a hater of Me (**mama dveṣī**). Even if he is My devotee he is not a Vaisnava (**mad-bhakto'pi na vaiṣṇavaḥ**).

However, this does not apply to the devotee because the devotee is following another order.

He breaks the first order, to perform varṇāśrama, only because he is following another order of the Lord which is based on detachment from material enjoyment and faith in bhakti.

Some scholars argue that simply by following the principles of varṇa and āśrama one can gradually rise to the perfections reached by practicing devotional service, but this argument is not accepted by the great authorities.

Lord Caitanya also condemned this idea while He was talking with Rāmānanda Rāya about the gradual development of devotional service.

He rejected the idea of the importance of varṇāśrama-dharma when it was put forward by Rāmānanda Rāya.

He said that this advancement of varṇa and āśrama is merely external.

There is a higher principle.

In Bhagavad-gītā also the Lord says that one has to give up all other principles of elevation and take simply to the method of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

That will help one in achieving the highest perfection of life.

In the Eleventh Canto, Twentieth Chapter, verse 9, of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the Lord Himself says, "One should execute the prescribed duties of varṇa and āśrama as long as he has not developed spontaneous attachment for hearing about My pastimes and activities."

In other words, the prescribed forms of varṇa and āśrama are ritualistic ceremonies of religion intended for economic development, sense gratification or salvation.

All of these things are recommended for persons who have not developed Kṛṣṇa consciousness; in fact, all such activities are recommended in the revealed scriptures only to bring one to the point of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

But one who has already developed spontaneous attachment for Kṛṣṇa does not require to execute the duties prescribed in the scriptures.

All Said and Done.....

~~Srila Prabhupada did say that 50% of his mission is “Establishing Varnasrama”!!!~~

~~How do we Understand this?~~

Option – 1

Establishing Varnasrama institution as a
stepping stone for the Outsiders to take up
to Suddha Bhakti

Morning Walk – Feb 9, 1976, Mayapur

Prabhupāda: No, ISKCON is not going to be social reformer, but as far as possible, we can help. Our main business is how to make everyone Kṛṣṇa conscious. That is our business. We cannot take up, but if possible, we can take up all the system of varṇāśrama.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: If varṇāśrama is neglected, then how can there be proper functioning of society?

Prabhupāda: No. If the society chants Hare Kṛṣṇa seriously, then it is all right. Never mind whatever is done. It doesn't matter. Pāpī tāpī jata chilo, hari-nāme uddhārilo. This is the power of hari-saṅkīrtana. If one is absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, so all benefit is there. So long in the bodily concept of life, we require this varṇāśrama-dharma. Otherwise there is no necessity.

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: Yes.

Prabhupāda: ~~Caitanya Mahāprabhu you have read in the eighth chapter, Madhya-līlā, talk between Rāmānanda Rāya and Caitanya Mahāprabhu?~~ So "Perfectional life, how begins?" This question was raised by Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and Rāmānanda replied, "It begins with the varṇāśrama-dharma, regulated social life."

Tamāla Kṛṣṇa: He rejected that.

Prabhupāda: Not rejected.

"Yes, it is not very important." Eho bāhya: "This is external." Āge
kaha āra: "If you know something more."

So the varṇāśrama-dharma is a good help undoubtedly, but it is not
important for Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Otherwise how could I start this movement in the Western country?

There was no varṇāśrama-dharma.

But that did not hamper my movement.

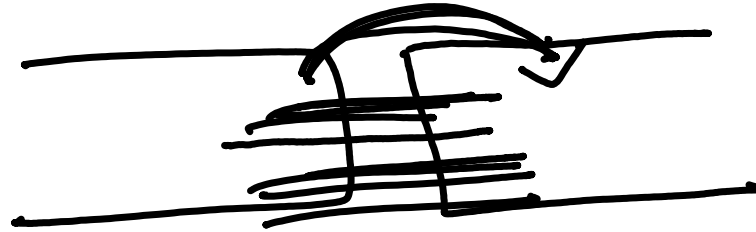
Now people are surprised: "How these people have become such great devotees."

So it was not based on varṇāśrama-dharma.

No. Because the whole movement is spiritual. It starts from the spiritual platform, ahaṁ brahmāsmi. Jīvera svarūpa haya nitya-kṛṣṇa-dāsa [Cc. Madhya 20.108].

Samāśritā ye pada-pallava-plavam mahat-padam punya-yaśo
murāreḥ, bhavāmbudhir vatsa-padam param [SB 10.14.58].

Now just like here is a gap.



So you can go by the bridge, and if you can jump over, that is also
going. That is also going.

So to become Kṛṣṇa conscious means to jump over to the spiritual
platform immediately.

And this varṇāśrama-dharma, sannyāsa, varṇa-tyāga, karma-tyāga,
these are different steps only.

But if you become Kṛṣṇa conscious seriously, then you jump over all
these steps; you go immediately.

That lift and the staircase.

By staircase you go step by step; by lift you can go immediately,
faster.

Option – 2

Accepting the Varnasrama Occupations in
the mood of “Anukulyasya Sankalpo” as a
viable alternative for the modern Ugra
Karma Life Style

Srimad Bhagavatam – 7.14.10 Purport

These are the different occupational duties by which men should earn their livelihood, and in this way human society should be simple.

At the present moment, however, everyone is engaged in technological advancement, which is described in Bhagavad-gītā as ugra-karma—extremely severe endeavor.

This ugra-karma is the cause of agitation within the human mind.

Men are engaging in many sinful activities and becoming degraded by opening slaughterhouses, breweries and cigarette factories, as well as nightclubs and other establishments for sense enjoyment. In this way they are spoiling their lives.

In all of these activities, of course, householders are involved, and therefore it is advised here, with the use of the word api, that even though one is a householder, one should not engage himself in severe hardships.

One's means of livelihood should be extremely simple.

As for those who are not gr̥hasthas—the brahmacārīs, vānaprasthas and sannyāsīs—they don't have to do anything but strive for advancement in spiritual life.

This means that three fourths of the entire population should stop sense gratification and simply be engaged in the advancement of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Only one fourth of the population should be gr̥hastha, and that should be according to laws of restricted sense gratification.

The gr̥hasthas, vānaprasthas, brahmacārīs and sann̥yāsīs should endeavor together with their total energy to become Kṛṣṇa conscious.

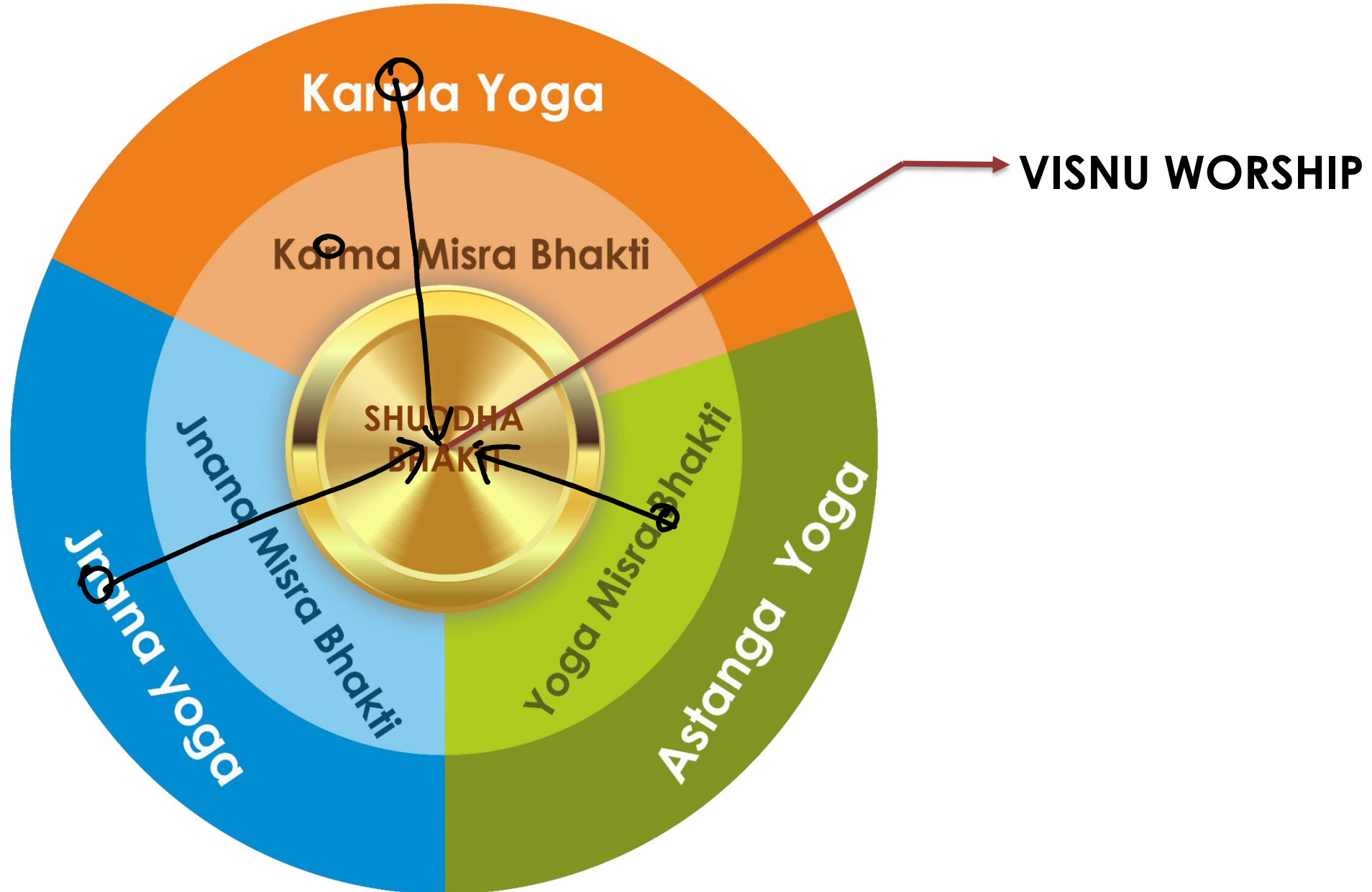
This type of civilization is called daiva-varṇāśrama.

One of the objectives of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is to establish this daiva-varṇāśrama, but not to encourage so-called varṇāśrama without scientifically organized endeavor by human society.

Option – 3

Why should the Krsna Consciousness
Movement be restricted only to those who
are “anyabhilasita sunyam?”

The Varnasrama System



|| 2.3.10 ||

akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā
mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ |
tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena
yajeta puruṣam param ||

The person desiring destruction of all desires (**akāmaḥ**), the person with all desires (**sarva-kāmo vā**), and even the person with an intense desire for liberation (**mokṣa-kāma**), if he has good intelligence (**udāra-dhīḥ**), will worship the Supreme Lord (**yajeta puruṣam param**) with pure bhakti (**tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena**).

The Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is described in the Bhagavad-gītā as puruṣottama, or the Supreme Personality.

It is He only who can award liberation to the impersonalists by absorbing such aspirants in the brahma-jyoti, the bodily rays of the Lord.

The brahma-jyoti is not separate from the Lord, as the glowing sun $\bar{r}\bar{a}y$ is not independent of the sun disc.

Therefore one who desires to merge into the supreme impersonal brahma-jyoti must also worship the Lord by bhakti-yoga, as recommended here in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

Bhakti-yoga is especially stressed here as the means of all perfection.

In the previous chapters it has been stated that bhakti-yoga is the ultimate goal of both karma-yoga and jñāna-yoga, and in the same way in this chapter it is emphatically declared that bhakti-yoga is the ultimate goal of the different varieties of worship of the different demigods.

Bhakti-yoga, thus being the supreme means of self-realization, is recommended here.

Everyone must therefore seriously take up the methods of bhakti-yoga, even though one aspires for material enjoyment or liberation from material bondage.

Option – 4

ISKCON Should be a Varnasrama
Pilot Project for the World:

Room Conversation

—

February 14, 1977, Māyāpur

Satsvarūpa: Introduced starting with ISKCON community?

Prabhupāda: Yes. Yes. Brāhmaṇa, kṣatriyas. There must be regular education.

Hari-śauri: But in our community, if the..., being as we're training up as Vaiṣṇavas...

Prabhupāda: Yes.

Hari-śauri: Where will we introduce the varṇāśrama system, then?

Prabhupāda: In our society, amongst our members.

Hari-śauri: But then if everybody's being raised to the brahminical platform...

Prabhupāda: Not everybody. Why you are misunderstanding?
Varnāśrama, not everybody brāhmaṇa.

Hari-śauri: No, but in our society practically everyone is being raised to that platform. So then one might ask what is...

Prabhupāda: That is... Everybody is being raised, but they're falling down.

Hari-śauri: The principle we follow. We're just thinking how it can be implemented. You were saying that it should be started in our society.

Prabhupāda: Yes, that is a very broad idea. Now we are speaking of some of them, training them. That is another thing. That is small scale.

Hari-śauri: The principle we're following.

Prabhupāda: Yes. In the... For the big scale, this is the required. In big scale you cannot make all of them as brāhmaṇas or sannyāsīs. No. That is not possible. This is a small scale. How many percentage of people of the world we are controlling? Very insignificant. But if you want to make the whole human society perfect, then this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement should be introduced according to the Kṛṣṇa's instruction, if you want to do it in a larger scale, for the benefit of the whole human society.

Prabhupāda: That "we said" means not we are going to take them,
but we are simply giving the ideas. We are not going to be śūdras.
But to show the... Just like you play in a drama. You are playing the
part of a king. You are not a king.

Hari-śauri: No.

Prabhupāda: So similarly, just to give them idea, we have to play like
that.

Hari-śauri: Well, again, that's...

Prabhupāda: Not necessarily that we are going to be śūdra. So that is it. That is the thing.

Hari-śauri: Well that's what I was saying.

Prabhupāda: We are servant of Kṛṣṇa. That's all. And as servant of Kṛṣṇa, we have to execute the order of Kṛṣṇa.

Satsvarūpa: So we can ideally organize ourselves, and then for the rest of the people all we can do is hope that they'll follow it.

Prabhupāda: Yes.

Bhavānanda: Set the example.

Prabhupāda: Example. Just like Bhavānanda, when there was no commode here, he was taking my stool and urine. Does it mean he is a sweeper?

He's a sannyāsī, Vaiṣṇava. Similarly, āpani ācari' jīve śikhāilā [Cc. Madhya 1.22].

Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, "I am not a sannyāsī." But He took sannyāsa.

Actually He is God, so what is the benefit of becoming a sannyāsī for God? But He became that.

In order to serve the mass of people, to bring them to the ideal position, we should try to introduce this varṇāśrama, not that we are going to be candidates of varṇāśrama.

It is not our business.



But to teach them how the world will be in peaceful position we have to introduce.