

# Six Faults that Destroy Bhakti

3. Prajalpa – Idle  
Talking

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- Talking with one another is called jalpana or prajalpa.
- Nowadays in this world godlessness is so prominent that conversing with others means godless talk.
- Therefore it is not profitable for a practicing devotee to engage in jalpana.

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- There can, however, be many kinds of jalpana in the cultivation of devotional service.
- They are all auspicious for the devotees.
- Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has written in his Kārpaṇya-pañjikā-stotra:

**tathāpy asmin kadācid vāmadhīśau nāma-jalpini  
avadya-vṛnda-nistāri nāmābhāsau prasīdatam**

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

Devotees recite the purport of this verse in the following words:

**tathāpi e dīna-jane, yadi nāma-uccāraṇe  
nāmābhāsa karila jīvane  
sarva-doṣa-nivāraṇa, duhuṅ-nāma-sañjalpana  
prasāde prasīda dui jane**

"While chanting the holy name of the Lord, if a wretched person in his lifetime achieves nāmābhāsa, or a glimpse of offenseless chanting, then all his faults are destroyed and Their Lordships become pleased with him."

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- Kīrtana, offering prayers, and reciting the scriptures are all jalpana; but when these are performed with a favorable mood and devoid of material desire, then they are all cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.
- Therefore the conclusion is this: All prajalpas that are unfavorable to Kṛṣṇa's service are adverse to devotional service.

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- The practitioner should carefully give up prajalpa.
- There is no fault in the activities of the mahājanas.
- The mahājanas have respectfully engaged in prajalpa (favorable to devotional service), and this is our only duty.

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- Sometimes puffed-up devotees advise that all types of prajalpa should be given up.
- But we are followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī; being followers of Rūpa Gosvāmī we will always stick to the path shown by the sadhus who are following his instructions.
- In the Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu, as quoted from the Skanda Purāṇa, it is said:

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

sa mṛgyaḥ śreyasām hetuḥ  
panthāḥ santāpa-varjitaḥ  
anavāpta-śramam pūrve  
yena santaḥ pratisthira

One should follow (**sah mṛgyaḥ**) the scriptural rules (**panthāḥ**) which give the highest benefit (**śreyasām hetuḥ**) and are devoid of hardship (**santāpa-varjitaḥ**), by which the previous devotees easily progressed (**yena pūrve santaḥ anavāpta śramam prasthira**). (**Skandha Purana**)



## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- Our mahājana's path is that which was shown by Śrīla Vyāsadeva, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Prahlāda Mahārāja, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and His associates.
- We are not to leave aside that path to follow the instructions of new puffed-up devotees.
- All the mahājanas have respected that prajalpa which nourishes devotion to Hari.

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- We will discuss this in the appropriate place.
- Godless prajalpas are impediments to devotional service.
- They are of many types.

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

1. Useless talks
2. Arguments
3. Gossip
4. Debates
5. Fault-finding in others
6. Speaking falsehoods
7. Blaspheming devotees
8. Worldly talk

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

## 1. Useless Talk

- **Useless talk** is extremely detrimental.
- Practicing devotees should discuss topics of Lord Hari in the association of other devotees and remember Hari's name, form, qualities, and pastimes in a secluded place without uselessly wasting time.
- In the Bhagavad-gītā (10.8-9) it is said:

|| 10.8 ||

aham sarvasya prabhavo  
mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate  
iti matvā bhajante mām  
budhā bhāva-samanvitāḥ

I am the source of everything (**aham sarvasya prabhavaḥ**). Due to Me everything operates (**mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate**). Convinced by this knowledge (**iti matvā**), the intelligent persons (**budhāḥ**), endowed with love (**bhāva-samanvitāḥ**), worship Me (**mām bhajante**).

|| 10.9 ||

mac-cittā mad-gata-prāṇā  
bodhayantaḥ parasparam  
kathayantaś ca mām nityam  
tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca

With minds greedy for Me (**mac-cittā**), being completely dependent on Me (**mad-gata-prāṇā**), mutually hearing about Me (**bodhayantaḥ parasparam**), and singing about Me (**kathayantaś ca mām**), they continuously experience satisfaction and enjoyment (**nityam tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca**).

- Also in the Gītā (9.14) it says:

**satataṁ kīrtayanto mām  
yatantaś ca dr̥ḍha-vratāḥ  
namasyantaś ca mām bhaktyā  
nitya-yuktā upāsate**

They worship Me at all times (**satataṁ mām upāsate**) with devotion (**bhaktyā**), in the form of singing about Me (**kīrtayanto**), having strict vows (**dr̥ḍha-vratāḥ**), desiring to be My associates (**nitya-yuktā**), wandering about to gain association (**yatantah**), and offering unto Me respects as well as other devotional acts (**namasyantaś ca mām bhaktyā**).

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- In this way the practicing devotee should cultivate unalloyed devotion.
- If they spend their days and nights uselessly talking with materialists, then the Lord's instruction, "always chanting My glories," will not be followed.
- In newspapers there is so much useless talk.



## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- For the practicing devotee to read newspapers is a great loss.
- But if there are topics about pure devotees described in the newspaper, then that can be read.
- After finishing their meal, mundane people normally smoke and engage in useless talk with other godless people.

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- It is certainly difficult for them to become followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.
- Reading novels is the same.
- But if one gets a novel with a story like that of Purañjana in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, then reading that is not an impediment, rather it is beneficial.

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

## 2. Argument

- **Argument** is a prajalpa that is adverse to devotional service.
- All the arguments of the followers of nyāyā and vaiśeṣika are simply godless quarrels.
- They do not yield any result other than wasting the mind's strength and increasing one's restlessness.

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- In the Vedas (Kaṭha Upaniṣad 1.2.9) it is said: naiṣā tarkeṇa matir apaneyā "This intelligence cannot be attained by argument."
- The living entity's proper discretion is eternally established in his natural intelligence.
- That discretion naturally flows towards the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord.

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- But by arguing about directions, places, mistakes, and illusions, the heart becomes tough.
- Then natural discretion no longer remains.
- By accepting the Vedic Daśamūla instructions and arguing accordingly, one's mind does not become wicked.

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- What is good, what is bad-when such deliberations are based on the Vedas, that is no longer prajalpa.
- That is why in the Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 25.153) Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has given the instruction:

**ataeva bhāgavata karaha vicāra**

"Study Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam very scrutinizingly."

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- Discussions to establish the knowledge of one's relationship with the Lord are not prajalpa.
- Those who conquer the assembly by useless arguments do not reach any conclusion; therefore it is certainly one's duty to give up such logician's association.

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- This is confirmed in the Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 12.183) by Śrī Vāsudeva Sārvabhauma, who said:

**tārkika-śṛgāla-saṅge bheu-bheu kari  
sei mukhe ebe sadā kahi 'kṛṣṇa' 'hari'**

"In the association of the jackals known as logicians, I simply continued to bark a resounding 'bheu bheu.' Now, from the same mouth I am chanting the holy names 'Kṛṣṇa' and 'Hari.'"



## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- Those who are accustomed to discuss spiritual matters should remember the words of the Vārāṇasī sannyāsī as found in the Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 25.43):

**paramārtha-vicāra gela, kari mātra 'vāda'  
kāhāñ mukti pāba, kāhāñ kṛṣṇera prasāda**

"The atheists, headed by the Māyāvādī philosophers, do not care for liberation or Kṛṣṇa's mercy. They simply continue to put forward false arguments and countertheories to atheistic philosophy, not considering or engaging in spiritual matters."

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- Useless arguments arise from envy or pride, aversion or attachment to sense gratification, or foolishness or self-pride.
- Quarrelsome people also become intoxicated by useless arguments.
- While discussing topics of the Lord and His devotees the practicing devotee should always be careful to avoid useless arguments.

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

## 3. Gossip

- Talking without reason about other people is extremely adverse to devotional service.
- Many people talk about others to establish their own reputation.
- Being envious, some people are accustomed to discuss others' character.

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

## 3. Gossip

- The minds of those who are busy in such topics can never be fixed on the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.
- Talking about others should be rejected in all respects.
- But in the practice of devotional service there are many favorable topics that are faultless, even though they are about others.

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- In order to completely renounce talking about others, one needs to live in the forest.
- The two different types of practicing devotees are the householders and the renunciates.
- Because the renunciates have no business whatsoever with sense enjoyment, they can give up talking about others in all respects.

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- But because a householder is engaged in earning, saving, protecting, and maintaining the family, he cannot completely give up talking about others. It is best for him to live in a Kṛṣṇa conscious family.
- When all ones material activities are related with Kṛṣṇa, then even his unavoidable talk about others becomes sinless and a part of devotional practice in relation to Kṛṣṇa.

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- He should not talk about others in a way that is detrimental to anyone.
- He should talk about others only whatever little is necessary in his Kṛṣṇa conscious family.
- He should not talk about others without reason.

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- Moreover, when a guru enlightens his disciple on some topic, then unless he occasionally talks about others, his instruction may not be clear.
- When previous mahājanas have talked about others in this way, there is merit in such talk, not fault.



As Śukadeva Gosvāmī said in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.1.3-4):

**nidrayā hriyate naktam  
vyavāyena ca vā vayah |  
divā cārthehayā rājan  
kuṭumba-bharaṇena vā ||**

O King (**rājan**)! Life is wasted at night (**vayah hriyate naktam**) in sleeping or in sex enjoyment (**nidrayā vā vyavāyena**). Life is wasted during the day (**divā ca**) by desiring material objects (**artha īhayā**) or supporting family members (**kuṭumba-bharaṇena vā**).

dehāpatya-kalatrādiṣv  
ātma-sainyeṣv asatsv api |  
teṣāṃ pramatto nidhanam  
paśyann api na paśyati ||

Deeply attached (**pramattah**) to his body, children and wife (**deha apatya-kalatra ādiṣu**), who are like an army giving protection (**ātma-sainyeṣu**), though they are false (**asatsu api**), he sees their destruction (**teṣāṃ nidhanam paśyann api**) but does not see it (**na paśyati**).

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- Although Śukadeva Gosvāmī talks about the materialists in order to instruct his disciple, he is not considered a prajalpī.
- Therefore such activities should be considered beneficial.
- Again, in order to instruct His own disciples, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu spoke about pseudo-renunciates in the following words from the Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya 2.117, 120, 124):

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

prabhu kahe,— "vairāgī kare prakṛti sambhāṣaṇa  
dekhite nā pāroṅ āmi tāhāra vadana  
kṣudra-jīva saba markāṭa-vairāgya kariyā  
indriya carāṇā bule 'prakṛti' sambhāṣiyā"  
prabhu kahe,— "mora vaśa nahe mora mana  
prakṛti-sambhāṣī vairāgī nā kare darśana

"The Lord replied, "I cannot tolerate seeing the face of a person who has accepted the renounced order of life but who still talks intimately with a woman. There are many persons with little in their possession who accept the renounced order of life like monkeys. They go here and there engaging in sense gratification and speaking intimately with women. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, "My mind is not under My control. It does not like to see anyone in the renounced order who talks intimately with women."

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- Unless one speaks in this way while instructing and while concluding a subject, there is no benefit for oneself or others.
- Therefore when the previous ācāryas have personally set example and taught others, how will we be benefitted by acting contrary to their instruction?

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- And if one discusses in this way the improper behavior current in a religious sect or amongst the general public, then such talk is not adverse to devotional service.
- Even if one sometimes talks about a particular person, there is no fault.
- In the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (4.14.29) Maitreya Muni spoke about Veṅa Mahārāja in this way:

|| 4.14.29 ||

maitreya uvāca

ittham viparyaya-matiḥ  
pāpiyān utpatham gataḥ  
anunīyamānas tad-yācñām  
na cakre bhraṣṭa-maṅgalaḥ

Maitreya said: Thus (**ittham**), the sinful King (**pāpiyān**) straying from the path (**utpatham gataḥ**), intelligence lost (**viparyaya-matiḥ**), bereft of good fortune (**bhraṣṭa-maṅgalaḥ**), though pacified by the sages (**anunīyamānah**), did not accept their request (**tad-yācñām na cakre**).

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- Śrī Maitreya Ṛṣi needed to speak about others in this way; he spoke to his audience to instruct them.
- This is not prajalpa.
- The practicing devotee normally discusses ancient history in the association of devotees.



## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- Occasionally they talk about nondevotees.
- Such talk is always auspicious and favorable to devotional service.
- But those who talk about others while influenced by devotional impediments like envy, hatred, pride, or distinction are offenders at the feet of Bhaktidevī.

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

## 4,5. Debate and Fault finding

- **Debate** arises only from a desire for conquest.
- It is extremely abominable.
- **Fault-finding** arises only from imposing one's own bad habits on others.
- This should be given up in all respects.

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

## 6, 7. Speaking Falsehoods and Worldly Talk

- **Speaking falsehoods** is another form of useless talk.
- **Worldly talk** is completely rejected by renounced devotees.

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

## 6, 7. Speaking Falsehoods and Worldly Talk

- Householders may accept some worldly talk that is favorable to devotional service.
- If topics like archeology, zoology, astrology, and geography are devoid of God consciousness, they should be rejected.

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- In the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (12.12.49-50) Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī has said:

mṛṣā giras tā hy asatīr asat-kathā  
na kathyate yad bhagavān adhokṣajah  
tad eva satyaṁ tad u haiva maṅgalaṁ  
tad eva puṇyaṁ bhagavad-guṇodayam

tad eva ramyaṁ ruciraṁ navam navam  
tad eva śaśvan manaso mahotsavam  
tad eva śokārṇava-śoṣaṇam nrṇām  
yad uttamaḥśloka-yaśo 'nugīyate

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

"Words (**gīrah**) that do not describe the transcendental Personality of Godhead (**yad na bhagavān adhokṣajāḥ kathyate**) but instead deal with temporary matters (**asat-kathā**) are simply false and useless (**tā mṛṣā asatīh**). Only those words that manifest the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Lord (**yad uttamaḥśloka-yaśo anugīyate**) are actually truthful (**tad eva satyam**), auspicious (**tad u haiva maṅgalam**) and pious (**tad eva puṇyam**). Those words describing the glories of the all-famous Personality of Godhead are attractive (**tad eva ramyam**), relishable and ever fresh (**ruciram navam navam**). Indeed, such words are a perpetual festival for the mind (**tad eva śaśvan manaso mahotsavam**), and they dry up the ocean of misery (**tad eva śokārṇava-śoṣaṇam nṛṇām**)."

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

## 8. Blaspheming Devotees

- **Blaspheming sadhus** is the source of great inauspiciousness.
- If one wants to attain devotion to Lord Hari, then he should make a vow like this: "In this life I will never blaspheme sadhus."
- Devotees are sadhus.

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

## 8. Blaspheming Devotees

- By blaspheming them, all one's virtues are destroyed.
- By blaspheming the supremely pure Lord Mahādeva, Prajāpati Dakṣa, the best of ascetics, met with severe inauspiciousness.



## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- As stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.4.46):

**āyuh śriyaṁ yaśo dharmam**

**lokān āśiṣa eva ca**

**hanti śreyāṁsi sarvāṇi**

**pumso mahad-atikramah**

My dear King, when a man persecutes great souls (**pumso mahad-atikramah**), all his benedictions (**śreyāṁsi sarvāṇi**) of longevity, beauty, fame, religion (**āyuh śriyaṁ yaśo dharmam**), blessings and promotion to higher planets (**lokān āśiṣa eva ca**) will be destroyed (**hanti**).

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- The conclusion of this essay is this: Whatever prajalpa is not favorable for devotional service should be carefully given up by Vaiṣṇavas who are cultivating bhakti.
- Amongst these instructions, the instruction to tolerate the urge to speak mentioned in the first verse-*vāco vegam*-is only a conditional urge.

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- By giving up prajalpa, the urge to speak is permanently regulated.
- In order to pass one's life without sin, one should not speak anything more than whatever little is necessary.
- One need discuss only whatever is auspicious for oneself and others.

# Prajalpa – Idle Talking

- If one wants to discuss topics of others, it will simply be useless speech.
- Therefore in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.28.2) Lord Kṛṣṇa instructed Uddhava as follows:

## Prajalpa – Idle Talking

para-svabhāva-karmāṇi  
yaḥ praśamsati nindati  
sa āśu bhraśyate svārthād  
asaty abhiniveśataḥ

"Whoever indulges in praising or criticizing (**yaḥ praśamsati nindati**) the qualities and behavior of others (**para-svabhāva-karmāṇi**) will quickly become deviated from his own best interest (**sa āśu bhraśyate svārthād**) by his entanglement in illusory dualities (**asaty abhiniveśataḥ**)."