

Six Qualities that Enhance Bhakti

10. Tat-tat-karma-pravartana - Various activities favorable for devotional service

Topic - 12

Angas of Devotional Service

sa-jātīyāśaya-snigdha-śrī-
bhagavad-bhakta-saṅgo

Association with like-
minded, affectionate
devotees

**The Glories of
Association of Devotees**

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tulayāma lavenāpi
na svargaṁ nāpunar-bhavam |
bhagavat-saṅgi-saṅgasya
martyānām kim utāśiṣaḥ ||

The value of a moment's association with the devotee of the Lord (lavena api bhagavat-saṅgi-saṅgasya) cannot be compared (na tulayāma) even to the attainment of heavenly planets or liberation from matter (svargaṁ apunar-bhavam). What then to speak of (kim uta) worldly benedictions in the form of material prosperity, which are meant for those who are destined to die (martyānām āśiṣaḥ). (SB 1.18.13)

- Bhagavat-saṅgi-saṅga means association with persons who are attached to the Lord.
- Saṅga means attachment, and he who constantly has that attachment to the Lord is called saṅgi.
- Even a moment's association with such a person cannot be compared to attaining the heavenly planets.

- In praising association of devotees, the sages at Naimiṣāranya show that they have also a similar desire for the association of devotees.
- The verse is used here as an example since it acts as a good instruction for others.
- The affectionate nature of devotees (snigdha) should be implied from the verse.

- One should also see a similar verse in the Fourth Canto:

kṣaṇārdhenāpi tulaye
na svargaṃ nāpunar-bhavam
bhagavat-saṅgi-saṅgasya
martyānām kim utāśiṣaḥ

What to speak of any blessings on this earth (**martyānām kim uta āśiṣaḥ**), or on Svarga, even the blessing of liberation (**svargaṃ apunar-bhavam**) cannot compare (**na tulaye**) with even half a moment's association with the devotee of the Lord (**kṣaṇa ardhena api bhagavat-saṅgi-saṅgasya**). (SB 4.24.57)

- This verse explains how much we should speak of the glories of the great ocean of association with such great devotees who have become visible in front of us.
- We should not compare a moment's association with devotees who are attached to the Lord, with Svarga, the result of karma, or liberation, the result of jñāna.

- We cannot compare at all that association with the worldly blessings of men in this world, such as a kingdom.
- That is because by the association of devotees, the sprout of bhakti, which is very rare, appears.
- We should not even compare the complete results of karma or jñāna with a moment's association with a devotee or with a small particle of sādhana-bhakti.
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- What then to speak of devotee association of long duration, or even more, what to speak of the bhakti which results from that association!
- Even more, what can we say about attaining prema which is the result of bhakti?
- These comparisons are suggested in the verse.

- Since it is used in the negative, the meaning is that we should not even imagine a comparison between devotee association and the other items, just as one could never compare Mount Meru to a mustard seed.
- The verb is in the plural number, in order to suggest that it is not possible for anyone to disprove this statement, since it is the opinion of many.

- The importance of association with the devotees
who are attached to the Lord may be explained
in terms of the following verse:

Potency of a Sadhu

Potency of a Vaisnava

→ perfected śādhū → bhāva (or) prēṇē

- "In the pure Vaisnava resides Kṛṣṇa's energies of bhakti, hlādinī and samvit.
↓
Kṛṣṇa ↓
 knowledge.
- Thus by contacting a Vaisnava one can also receive Kṛṣṇa bhakti.
- For this reason also, the food remnants, the foot water and the foot dust from the pure Vaisnavas are three powerful articles for creating bhakti.

Potency of a Vaisnava

- If one stays near a pure Vaisnava for some time,
one can receive the bhakti energy flowing from his
body.
- If one can bind that energy within one's heart,
after having developed strong faith, bhakti will
develop and one's body will begin to tremble in
ecstasy.

Potency of a Vaisnava

- Thus, by living close to a Vaisṇava, soon devotion will appear in one's heart.
- First, such a person will begin chanting the holy name, and then, by the power of the name, he will receive all good qualities.
- This is the particular power of the uttama adhikārī.

- ① Any device
- ② Any ISKCON devotee
- ③ same liking for Kṛp
same habits / a friend for
same SM / a friend for
- ④ ~~4~~ Rāṅgāya Sādhak

sa-jāṭīyāśaya

① Like-minded

yasya yat-saṅgatiḥ puṁso
maṇivat syāt sa tad-guṇaḥ |
sva-kula-rddhyai tato dhīmān
sva-yūthān eva saṁśrayet

A man (puṁsah) will attain the qualities (tad-guṇaḥ syāt) of the person with whom he associates (yasya yat-saṅgatiḥ), just as a crystal takes up the color of the object next to it (maṇivat). Therefore (tato), the wise man (dhīmān) will take shelter of those who have qualities like his own (sva-yūthān eva saṁśrayet) ~~for the prosperity of his family~~ (sva-kula-rddhyai). (Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya)

- This verse makes clear the power of association with like-minded persons using an example.
- This is a statement of Hiranyakaśipu to Prahlāda.
- Though the demon's intention was otherwise, because it is a general statement, it is possible to use the verse according to one's own intentions.
This is the aim of the author.

- Maṇivat means “like a crystal.”
- It is used here as an example to illustrate taking up the qualities of an object in proximity, though it also has the quality of being completely unsteady, taking up any color of any nearby object.
- Sva-yūthān here indicates sajātiyān, like-minded.

Snigdhe

②

Affectionate

**dadāti pratigrhṇāti
guhyam ākhyāti pṛcchati
bhunkte bhojayate caiva
ṣaḍ-vidham prīti-lakṣaṇam**

Offering gifts in charity (**dadāti**), accepting charitable gifts (**pratigrhṇāti**), revealing one's mind in confidence (**guhyam ākhyāti**), inquiring confidentially (**pṛcchati**), accepting prasāda and offering prasāda (**bhunkte bhojayate caiva**) are the six symptoms of love shared by one devotee and another (**ṣaḍ-vidham prīti-lakṣaṇam**). (NOI – 4)

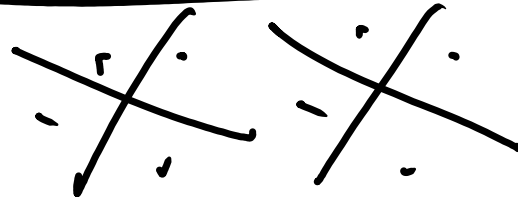
- Even in ordinary social activities, these six types of dealings between two loving friends are
absolutely necessary.

- For instance, when one businessman wishes to contact another businessman he arranges a feast in a hotel, and over the feast he openly expresses what he wishes to do.

- He then inquires from his business friend how he should act, and sometimes presents are exchanged.

- Thus whenever there is a dealing of prīti, or love in intimate dealings, these six activities are executed.
- In the previous verse, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī advised that one should renounce worldly association and keep company with the devotees (saṅga-tyāgāt sato vṛtteḥ).
- The International Society for Krishna Consciousness has been established to facilitate these six kinds of loving exchanges between devotees.

- The life of the Kṛṣṇa conscious society is nourished by these six types of loving exchange among the members; therefore people must be given the chance to associate with the devotees of ISKCON because simply by reciprocating in the six ways mentioned above an ordinary man can fully revive his dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness.



- In the Bhagavad-gītā (2.62) it is stated, saṅgāt sañjāyate kāmāḥ: one's desires and ambitions develop according to the company one keeps.

- It is often said that a man is known by his company, and if an ordinary man associates with devotees, he will certainly develop his dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Svato-Vare

③

More Advanced

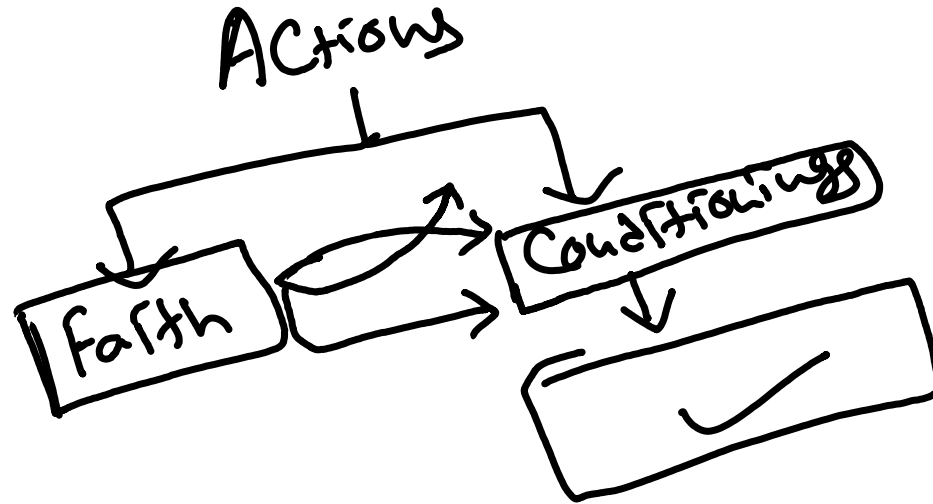
kṛṣṇeti yasya giri tam manasādriyeta
dīkṣāsti cet praṇatibhiś ca bhajantam īsam
śuśrūṣayā bhajana-vijñam ananyam anya-
nindādi-śūnya-hṛdam īpsita-saṅga-labdhyā

One should mentally honor (**manasā ādriyeta**) the devotee who chants the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa (**kṛṣṇeti yasya giri tam**), one should offer humble obeisances (**praṇatibhih**) to the devotee who has undergone spiritual initiation [dīkṣā] (**dīkṣāsti cet**) and is engaged in worshiping the Deity (**bhajantam īsam**), and one should associate with (**īpsita-saṅga-labdhyā**) and faithfully serve (**śuśrūṣayā**) that pure devotee who is advanced in undeviated devotional service (**ananyam bhajana-vijñam**) and whose heart is completely devoid of the propensity to criticize others (**ananyam anyanindādi-śūnya-hṛdam**). (NOI – 5)

- In order to intelligently apply the sixfold loving reciprocations mentioned in the previous verse, one must select proper persons with careful discrimination.
- Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī therefore advises that we should meet with the Vaiṣṇavas in an appropriate way, according to their particular status.
- In this verse he tells us how to deal with three types of devotees—the kanīṣṭha-adhikārī, madhyama-adhikārī and uttama-adhikārī.

But Beware of Offenses

dr̥ṣṭaiḥ svabhāva-janitair vapuṣaś ca doṣair
na prākṛtatvam iha bhakta janasya paśyet
gaṅgāmbhasām na khalu budbuda-phena-paṅkair
brahma-dravatvam apagacchati nīra-dharmaiḥ



Being situated in his original Kṛṣṇa conscious position, a pure devotee does not identify with the body. Such a devotee should not be seen from a materialistic point of view. Indeed, one should overlook a devotee's having a body born in a low family, a body with a bad complexion, a deformed body, or a diseased or infirm body. According to ordinary vision, such imperfections may seem prominent in the body of a pure devotee, but despite such seeming defects, the body of a pure devotee cannot be polluted. It is exactly like the waters of the Ganges, which sometimes during the rainy season are full of bubbles, foam and mud. The Ganges waters do not become polluted. Those who are advanced in spiritual understanding will bathe in the Ganges without considering the condition of the water.

(NOI – 6)

The Easiest Way to
Develop Loving
Relationships is to
Discuss Krsna-Katha

① mitho ratih → mutual affection / love

② mitho tuṣṭih → satisfaction

|| 11.3.30 ||

(parasparānukathanam)
(pāvanam) (bhagavad-yaśah)
mitho ratir mithas tuṣṭir
(nivṛttir mitha ātmanah)

The disciple should learn to develop attraction for the glories of the Lord (**pāvanam bhagavad-yaśah**) through discussions with other devotees (**paraspara anukathanam**). He will experience happiness from their association (**mitho ratir mithas tuṣṭir**) and mutually they will become detached from material enjoyment (**nivṛttir mitha ātmanah**).

Taking shelter of purifying discussions where there is glorification of the Lord, one will have mutual enjoyment without rivalry (mithaḥ ratiḥ).

One will have happiness arising from association with other devotees.

Mutually one will become detached from material enjoyment—from one's wife and other things unfavorable for devotional development.

This means “If you are becoming detached, I also
will become detached starting from today.”

The disciple should learn all of this.

yatra bhāgavatā rājan
sādhavo viśadāśayāḥ
bhagavad-guṇānukathana-
śravaṇa-vyagra-cetasah

tasmin mahan-mukharitā madhubhic-caritra-
pīyūṣa-śeṣa-saritaḥ paritaḥ sravanti
tā ye pibanty avitr̥ṣo nṛpa gādha-karnais
tān na spr̥śanty aśana-tr̥ḍ-bhaya-śoka-mohāḥ

Where there are devotees (yatra bhāgavatā) with pure hearts and proper conduct (sādhavo viśada āśayāḥ), who are eager to hear (śravaṇa-vyagra-cetasah) discussions of the qualities of the Lord (bhagavad-guṇa-anukathana), profuse streams of nectar (pīyūṣa-śeṣa-saritaḥ) of the pastimes of the Lord (madhubhit-caritra) emanating from the mouths of the saintly devotees, the mahāprasāda of the devotees (mahat-mukharitā), flow everywhere (paritaḥ sravanti). Those who drink (ye pibanty) that nectar (tā) with firm ears (gādha-karnaih), with constant thirst (avitr̥ṣo), O King (nṛpa), will not be touched (na spr̥śanty) by hunger, thirst, fear, lamentation and illusion (aśana-tr̥ḍ-bhaya-śoka-mohāḥ). (4.29.39-40)