

Bhaktyaloka

By

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Six Qualities that Enhance Bhakti

12. Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in
the footsteps of the previous
ācāryas

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

The purport is that the conviction in the heart of a Vaiṣṇava is independent.

If one is a Vaiṣṇava, then he can understand the conviction in the heart of another Vaiṣṇava who is engaged in the same activities as those of the smārtas.

(Smārtas & Vaiṣṇavās)

①7 Learn to carefully discriminate Vaiṣṇavās from Smārtas even though they may be engaged similarly

One who cannot understand this cannot respect Vaiṣṇavas, and he thereby goes to hell.

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

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3 Primary duties of a Householder

- a) kṛṣṇa-sevā
- b) vaiṣṇava sevā
- c) nirantara kṛṣṇa nāma saṅkīrtane

The Lord has explained the duties of householders in the Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 15.104):

①

Duties of a Householder

prabhu kahena,— 'kṛṣṇa-sevā', 'vaiṣṇava-sevana'

'nirantara kara kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana'

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu replied, "Without cessation continue chanting the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Whenever possible, serve Him and His devotees, the Vaiṣṇavas."

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

It is the duty of a grhastha to constantly chant the holy names of the Lord and serve the Vaiṣṇavas and the Lord with the help of his relatives and by the wealth he has earned through his pious life.

Regarding serving the Vaiṣṇavas, one should know that there are three types of non-duplicitous devotees.

↓ Kamiṣṭha, madhyama & Uttama.

Serving such Vaiṣṇavas is called vaiṣṇava-sevā.

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

b) in vaiṣṇava sevā → Do not invite too many Vaiṣṇavas as it might lead to offenses.

There is no need to gather many Vaiṣṇavas by invitation.

Whenever a Vaiṣṇava comes for any purpose he should be properly served with care.

By gathering many Vaiṣṇavas, one may commit offenses.

As stated in the Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 15.198):

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

bahuta sannyāsī yadi āise eka ṭhāñi
sammāna karite nāri, aparādha pāi

"If all the sannyāsīs come together, it would not be possible for me to
pay them proper respects. Therefore I would be an offender."

① Show mercy upon the poor & fallen

It is the duty of a gṛhastha Vaiṣṇava to show mercy on the poor and
fallen.

As stated in Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya 3.238):

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

dīne dayā kare,—ei sādhu-svabhāva haya

"It is a characteristic of all saintly persons to be kind toward the poor and fallen."

② Don't commit suicide due to sentiment or anger

A gr̥hastha Vaiṣṇava should not desire to give up his body merely out of some sentiment or anger.

As stated by the Lord in Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya 4.57):

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

deha-tyāgādi yata, saba—tamo-dharma
tamo-rajo-dharme kṛṣṇera nā pāiye marma

"Acts such as suicide are influenced by the mode of ignorance, and in ignorance and passion one cannot understand who Kṛṣṇa is."

②) Do not distinguish vaiṣṇaves based on their birth, varṇa etc

There is no consideration of superior or inferior status due to social position in regard to worshiping Kṛṣṇa.

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

In worldly occupations there are different activities according to the different social divisions, which are due to superior and inferior grades of intelligence.

There are no such distinctions in the process of devotional service.

As confirmed by the Lord in Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya 4.66-67):

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

nīca-jāti nahe kṛṣṇa-bhajane āyogya
sat-kula-vipra nahe bhajanera yogya
yei bhaje sei baḍa, abhakta—hīna, chāra
kṛṣṇa-bhajane nāhi jāti-kulādi-vicāra

"A person born in a low family is not unfit for discharging devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, nor is one fit for devotional service simply because he is born in an aristocratic family of brāhmaṇas. Anyone who takes to devotional service is exalted, whereas a nondevotee is always condemned and abominable. Therefore in the discharge of devotional service to the Lord, there is no consideration of the status of one's family."

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

Also in the Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya 5.84) it is said:

sannyāsī paṇḍita-gaṇera karite garva nāśa
nīca-śūdra-dvārā kareṇa dharmera prakāśa

"To vanquish the false pride of so-called renunciants and learned scholars, He spreads real religious principles, even through a śūdra, or lowborn, fourth-class man."

② No prayaśa → he satisfied

A gr̥hastha Vaisnava should feel satisfied with whatever food and clothing he gets without difficulty.

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

As stated in the Caitanya-bhāgavata (CB Antya-khaṇḍa 4.293):

sabā' haite bhāgyavanta-śrī śāka, vyañjana
punaḥ punaḥ yāhā prabhu kareṇa grahaṇa

"The spinach and vegetables are the most fortunate of all, for the Lord
accepts them again and again."

②③ perform D-S with attention.

A gr̥hastha Vaiṣṇava should perform devotional service with
undeviated attention, knowing Kṛṣṇa as the Lord of all.

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

(24) Do not disrespect the DGs of the Smārta sampradāya

He should not disrespect the demigods worshiped by the smārta-sampradāya.

As stated in Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata (CB Antya-khaṇḍa 2.243):

nā māne' caitanya-patha, bolāya 'vaiṣṇava'
śivere amānya kare vyartha tā 'ra saba

"If one claims to be a Vaiṣṇava, but he disrespects Lord Siva and does not strictly follow the path exhibited by Lord Caitanya, all his efforts are futile."

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

25 work for the benefit of others even by giving up one's self-interest.

It is the duty of a grhastha to work for the benefit of others even by giving up his own self-interest.

In the Caitanya-bhāgavata (CB Antya-khaṇḍa 3.365) it is said:

āpanāra bhāla hau yete jana dekhe
sujana āpanā chāḍiyāo para rākhe

"Some people expect only benefits for themselves, but a gentleman cares for others while giving up his own interest."

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

26 Respect & worship tulasī

A gr̥hastha Vaiṣṇava should respect and worship tulasī. As stated in Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata (CB Antya-khaṇḍa 8.159-160):

saṅkhyā nāma laite ye sthāne prabhu vaise
tathāi rākhena tulasīre prabhu pāṣe
tulasīre dekhena, japena saṅkhyā-nāma
e bhakti-yogera tattva ke bujhibe āna?

"Wherever the Lord sits to chant His rounds, He keeps tulasī before Him. He gazes at tulasī while He chants His rounds. Who can understand the science of devotional service?"

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

27 Value the importance of devotion.

A householder with devotion is glorious, while a householder without devotion is insignificant.

28 Whatever social dealings one has to perform → do it while taking shelter of the H.N.s

Whatever social dealings a householder has to perform should be done while taking shelter of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

Regarding the character of the mahājana Śrī Kalidāsa, the Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya 16.6-7) states:

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

mahā-bhāgavata teṅho sarala udāra
kṛṣṇa-nāma-'saṅkete' cālāya vyavahāra
kautukete teṅho yadi pāśaka khelāya
'hare kṛṣṇa' 'kṛṣṇa' kari' pāśaka cālāya

"Kālidāsa was a very advanced devotee, yet he was simple and liberal.
He would chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa while performing all his
ordinary dealings. When he used to throw dice in jest, he would chant
Hare Kṛṣṇa while throwing the dice."

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

(29) Avoid corrupt earning & spending

Everyone is prohibited from corrupt earning or spending, and workers are prohibited from accepting bribes.

As stated by the Lord in the Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya 9.90, 142-144):

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

rājāra vartana khāya, āra curi kare
rāja-daṇḍya haya sei śāstrera vicāre
'vyaya nā kariha kichu rājāra mūla-dhana'
rājāra mūla-dhana diyā ye kichu labhya haya
sei dhana kariha nānā dharme-karme vyaya
asad-vyaya nā kariha,—yāte dui-loka yāya

"One who serves the government but misappropriates the government's revenue is liable to be punished by the king. That is the verdict of all revealed scriptures. Do not spend any of the King's revenue. First you should pay the revenue due the King, and then you may spend the balance for religious and fruitive activities. Don't spend a farthing for sinful activities for which you will be the loser both in this life and the next."

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

30. Accepting a Saḍ-guru

A gr̥hastha should accept a spiritual master who is full of devotion and of pure character.

As stated in Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata (CB Madhya-khaṇḍa 21.65):

guru yathā bhakti-śūnya, tathā śiṣyagaṇa

"As the guru is without devotion, so are the disciples."

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

31. Avāṅ vaiṣṇava aparādhe

A householder should be particularly careful not to commit offenses against the Vaiṣṇavas.

In the Caitanya-bhāgavata (CB Madhya-khaṇḍa 22.33) the Lord says:

ye vaiṣṇava-sthāne aparādha haya yā 'ra
punaḥ sei kṣamile se ghuḥce, nahe āra

"When someone offends a Vaiṣṇava, he is not relieved until he is forgiven by that same Vaiṣṇava."

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

32. service to vaiṣṇavās → Accepting their remnants, foot dust etc.

Serving devotees is a householder's main duty.

As stated in the Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Antya 16.57, 60):

vaiṣṇavera śeṣa-bhakṣaṇera eteka mahimā
kālidāse pāoyāila prabhura kṛpā-sīmā
bhakta-pada-dhūli āra bhakta-pada-jala
bhakta-bhukta-avaśeṣa—tina mahā-bala

"Taking the remnants of the Vaisnavas' food is so valuable that it induced Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to offer Kālidāsa His supreme mercy. The dust of the feet of a devotee, the water that has washed the feet of a devotee, and the remnants of food left by a devotee are three very powerful substances."

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

In the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.27-8) Lord Kṛṣṇa describes how a householder should act until his natural propensity for enjoying sense objects is overcome and he fully attains the characteristics of a pure devotee:

33. jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu
nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu
veda duḥkhātmakān kāmān
parityage 'py anīśvaraḥ
tato bhajeta mām prītaḥ
śraddhālur dr̥ḍha-niścayah
juṣamānaś ca tān kāmān
duḥkhodarkāmś ca garhayan

How should a householder act until
Ananta hiṅgārī is a conviction

↓

- 1 bhajeta mām
- 2 prītaḥ → do not succumb to depression.
- 3 śraddhālur → do not doubt the process.
- 4 dr̥ḍha niścayah → be more determined to give up
- 5 garhayan → have sincere repentance.

"Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories, being disgusted with all material activities, knowing that all sense gratification leads to misery, but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment, My devotee should remain happy and worship Me with great faith and conviction. Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment, My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result, and he sincerely repents such activities."

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

34. ACCE? + initiation.

When a householder has faith, he should take initiation into the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra.

As stated in the Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.64):

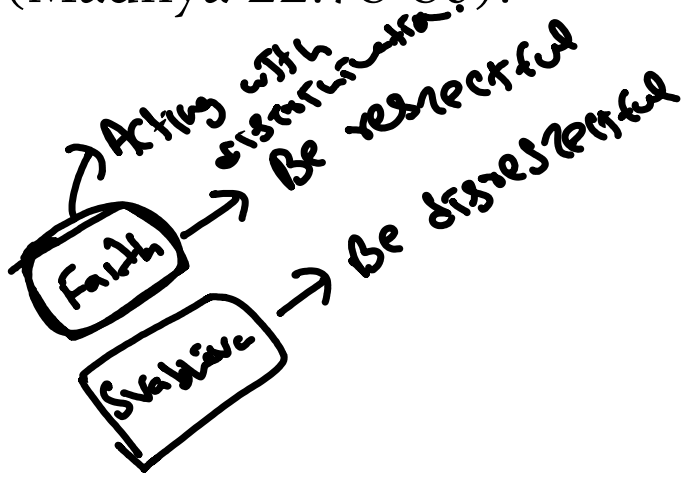
śraddhāvān jana haya bhakti-adhikārī
'uttama', 'madhyama', 'kaniṣṭha'—śraddhā-anusārī

"A faithful devotee is a truly eligible candidate for the loving service of the Lord. According to one's faith, one is classified as a topmost devotee, an intermediate devotee or an inferior devotee."

Sādhu-vṛtti - Following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas

35. one should gradually acquire all the good qualities

A grhastha Vaisnava must gradually acquire all the qualities mentioned in Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.78-80):



krpālu, akṛta-droha, satya-sāra sama
nidosā, vadānya, mrdu, śuci, akiñcana
sarvopakāraka, śānta, kṛṣṇaika-śarana
akāma, anīha, sthira, vijita-ṣaḍ-guṇa
mita-bhuk, apramatta, mānada, amānī
gambhīra, karuṇa, maitra, kavi, dakṣa, maunī

"Devotees are always merciful, humble, truthful, equal to all, faultless, magnanimous, mild and clean. They are without material possessions, and they perform welfare work for everyone. They are peaceful, surrendered to Kṛṣṇa and desireless. They are indifferent to material acquisitions and are fixed in devotional service. They completely control the six bad qualities-lust, anger, greed and so forth. They eat only as much as required, and they are not inebriated. They are respectful, grave, compassionate and without false prestige. They are friendly, poetic, expert and silent."