

**Bhaktyaloka  
Essay 2 by SBVT**

**Prayāsa**

**Prayasa: Over-endeavouring for something that is not inline with the principles of pure devotional service**

**Karma prayāsa**

**Visiting holy places**



**Visiting holy places with the intention of washing our sins so that we can continue our sense gratification without any difficulties is considered karma prayas.**

yasyātma-buddhiḥ kuṇape tri-dhātuke  
sva-dhīḥ kalatrādiṣu bhauma ijya-dhīḥ  
yat-tīrtha-buddhiḥ salile na karhicij  
janeṣv abhijñeṣu sa eva go-kharaḥ

ŚB  
10.84.1

	material identity	spiritual identity
atma-buddhi (Who am I?)	Body	servant of vaishnavas
sva-buddhi (What belongs to me?)	wife,money,home	Lord, vaishnavas, mercy of vaishnavas
ijya-buddhi (What is worshipable to me?)	place of birth	association of vaishnavas
tirtha-buddhi (What is a place of pilgrimage to me?)	where I can wash my sins	sravanam and kirtanam



**But going to the holy places where Krishna performed his pastimes or which Gauranga Mahaprabhu visited is not considered prayas if it is done with the desire to awaken one's ecstatic love for Krishna and to associate with the devotees.**

## Activities which are not considered prayas

★ Following the vows of devotional service

ex: following madhav tithis nicely

★ Serving the vaishnavas

The association of vaishnavas nourishes our heart and protects us from unholy association.

★ Temple worship

spontaneous manifestation of the heart's emotions

★ Sankirtana

meant to open one's heart to chanting the Lord's holy names

→ Anything that is pushing us towards Krishna, reinstating us back in our constitutional position then it is not unfavourable and useless prayas.

## Vairagya prayas

Vairagya : natural by product of our devotion

We should not endeavour too much for vairagya (otherwise heart becomes hard).

The primary endeavour should be to perform the devotional activities.

As a result of absorption in devotional activities, vairagya automatically comes.

**jñāna and Vairagya are  
natural by-products of bhakti**

**Bhakti dedicated to Lord Krishna , endowed with special  
moods, quickly produces detachment from material  
goals and knowledge of the Lord devoid of the desire for  
liberation.**

**ŚB  
1.2.7**

**bhaktiḥ pareśānubhavo viraktir  
anyatra caiṣa trika eka-kālah [SB  
11.2.42]**

**When a devotee humbly and without duplicity chants and  
remembers the holy names of Krishna, then real intelligence  
easily awakens in this way:**

**"I am spiritual particle, servant of Krishna; Krishna is my eternal  
Lord; surrender to Krishna's lotus feet is my eternal nature; this  
world is like a traveler's rest-house; and to be attached to  
anything of this world will not give me eternal happiness."**




**Everything is a product of chanting humbly and without  
duplicity. Jnana and vairagya are natural byproducts of  
practicing bhakti and chanting the holy names.**

## The lowest of all kinds of prayasa

Even if one can give up all material desires, the desire for fame is very difficult to give up . **This desire for fame, which is compared to stool , is the root cause of all anarthas.** Therefore, one should carefully avoid touching this stool-like desire for fame.

[ Sanatan Goswami in Hari bhakti vilas]



This instruction is extremely serious.  
One should not endeavour to be glorified.

Solution : Always serve the exalted devotees of Lord to give up this desire of prestige (Srila Raghunath Das goswami in manah siksha)

**All these instructions have 2 different types of applications:  
FOR**

**Householders  
(Sadhakas-married or unmarried)**

**Accept a natural occupation that is favourable to devotional service.**

**Accept those varnashrama duties which are favourable for bhakti.**

**Earn and save only to easily maintain the family members.**

**Always remember worshiping Hari is the only purpose of life.**

**Application of the principle requires live practical guidance from a devotionally mature devotee with a similar life experience.**

**Renunciates (one who gives up home because of natural detachment at the stage of bhava)**

**should not save at all**

**maintain his body by daily begging alms**

**not engage in any business or occupation for earning money**

**Be focused on worshiping Lord with humility and simplicity**

## Mood to worship the Lord

tat te 'nukampāṁ su-samīkṣamāṇo  
bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtaṁ vipākam  
hṛd-vāg-vapurahir vidadhan namas te  
jīveta yo mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk

ŚB  
10.14.8

One who earnestly waits for you to bestow your mercy upon him, all the while patiently suffering the reactions of his past misdeeds and passes his life by offering you respectful obeisances with his heart, words and body, is the rightful claimant of you, the shelter of liberation.

One should see one's own situation as merciful presentation of Krishna and one should see one's suffering as being caused due to his own offensive attitude.

The devotee clearly and perfectly sees everything happening in his life to be Lord's mercy.

He thinks:

**'All my sufferings are due to my past offensive behaviour.  
I am the cause of my own suffering but Krishna is being very kind to me and he is protecting me at every step.'**

With this understanding, he expresses his gratitude by offering obeisances again and again by heart, words and body.

The more one worships the Lord with humility and simplicity, the more one will understand Krishna, by His mercy.