## 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 l?)	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

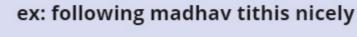


But going to the holy places where Krishna performed his pastimes or which Gauranga Mahaprabhu visited is not considered prayas if it is done with the desire to awaken one's ecstatic love for Krishna and to associate with the devotees.

# Activities which are not considered prayas



Following the vows of devotional service





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

Accept a natural occupation that is favourable to devotional service.

should not save at all

Accept those varnashrama duties which are favourable for bhakti.

maintain his body by daily begging alms

Earn and save only to easily maintain the family members.

not engage in any business or occupation for earning money

Always remember worshiping Hari is the only purpose of life.

Be focused on worshiping Lord with humility and simplicity

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

### Mood to worship the Lord

tat te 'nukampāṁ su-samīkṣamāṇo bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtaṁ vipākam hṛd-vāg-vapurbhir 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.