

Bhaktyaloka Essay 5

Jana-saṅga

Association with worldly-minded persons

These worldly people are of seven kinds:

1. Māyāvādis and atheists
2. sense enjoyers
3. those who are fond of the sense enjoyers
4. women
5. womanizers
6. the hypocritically devout
7. the ill-behaved foolish outcastes

Women and womanizers

Associating with the opposite sex is very inauspicious for the advancing devotee.

It has the maximum potency to carry our consciousness away from Krishna.

When there is no marital relationship and one converses with a woman with evil intentions, then this is stri-saṅga.

Married couples: Touching and talking is allowed.

But If they are illusioned by each other and they engage in activities other than prescribed duties, then that is called stri-sanga and purusa-sanga, or association with the opposite sex.



This is the standard for legally married couples where the husband and wife, both are devotees.

If our partner is not a devotee?

Then we have to be patient with him/her and try to understand their value system and where they are coming from. Approach them with compassion and understanding,

It's not their fault that they are not devotees. It's just that they are not so fortunate and not have enough ajnata sukriti.

But I can extend myself and facilitate the accumulation of ajnata sukriti so that they can become a devotee someday.

Rmanaujacharya gave up his wife - but it was not a sudden decision. He sent his wife to her parent's home after she offended his guru's wife. He then took sannyāsa.

Srila Prabhupada lived with his wife for more than 35 years before he left her. And then he also took sannyasa.

Man's bondage and bewilderment is not due to attachment to objects as much as it is due to his association with woman and to his association with men who associate with women.

SB
3.31.35



Attachment to objects is one sided but attachment to opposite sex is both sided - the knot is both sided and must be cut from both sides.

**the hypocritically
devout**

Those who accept the external signs of dharma but do not actually follow dharma are called dharma-dhvajis.

There are two types of dharma-dhvajis:

the hypocrites or the
cheaters

the fools and the
cheated



Don't hear from here or there.

But SP said, 'One must learn to pick gold even from a filthy place?!'

When there is a golden mountain (in the form of writings of our acharyas and IDT), why do we want to go to a filthy place and search for gold?

How can we trust our discrimination? We actually can not discriminate between gold and filth!

Srila Raghunath Bhatta Goswami could not find that Ramadasa Visvasa was a mayavadi.

Bhagwan acharya's brother Gopal- only Swarup Damodar prabhu could find out- other devotees were appreciating him.

Do you think wisdom is hidden only in the gaudiya vaishnava parampara?!

But if we do accept Prabhupada had wisdom, other acharyas had wisdom then why do we have to search elsewhere?

To a common man, don't go and criticize dharma-dhvajis. But amongst devotees, one can warn devotees.

We don't criticize them but at the same time we maintain respectful distance from them and don't try to take nourishment from them.



**The ill-behaved foolish
outcastes**

ill-behaved persons: eating meat, drinking wine, not situated in varnasrama-dharma, unregulated character

By associating with them, the mind becomes polluted.

But if those persons become faithful in devotional service by associating with a Vaishnava, then their association is auspicious.

api cet su-durācāro
bhajate mām ananya-bhāk
sādhur eva sa mantavyaḥ
samyag vyavasito hi saḥ

Bg.
9.30

kṣipraṁ bhavati dharmātmā
śāśvac-chāntiṁ nigacchati
kaunteya pratijānīhi
na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati

Bg.
9.31

jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu
nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu....

ŚB
11.20.27-28

The conclusion is that the association of pious and sinful persons who are bereft of Krishna consciousness is undesirable.

On the other hand, the association of persons who are sinful, yet devoted to the Lord, is desirable.

It is preferable to remain within a cage of blazing fire than to have the misfortune of living in association with persons who are opposed to thinking of the Lord.

BRS
(1.2.51)

**Srila Prabhupada on
Jana Sanga**

One should also avoid association with Mâyävädīs, who simply blaspheme devotees.

Bhukti-kāmis, who are interested in material happiness, **mukti-kāmis**, who desire liberation by merging into the existence of the formless Absolute (Brahman), and **siddhi-kāmis**, who desire the perfection of mystic yoga practice, are classified as **atyähāris**.

**Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhar
Maharaja**

Jana-sanga means to be very approachable to the ordinary public, for politics, sociality, feeding the poor etc.

Whoever wants to speak on these topics, we are readily available - we have eagerness to associate with such persons.

So many ideologies are there all around and to chase them or be captivated by them is jana sanga.

We are refusing to be captivated by the ideologies of our acharyas and we are ready to be captivated by the ideologies of other people.

Eagerness should be to associate with more advanced devotees.

Instead of that, if we allow ourselves to mix with the ordinary public, in the name of preaching or collection or any other thing, that will be detrimental to our cause.

We are on the way to prema but the journey is very long--we have to run a long distance..

but we can have water and good shoes

Association of affectionate, like minded devotees does the job of water and good shoes and help us forget the weariness of the journey!