

Śrī Manah-śikṣā

Splendid Instructions to the  
Mind

by Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī

**Verse-2**

**Bhajana Darpana**

**by**

**Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura**

## Verse-2 Bhajana Darpana

na dharmam nādharmam śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṁ kila kuru  
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa-pracura-paricaryām iha tanu  
śacī-sūnuṁ nandīśvara-pati-sutatve guru-varam  
mukunda-preṣṭhatve smara param ajasram nanu manaḥ

Indeed (**nanu**), do not perform (**na kila kuru**) any pious acts prescribed in the Vedas and supporting literature (**śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṁ dharmam**), or sinful acts forbidden in them (**na adharmaṁ**). Staying here in Vraja (**iha vraje**), please perform (**tanu**) profuse service (**pracura-paricaryām**) to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa (**rādhā-kṛṣṇa**). O mind (**manaḥ**), unceasingly remember (**ajasram smara**) the son of Śacī (**śacī-sūnuṁ**) as the son of Nanda Mahārāja (**nandīśvara-pati-sutatve**), and Śrī Guru (**guru-varam**) as the dearest servant of Lord Mukunda (**param mukunda-preṣṭhatve**).

## Verse-2 Bhajana Darpana

This verse deals with three doubts.

The first doubt concerns how an individual jīva who gives up false pride and takes shelter of kṛṣṇa-bhakti will earn a living.

It might appear that no one who gives up dharma and adharmā, as prescribed in this verse, could maintain a livelihood.

The second doubt concerns accepting the worship of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, the divine couple, as the ultimate and only object.

## Verse-2 Bhajana Darpana

Such a person needs to understand how to know and regard Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Caitanya Mahāprabhu without disturbing one-pointed worship.

The third doubt concerns needing to know the method in which one should meditate on Śrī Guru.

Answers to all of these are provided below with proper analysis.

# Ślokārtha: Meaning of the Verse

1. Na dharmam nādharmam  
śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṃ kila kuru:

Do not perform the pious or  
sinful activities mentioned in the  
śrutīs.

## Verse-2 Bhajana Darpana

The śrutīs' essence is the esoteric conclusion that one should serve the divine couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa uninterruptedly.

Externally, whatever a human being does falls in one of these two categories of dharma and adharmā.

If we reject both, life cannot be sustained even for a moment.

Therefore, Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī did not actually prohibit all activities in relation to engaging the senses in the world.

## Verse-2 Bhajana Darpana

Nor did he prohibit all prescribed duties in relation to awakening a soul to the ultimate goal of life.

In this world there are two categories of living beings, the spiritually ignorant and the spiritually intelligent.

For spiritually ignorant living beings, the Vedas as śruti and smṛti list many rules and prohibitions to promote piety and discourage sin.



## Verse-2 Bhajana Darpana

Fear of punishment motivates spiritually ignorant jīvas to follow such rules.

Whenever they do anything independently of such scriptural guidelines, their actions have an inauspicious result.

Those who have attained self-realization are spiritually intelligent, conscious of their spiritual identity as servant of God.

They do not need, and shouldn't do, actions motivated by fear.

## Verse-2 Bhajana Darpana

Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī has instructed such persons who have realized their spiritual identity to pursue the worship of the divine couple without much regard to dharma or adharma.

Even while performing whatever required duties are needed in their life, spiritual practitioners (sādhakas) should infuse those activities with service to the divine couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Those persons who live according to varṇāśrama-dharma (scriptural rules of occupation and life stages) should do those actions in a mood related to pure devotional service.

## Verse-2 Bhajana Darpana

For example, those who are married (gṛhastha) should establish the Deity form of the Lord (śrī-vigraha) at home.

Then all activities such as earning money, farming, supporting one's family, protecting wealth and assets, building houses, and so forth, should be done in the mood of identifying oneself as a servant of the Deity who is the enjoyer of all those activities.

One should never think, “I am the enjoyer and master.

## Verse-2 Bhajana Darpana

I can exploit the fruits of my work for my own enjoyment.”

According to Hari-bhakti-vilāsa, even rituals such as the śrāddha (oblation) offering to ancestors should be performed in the mood of the service to the Deity.

When a person has no more attachment and dependency upon the principles of varṇāśrama-dharma, the pure intrinsic nature of devotional service for the pleasure to the divine couple is easily available.

Then one can live in vraja-dhāma at least mentally, if not both physically and mentally.

# Ślokārtha: Meaning of the Verse

2 Śacī-sūnuṃ nandīśvara-pati-  
sutatve:

Meditate on Lord Caitanya, the  
son of Śacī, as non-different  
from Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of  
Nanda.

## Verse-2 Bhajana Darpana

The very beginning of worshiping the divine couple starts with worship of one's gurus (śrī-guru-pūjā) and pleasing the gurus.

Then one remembers Lord Gaurāṅga, meditating upon him to appear in the form of Kṛṣṇa.

If worship is done otherwise, the ultimate perfection will not come.

However, if someone worships Śrī Caitanya separately from the divine couple, one will be unable to understand how he is non-different from Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

## Verse-2 Bhajana Darpana

Having established that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Nanda-nandana, is non-different from Lord Caitanya, Śrī Śacī-nandana, one is then able to remember Śrī Caitanya even while worshiping Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

# Ślokārtha: Meaning of the Verse

3 Guru-varaṁ mukunda-  
preṣṭhatve smara:

Meditate on Śrī Guru as being  
the dearest to Mukunda, Kṛṣṇa.



## Verse-2 Bhajana Darpana

The term mukunda-preṣṭha means someone who is very dear to Lord Mukunda, the Lord who gives mukti, freedom from the material world.

The worshiper should think, “Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is like an ocean of mercy, has sent his intimate associate in order to take me home, back to Godhead.”

It is also most appropriate to respect and regard Śrī Gurudeva as an intimate friend (priyā-sakhī) of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

Verse-1

ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA  
ṬHĀKURA'S

MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ BHĀṢĀ

SONG TWO

# MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ BHĀṢĀ

## Verse-1

‘dharma’ bali’ vede yā’re, eteka praśaṁsā kare,  
‘adharma’ baliyā ninde yā’re  
tāhā kichu nāhi kara, dharma-adharma parihara,  
hao rata nigūḍha vyāpāre

Engage neither in anything that the Vedas proclaim to be dharma, nor in anything that it censures. Rather, leaving all dharma and adharma aside, enrapture yourself in the supreme mystery.

# MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ BHĀṢĀ

## Verse-2

yāci mana, dhari' tava pāya  
se-sakala parihari', vraja-bhūme vāsa kari',  
rata hao yugala-sevāya

O heart! I beg you, holding on to your feet. Abandoning everything, live in Vraja and be always absorbed in the loving service of the divine couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

# MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ BHĀṢĀ

## Verse-3

śrī-śacīnandana-dhane, śrī-nandanandana-sane,  
eka kari' karaha bhajana  
śrī-mukunda-priya-jana, gurudeve jāna', mana,  
tomā' lāgi' patita-pāvana

Worship our treasure Śrī Śacīnandana (the son of Śacī, Gaurahari) and Śrī Nandanandana (the son of Nanda, Kṛṣṇa) as one. Know that Gurudeva is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beloved, who manifested in this world, dear mind, as a savior of the fallen, for you!

# MANAḢ-ŚIKṢĀ BHĀṢĀ

## Verse-4

jagate prakṛta bhāi, tāñhā vinā gati nāi,  
yadi cāha āpana kuśala  
tāñhāra caraṇe dhari', tad ādeśa sadā smari',  
e bhaktivinode deha' bala

You cannot progress without guru. If you want your own welfare, hold tight onto the guru's lotus feet, always keeping the guru's instructions in mind. Bhaktivinoda, begs, "Please grant me strength [that I may do this myself]."

# Verse-1

Notes on the Commentary

by

Śrīla Sivarama Swami

# Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- The first verse dealt with the question of what one should do when faith in kṛṣṇa-kathā rises within the heart of the jīva.
- And the answer to that was gurau goṣṭhe goṣṭhālayiṣu sujane bhū-sura-gaṇe sva-mantre śrī-nāmni, that one should take dīkṣā mantra by accepting a spiritual master, serve Vaiṣṇavas, and worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.
- There are certain implied questions in that first verse, namely, that if one is always worshiping Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, how is one meant to maintain oneself or live within this world.



## Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- So the answer to this is covered in the second verse, as well as how to see the position of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the position of the spiritual master, and how this process of worship should be done.

# Verse-2

Notes on the Commentary  
by  
Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

This paddhati is a guidebook for those who have developed faith in Kṛṣṇa as their complete shelter, including their maintainer.

It answers the question, “If I have now developed my faith in Kṛṣṇa, then what is my duty?”

Once, Caitanya Mahāprabhu went to Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita and asked, “Paṇḍita, you are only reciting the Gītā or holding kīrtana festivals at your house and this doesn’t bring money.

How do you maintain your family with its numerous members?”

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita said, “If we serve you, if we have trust in you, if we have faith in you, you have said that you will maintain us.

If for one day you don't maintain us, no problem.

For the second day you don't maintain us, also no problem.

Even for the third day we can still keep on fasting—we can fast three days, no problem.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

If on the fourth day nothing comes, we will all go to the Gaṅgā and drown ourselves because you have failed on your promise.”

The dharma (function) of the conditioned soul is to run around in the world and make many arrangements for maintenance according to pious rules given in the Vedas.

The ignorant cannot work without such rules and regulations; otherwise, their activities become inauspicious and immoral.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

But those who possess knowledge of the soul and their sambandha (relationship to Kṛṣṇa) do not require such scriptural rules and regulations.

They are called wise.

They are ready to embrace the path of surrendering to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

However, gṛhasthas need to maintain their families and also try to support the brahmacārīs or the renunciates.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

This is the old tradition. Such earning of livelihood should be done while we make ourselves absolutely dependent on Kṛṣṇa; then it works.

A friend of mine married and took to the profession of astrology.

But it didn't work; no money came.

So he went one day to Bālajī, and said, “Bālajī, whenever someone comes to me for astrological consultations, I promise to give you one-tenth of the income.”

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

He made himself dependent on Bālajī, and customers came, but he forgot to give the tenth.

His business ran down, and one day his good wife said to him, “The reason why you are so poor is you don’t make yourself dependent on Bālajī.

You keep everything for yourself.

You don’t donate.

Donate! So he gave the tenth and now he is one of the richest gṛhasthas in ISKCON.



## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

With this somewhat clumsy example, I am saying our life situation may change, but we should not change the idea of making ourselves dependent on Kṛṣṇa.

How to have this dependence?

This verse tells us that we should meditate on Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

It is so important, because Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu opens for us the road of mercy.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

Because of Mahāprabhu's appearance in this world we have access to these highly exalted subject matters.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has given us the key: just chant the holy name, avoiding the ten offenses, and then we enter the road of prema, and we go upwards.

There is a song by Vāsudeva Ghoṣa where he asks: Would anyone have ever heard of something known as prema as the ultimate aim of mankind if Caitanya Mahāprabhu had not come and been compassionate?

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

Could anyone know of the divine power of the holy name if Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu didn't come?

Had anyone ever entered the sweet charming forest of Vṛndāvana without Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu?

Did anyone know that Śrī Rādhā is the embodiment of the highest transcendental ecstasy?

Then this second verse of Manaḥ-śikṣā says you should see Caitanya Mahāprabhu as non-different from Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and when you meditate about Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja tells us that we should think of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu as Kṛṣṇa, but as Kṛṣṇa in a special mood.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

He has descended in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī to teach us how to develop devotion.

Once Kṛṣṇa sat with Rādhārāṇī in the forest of Vṛndāvana.

He took Rādhā's hand in his own and said, "Would you please give me something today?"

Rādhārāṇī was in a very special mood. Her heart had melted.

Kṛṣṇa said, "Could you give me this love?"

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

Rādhā said, “This love would be too heavy for you to bear.”

Then Lalitā chimed in, “This will be too heavy.

When our Svāminī has this type of love in her heart, her everything goes to you, Kṛṣṇa.

She cannot be pacified when you are not there.

We put sandalwood paste on her body, but it falls off like leaves of paper that are dried.

We put her on a bed of damp lotus petals, but the lotus petals burn up. This would be too heavy for you.”

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

Then Kṛṣṇa took the other hand of Rādhārāṇī. “I want to experience this love.”

Rādhā said, “All right, Śyāma, I will give you this love. But in addition to this, I will cover your beautiful blackish body with my golden complexion.

Then, when you stumble and fall and bruise your body, you will be protected by my effulgence, and in this way you will not harm your soft body, which is so dear to me.”

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Sacinandana Swami

So Kṛṣṇa came with a golden complexion, and he danced, calling like Rādhā, “O Kṛṣṇa, where are you? Where are you, O moon who has risen from the dynasty of Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśodā? Where are you?”

When Kṛṣṇa had this love, which would make him cry so much that the stones melted, he would crash down like a tree that was felled by a gale.

Then that beautiful golden shining effulgence of Rādhā would protect him.

This is how we meditate on Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu if we follow the footsteps of Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī and Bhaktivinoda Thākura.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

Verse two of the Manaḥ-śikṣā says how to meditate about the guru, and I find this very practical.

You should think of the guru with this attitude: he is dear to Mukunda, the Lord who gives liberation.

See him as a dear friend of Kṛṣṇa, doing Kṛṣṇa's work.

There's a verse in the Fourth Canto of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam where the Pracetās address Lord Śiva.

Lord Śiva had taught them a special mantra called the Śiva-gīta, the song of Lord Śiva.



## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

It is a beautiful song, describing attractive features of Kṛṣṇa as glistening like a rain cloud lit up by a flash of lightning.

The Pracetās sang this song, meditating upon it.

They saw the Deity of this song, Viṣṇu, and said to him, “Dear Lord, by virtue of a moment’s association with Lord Śiva, who is very dear to you and who is your most intimate friend, we were fortunate to attain you.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.30.38)

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

It is important to see your guru as a friend of Kṛṣṇa, or mukunda-presta, very dear to Mukunda.

See his essence even when he chastises.

The spiritual master wants to give you Kṛṣṇa and he wants to bring you to Kṛṣṇa, because that is what Kṛṣṇa wants.

Kṛṣṇa wants you. Of course, the guru will help in Kṛṣṇa's mission.

That is the meditation we should have.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

Verse two of Manaḥ-śikṣā also says, “Staying here in Vraja, please perform profuse service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.”

If you want to worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vraja, there are six ingredients that are very important.

First of all, you must learn to offer obeisances.

When you are in Vraja offer sufficient obeisances.

Bow down and touch the dust.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Sacinandana Swami

This is a sādhana on the path of bhajana. Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī paid 2000 obeisances to the Vaiṣṇavas every day. This practice is important.

When I was introduced to daṇḍavat parikramā, I decided to do it at midnight so no one would see me.

In Rādhā-kuṇḍa, I readied myself; there was no one on the streets, so I started.

At first I thought how advanced I am, and so on. But then, very quickly, I noticed it was strenuous.

I said to myself, “Maybe there is another mode of consciousness here that is more appropriate.”

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

Immediately just by placing my body on the pilgrim's path with prostrated obeisances, I remember a feeling of humility swept over me—and then came my challenge.

I came to a herd of pigs blocking my path.

First of all, my false ego sprung up and I said to the superior pig, “I am the son of a director.

Get out of my way please.”

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

The pig didn't even look at me, so I then thought, "Okay, I learned to be a street fighter when I was very young; he can have it the other way."

So I went with my hand "Bang!" on the pig because I really wanted him to go out of my way for my glorious bowing-down exercise.

The pig just gave me a smile that made me think, "This pig might bite me and then I'll have to go to the hospital, so better I don't hit him."

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Sacinandana Swami

So I really prostrated myself, and thought, “Again my false ego has appeared.

This time I will pray very hard to Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa.”

I paid my obeisances and came again to that head pig who studied me very carefully.

I said to the pig, “Please, let me do this service.

I know you are a great soul.

You have been sent by Rādhārāṇī to test me and I failed my first test.”

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

I really prayed, *tapta-kāṣcana-gaurāṅgi rādhe vṛndāvaneśvari*, because I was going around Rādhā-kuṇḍa (the lake of Rādhā).

The pig then ran to the side, leading the other pigs to the side as well. So I went through the pigs easily.

I have never felt so cleansed in my life as I felt among the *saṅga* of pigs, because they had told me in their own graphic way that I have to be humble.

I had to do it for Rādhārāṇī otherwise they would bite me.



## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

We may not offer so many obeisances as in a daṇḍavat parikramā, but we should offer a sufficient amount of obeisances.

Especially we can use the time when we start and end the Gāyatrī mantra, and when visiting the holy dhāmas, to pay obeisances. This is the mārḡa (path) of devotion.

The second ingredient is prayers.

The Gosvāmīs wrote prayers one after the other, because they would sing these wonderful prayers that encourage devotion in the heart.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

Their prayers are full of devotion, and when we chant them we will also be overwhelmed with devotion.

The third item is to offer our activities.

That means to do something for Kṛṣṇa.

When visiting the holy dhāma, for instance, do some broom sevā.

That is a wonderful service to just sweep the holy dhāma.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

Clean Vraja, like you clean a place before you sit down. Do something practical.

The fourth is similar to the third: offering the fruits of all your activities, which means perhaps giving a donation to the Deities and to good sādhus, or offering your services.

Fifth is to learn how to meditate on the lotus feet of the Lord, called smaraṇam.

Finally, sixth is to hear the topics of the Lord sufficiently.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura writes that we should learn to do these six when we want to do bhajana or worship.

These six items are also referenced in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Seventh Canto, chapter 9, verse 50, where Prahlāda Mahārāja describes them to us.

Now, at this verse of Manaḥ-śikṣā, where we have been introduced to dependence on Kṛṣṇa, meditation on Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the guru, we might ask what would be wrong in practicing some eclectic spirituality from various spiritual schools and paths—reading different books, going to a variety of lectures, maybe listening to the Dalai Lama.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

We could just construct our own spirituality with bits and pieces that we have collected from here and there.

We could ask whether or not it is possible to attain residence in vraja-dhāma and execute devotional service with this intense attachment and love by accepting dīkṣā and śikṣā from other sampradāyas, from other spiritual schools. This question will be addressed in Verse 3.

# Verse-2

Notes on the Commentary  
by  
Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana  
Goswami

**One-Pointed in Our Goal**

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

This second verse of Manaḥ-śikṣā contains a very important element—the principle of a single goal.

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī explains how a person who lives in the world and performs the duties associated with the world can attain this unity of spiritual direction.

In the early verses of Manaḥ-śikṣā, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī speaks of the various obstacles that arise on the sādḥaka's way.

One obstacle is that our minds are many-branched.



# Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

We are accustomed to setting many goals and pursuing them, but by doing so we can never reach Kṛṣṇa, because as the saying goes, “If you chase two rabbits, both will escape.”

Unfortunately, we are practiced at trying to accomplish many things at a time.

This is the same obstacle that Kṛṣṇa speaks about in the second chapter of the Bhagavad-gītā.

For a person who follows the path of conventional religion, dharma, there are many regulations one of which is the instruction to worship God.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

The prescription for the person who has chosen bhakti and wants to attain bhakti is just one, however.

God is not merely included; the only goal is to attain God.

It should be the only goal and everything else a means to attain this goal.

In other words, we should develop chastity to God.

As Kṛṣṇa says in the Bhagavad-gītā (18.66), sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Kṛṣṇa also says that foolish people worship the demigods and their minds are stolen by illusion, māyā.

Ultimately a person must have one goal, which is love of God, not just worship of God.

When we worship God for material gain, then the gain we want to get is more important to us than God himself.

In essence, we put this material goal above God.

For us God is nothing but a means or a tool of fulfilling our desires.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī is stressing that a person must clearly understand that they have only one goal and everything else serves that goal.

For example, Droṇācārya, marveling at Arjuna's accuracy, asked him, "How do you hit the target so precisely?"

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Arjuna explained by saying, “First I see the bird and along with the bird I see the tree in which the bird is sitting, and I see the branch on which it is sitting.

Then I see only the branch on which the bird is sitting and the bird.

Then I see only the bird.

But I do not shoot the arrow until I stop seeing everything else but the eye of the bird.

The arrow then flies there by itself because I do not see anything else.”

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

It is this quality that we need to develop. When we look, we should not see anybody except Kṛṣṇa.

In conditioned life, we look and we see māyā.

As we practice as Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī speaks about in this verse, we gradually stop seeing everything else—ekānta.

Ekānta means a person who has only one goal.

And when we do not see anything else, then our hearts are filled by faithfulness towards God, just like a faithful wife towards her husband.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

After all, God is īśvara, the Supreme pati or husband.

When we scatter our minds over various goals, it is as if we were being unfaithful to him.

This unfaithfulness manifests itself in various ways, either subtle or gross.

Vedic culture first teaches a person to be chaste in an ordinary way, but the highest chastity consists in reducing everything else to this goal, in seeing how everything else brings us to this goal.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

And here Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says: na dharmam  
nādharmam śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṁ kila kuru. Reject all  
dharma and all adharmā for Kṛṣṇa's sake.

We wear a kānti-mālā, and eat with our right hand  
instead of a fork because it pleases Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa, believe it or not, likes it when we sit on the floor  
and when we wear neck beads.

A chaste wife decorates herself with ornaments only for  
her husband.



## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

An unchaste wife also puts on ornaments, but she wears them for everyone.

In the same way we must adorn ourselves with our virtues and qualities, not for the sake of the virtues themselves or to make a show of these virtues, but so that Kṛṣṇa enjoys them.

We keep this secret deep in our heart: I am following this dharma, all that Kṛṣṇa wants me to, for the sake of pleasing him.

It is said that there are different categories of gopīs.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

When Śyāmasundara Gopīnātha stands under the Vamśīvaṭa, playing his flute, the gopīs run to him, but they face different obstacles on the way.

There are impediments that some sādhana-siddha-gopīs, of which there are different categories, meet on their way to the forest.

Some run to Kṛṣṇa and face no obstacles because they have no obstacles in their hearts.

But there are other gopīs who hear the sound of the flute.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

They want to rush to Kṛṣṇa, but their husbands bolt the doors, stand before them and exclaim, “Where are you running to?”

These gopīs remain at home and die of love for Kṛṣṇa.

Some gopīs’ husbands seem non-existent and do not bolt their doors.

Those gopīs run out and come directly to Kṛṣṇa.

However, with other gopīs there are husbands and bolts.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

The restricted gopīs still have an attachment to dharma, to their righteousness; attachment to the idea, “I am such a righteous gopī,” and, “Yes, Śyāmasundara is playing his flute and I want to run to him, but here is my husband.”

Immediately the husband turns up and says, “Did you call me?” and he bolts the door.

When a person retains even the slightest attachment to the notion of being something other than a person who loves Kṛṣṇa, this is attachment to pride.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

This attachment to pride can become manifest even as attachment to virtues and it will create an obstacle on the way.

In the process of spiritual practice, we must overcome all these hindrances, and when we overcome these internal obstacles, the external ones will disappear.

Then when we hear the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute, we will run and dance and embrace Kṛṣṇa.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

We should clearly understand that we have only one goal, which is love for Kṛṣṇa.

And the only way to achieve this goal is by chanting:  
Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare  
Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

We do not need anything else.

# Guru and Lord Caitanya

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Ragunatha Dāsa Gosvāmī says: vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa-pracura-paricaryām iha tanu—I start worshiping Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Then he says śacī-sūnuṁ nandīśvara—how I should see Lord Caitanya.

Lord Caitanya, son of Śacī, I should see as the son of Nanda Mahārāja.

When we worship Lord Caitanya, we worship him as Kṛṣṇa.

We see him as Kṛṣṇa who brought us love of God and came to teach us to love God.



## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

My guru I should see as mukunda-preṣṭa.

In other words, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says to learn to see one goal in everything we do.

If we worship guru, worship him as someone who is most dear to Kṛṣṇa.

Worshipping guru should not turn into a personality cult.

Sometimes people, blinded by their so-called love for guru, start worshiping him apart from God.

We worship guru only because he is dear to Kṛṣṇa and because through him we can come to Kṛṣṇa.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

We want to come to Kṛṣṇa; we don't want to come to anything else, because there is nothing else we need except Kṛṣṇa.

We need love for Kṛṣṇa. We need chastity in our hearts.

This is what Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī asks his mind in the second verse.

He says, “Give up everything else.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

You need Kṛṣṇa.

Everything else should not become an end in itself for you.

You should learn this art of how to connect everything you do to a single goal, to see that at the end of everything is Kṛṣṇa, who is bent at three places, with his flute to his lips, who is calling us all to dance.”

# Sattva-guṇa, Detachment, Faith, and Love

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Kṛṣṇa establishes some principles, adherence to which allows us to gradually purify our hearts.

When our hearts are pure, what should then appear in our hearts?

Love won't immediately appear, but gradually, by following the principles of dharma, the four regulative principles, and the other principles of Vedic culture, we will rise to the level of sattva.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Eleventh Canto, Kṛṣṇa says that sattva and dharma are synonyms; that sattva strengthens dharma; and religiosity strengthens goodness.

Purity, or adherence to the principles of purity, following the principles of sattvic life, will make a person more religious, and religion makes a person live in more purity.

These are integrally related to each other.

If we simply live a pure life, we will become more inclined to God, and this inclination will, in turn, make us live an increasingly pure life.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

But we do not need merely material purity or material sattva.

Ultimately, purity will certainly result in love of God, but love is preceded by something else—faith.

Therefore, Kṛṣṇa explains to Uddhava in the Bhāgavatam (11.20.9):

**tāvat karmāṇi kurvīta  
na nirvidyeta yāvatā  
mat-kathā-śravaṇādau vā  
śraddhā yāvan na jāyate**

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

If a person performs some dharma, some Vedic rituals, then gradually something wonderful happens—*na nirvidyeta yāvatā*.

Detachment from the material world appears in our hearts.

If a person follows the principles of Vedic dharma what they attain is indifference to the temptations of the material world, the sign of purification of the heart.

A pure heart is the heart that is gradually drifting away from the temptations of the material world.



## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

As a result of detachment, faith in kṛṣṇa-kathā will spring into our hearts.

As we become more aloof from the stories of the material world, from all this jaḍa-kathā or māyā-kathā, proportionally faith in kṛṣṇa-kathā appears.

By watching the news on TV, for instance, we actually strengthen our faith in māyā-kathā.

I do not know how many thousands of ślokaś there are describing māyā-kathā, but every day there are more mundane stories in the form of films, the news and everything else.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

But if a person begins following the principles of sattva, rising early in the morning, chanting japa, following other principles, then gradually they feel detachment from mundane kathā and faith in kṛṣṇa-kathā.

**Giving Up Adharma**

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

There are general fundamental principles of renouncing adharmā that apply to everyone which we should follow.

In our practice these are called the four regulative principles, which Śrīla Prabhupāda called the regulative principles of freedom.

These are the foundation of Vedic culture.

In 1983, there were attempts to recruit me into the KGB.

I was promised various benefits if I worked for them, and I was also threatened with dire punishments if I refused.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

I did not want at all to work for them in any way, but at the same time I was frightened.

Finally I plucked up the courage and went to the person who had threatened me, to give him my final answer.

I stood in front of him, a man twice my size.

I was a graduate student then, and was trembling.

As I stood before him shaking like an aspen leaf, I took a deep breath and said, “I thought about it and decided that I will not work for you because this does not correspond to my principles.”

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

When he heard this, he cried out, “What principles do you have except for the four regulative?”

I was shocked by the fact that even the KGB knew about the four regulative principles.

But in essence, these four are the basis for the development of bhakti in our hearts.

These are the basis of dharma, the basis of a happy life in this body, not to mention life in the next world.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

We must clearly understand where this foundation is because sometimes we have deeply hidden doubts that can make us stray far away.

We hide what we treasure most, so we hide our values.

We hide our doubts about Kṛṣṇa deep in our hearts as something most treasured.

As long as I have these doubts, I can enjoy in this world.

When there are no doubts, there are no more chances.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

In a sense, we should have no doubt in the regulative principles.

They are the basis of a normal life in this world.

The first regulative principle, no meat-eating, is obviously foundational.

Our hearts become cruel if we eat meat because we become contaminated by living at the cost of another being's life.

Any person with even a little intelligence understands that meat-eating should not be done.



## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

I knew a boy, now a young man, who became a vegetarian because his mother accidentally put a rabbit's eye in his stew.

He saw the eye and he then realized where meat was coming from and he stopped eating it.

Usually devotees have no problem with following this principle.

I also know a five-year-old boy who became a vegetarian under someone else's influence.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Since then, he has been saying to his grandmother, “Grandma, why are you eating corpses?”

How can you eat these corpses?”

His grandma replies, “Why are you always spoiling my appetite?”

But there are principles that are harder to accept, such as no gambling.

The three remaining principles (gambling, intoxication, and illicit sexual relations) have something in common.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Our future in Kṛṣṇa consciousness depends on how well we understand this point.

They have passion and attachment to the body in common.

Because of attachment to the body, a person does many things that tie the person to the body.

Therefore Śrīla Prabhupāda calls these principles the regulative principles of freedom.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

All the four sinful activities enslave us, forcing us to become addicted to the body, so much so that ultimately there is no self-control.

Whether we take intoxicants, gamble, or have illicit sex, we will ultimately become slaves to that activity.

It may seem like the price we pay isn't so high, but the price is suffering.

We may spend some money gambling, but the winnings can be huge.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Drugs may cost a certain amount, but we think the result is worth it.

But when we want to buy something very big for a very cheap price it is called cheating—and we cheat ourselves.

Therefore the ultimate result is pain and suffering, and the inclination to deception becomes increasingly stronger.

Yes, a person has the right to experience the material pleasures of sex, but what price must be paid for it?

Because of lust, children will need to be cared for and worried about over the next twenty-five years.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

If we want to be happy and have a peaceful mind free from any worry, what price should we pay for it?

We could meditate and purify the mind.

But why should someone do that if they can go and buy some LSD or similar substance and imagine that they are already there in the spiritual world, having visions, and blue-complexioned Kṛṣṇa is there, too.

But all this is deception; we are only deceiving ourselves.

When we drink or take drugs we do not become happy.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

We simply turn into slaves.

If we engage in illicit sex what we get eventually is pain and terrible things happen to us.

Leo Tolstoy's wonderful novella *The Kreutzer Sonata* describes this very deception underlying illicit sex.

But since the result, at first glance, is huge and the price seems very small, we become attached to these activities.

Therefore, these four principles are the basis of civilized life (just like there are the four pillars of religion: satyam—truthfulness; tapa—ascetism; daya—charity; śaucam—purity).

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

We must follow the regulative principles, and if we do not, then we are cheaters and rascals, as Śrīla Prabhupāda used to say.

Since by following the four principles we are trying to avoid sin in our lives so that our hearts become purified, we need to clearly understand the nature of sin.

There is a lie behind the sin and that is why Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī implores his mind in the first verse, “Give up the lie that makes you pretend to be something that you are not.”



## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

In our so-called normal life, when we pretend in one way or another to be God, the enjoyer, we commit certain actions that reinforce this proclivity to deceitfulness.

This attempt to deceive God and take something very valuable without paying a proper price for it, unfortunately, lives in the heart of every conditioned living being.

Not all conditioned living beings are deceivers, but the proclivity to be deceitful is there in us all.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

In other words, not everyone is a cheater, but everyone is a potential cheater.

If we allow this tendency to become manifest, we turn from being potential cheaters into actual cheaters.

**Give Up Attachment to  
Dharma**

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

The second verse makes us think about how to go on playing our role in the material world and simultaneously inwardly find ourselves in the spiritual world, in Vṛndāvana.

Again Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī is instructing his mind, saying, “O mind—na dharmam nādharmam śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṁ kila kuru.”

You must stop acting in accordance with the dharma described in the śruti, in the scriptures, and you must stop acting in accordance with adharma, that is, violating your dharma.

In other words, you should not follow dharma and you should not follow adharma.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

From the beginning Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says, śruti-gaṇa (Vedic scriptures).

The scriptures describe every possible responsibility of a living being, both dharma and adharmā.

There are two categories of living beings.

The first is the intelligent, who are enlightened, possess spiritual knowledge, and who live in accordance with the philosophy of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (vijna).

The second is the ignorant, the unenlightened (ājnā).

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's instruction na dharmam nādharmam śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṁ kila kuru is addressed to the vijnas, the enlightened people.

Jīva Gosvāmī gives an interesting definition of the ignorant person, or the person with materialistic tendencies as someone who identifies with the body.

In essence, most of us are faced with the same problem.

We do not understand that we are a soul, and we identify with the body, despite the numerous instructions that we have heard.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Jīva Gosvāmī also gives a slightly different definition that allows us to understand more clearly how to stop being an ignorant person.

He explains that an ignorant person is someone whose mind and intelligence are not absorbed in the message or teachings of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa.

These people are not fully focused on the teachings set down in the Bhagavad-gītā and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam and have not learned to see the world through the prism of these teachings.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

The only way to remove the ignorance of identifying with the body, as we explained in verse one, is to stand back and look at ourselves with an outward eye from the point of view of the Bhagavad-gītā and the other scriptures.

We take to take Kṛṣṇa's standpoint.

Why does Śrīla Prabhupāda call our path “Kṛṣṇa consciousness”?

It is because of how we should look at everything.



## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

For example, the first time Śrīla Prabhupāda flew on a plane, he was going from New York to San Francisco.

The plane started approaching San Francisco and he saw small houses and cars moving on the roads, which fascinated him.

He started saying, “Look, they’re like matchboxes.”

Then he called his servant and pointed at the tiny houses through the window which delighted the servant to look at all this together with Śrīla Prabhupāda.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Then Śrīla Prabhupāda looked at him and said, “Now imagine how this entire world looks from Kṛṣṇa’s perspective if it appears so small even from a plane.

And the people running around are very insignificant, so imagine what all this looks like to him.”

The path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness means that we look at everything from Kṛṣṇa’s perspective and that we try to see everything in terms of Kṛṣṇa.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

If we have learned to see the world from his viewpoint, then we move from the category of the ignorant to the category of the enlightened.

What does an ignorant person need to do in order to move into this other category?

We have already established with certainty that we fall into the category of the ignorant.

What do we need to do while we are still ignorant?

We need to follow dharma.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

We can't identify with philosophy.

We cannot see this world from Kṛṣṇa's perspective, so what can we do?

Focusing on Kṛṣṇa isn't so simple.

We should focus on how to observe the rules of the scriptures that constitute dharma, and this is something that anyone can do.

We must now very clearly understand at what point we can and must reject all these instructions of dharma.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Here Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says that we must do it:  
na dharmam nādharmam śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṁ kila kuru.

However, we need to understand when we must do that,  
because we must be careful not to do it prematurely.

If we do that too early, the result can be very unfortunate.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

What Caitanya Mahāprabhu brought is not just bhakti, but a special form of bhakti that we all must aspire to as the highest religious principle.

He came to give people rāga, a form of practice that should develop in our hearts as a burning desire to serve Kṛṣṇa, just like the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana have done and are still doing.

The instructions of Manaḥ-śikṣā are to be followed so that ultimately this rāga, attachment to Kṛṣṇa, is awakened in our hearts.

# Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

The first verse introduced us to the sphere of spiritual attachment, explaining the major obstacle to the development of this attachment, which is dambha (pride).

Pride forces us to identify with this body and the roles we play in life.

It forces us to become attached to the material world.

This is the weakness of the heart.

Later Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī describes specific forms in which this pride manifests itself.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

But at the very beginning he says that in order to develop attachment we must overcome our pride, and simultaneously we must start forming our spiritual identity, which consists of spiritual emotions.

From his first instruction, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī explains that we should try to attain our spiritual selves, being attached to the spiritual world, Vṛndāvana, the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, the spiritual master, the holy name, the mantra, which the spiritual master gives us, and ultimately to the ever-youthful couple of Vraja.



## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Beginning from the second verse, he explains step by step what we should do.

The first step Raghunantha Dāsa gives to his mind is, “O mind, give up attachment to dharma and adharmā.”

Give up attachment to following religious principles and non-following of religious principles.

Although this is a seemingly paradoxical statement, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura resolves this contradiction.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

On the one hand we are told to follow the principles of dharma and we promise our guru that we will follow the four regulative principles.

Yet on the other hand we are told, “Well, give it up; all this is nonsense.”

Sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja  
(Bhagavad-gītā 18.66).

Even if you are an absolute ignoramus, you can still go back to Kṛṣṇa.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Even if you are a mleccha and have nothing to do with brahminical culture, you can still go back because these things are unimportant.

Yet it is easy to become confused whether dharma is important or unimportant.

We may oscillate from one extreme to the other.

Vedic culture, true culture, is so important because it actually reflects the laws of the spiritual world.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

The principles of brahminical culture, strictly speaking, are not just some fanciful conventions.

These are profound laws that help us tune into the right mood, which is very important because the law of the spiritual world is to always be in the right mood, the basis of which is to surrender to God.

The materialistic brāhmaṇas forget about this detail of mood, although they observe everything else.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Therefore, any religious preacher or true messenger of God comes and says, “na dharmam nādharmam śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṁ kila kuru”—all this good and bad is just nonsense.

However, it is very important not to throw the baby out with the bathwater because these principles are nonetheless essential.

The primary principle is love of God; we should forget about ourselves and give up our selfishness.

We must purify our hearts so there will be an outpouring of pure love to serve Kṛṣṇa.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

But there are also secondary principles.

The secondary principles mean, for example, that we should eat with our right hands and use our left hands to take care of what comes out as a result of our food intake, or we should not give or accept anything using our left hand, which is the behavior of someone familiar with Vedic culture.

But in no way should we confuse the primary and the secondary principles with each other.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

In Śrī Caitanya Śīkṣāmṛta, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gives us a recipe or an algorithm that we must follow.

He explains all these secondary principles and says that a person who does not follow them develops hardheartedness, an adverse condition.

In one way or another, if a person does not follow these principles of the Vedic culture their attachment to the modes of passion and ignorance grows stronger.

Therefore, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains in which way the secondary principles should be combined with the primary principles.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

First of all he says a person should follow all the primary principles.

There are only five main principles of devotional service (pancāṅga-bhakti): sādhu-saṅga, nāma-kīrtana, bhāgavata-śravaṇa, mathurā-vāsa, śrī-mūrtira śraddhāya sevana.

Those are, the association of devotees, chanting the holy name of the Lord, studying the scriptures, living in a holy place, and faithful service to the Deity form of the Lord.

We should always, at least in our minds, live in a holy place; we should hear the scriptures, first of all Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam; we should chant the holy name; we should associate with the Vaisnavas; and we should worship a Deity.



## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Therefore, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that first we should adopt these five principles.

They must become the center of our lives because in any situation—whether it is a conditioned situation or a situation in spiritual life—they are the basis of spiritual existence.

In the spiritual world we will do the same.

What do devotees do in the spiritual world?

Where do they live first of all?

They live in a holy place; they live in the spiritual world.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Do they worship a Deity or not?

They do—Kṛṣṇa. They take care of him, they feed him, and they bathe and dress him.

What else do they do?

Do they hear Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam? They do, constantly; they constantly speak about Kṛṣṇa, and that is it.

Do they associate with sādhus? Certainly.

# Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Do they associate with materialists? No, because there are none.

Do they sing the holy name? Yes, they do.

In other words, those five items are both sādhana and sādhya at the same time.

These principles constitute not just the method, but also the goal of our spiritual practice.

When we attain the goal, we will do the same, but in the right state of mind and heart, when our hearts will be absolutely pure and overflowing with love.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Therefore, when asked, “What is the result of your chanting the holy name Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare?”

Śrīla Prabhupāda would reply that we will chant even more.

But at the same time, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that along with these five basic principles of bhakti, we must decide what to do with the secondary principles.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Some of us choose the option to follow what we want.

Others follow all the principles, or others follow only the principles that they have been taught.

But Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that from the very beginning, never mind how difficult it may be and no matter how long it takes, we should try to follow all the secondary principles.

From the very beginning, not only should we adopt the basic principles, but also we should study and achieve perfection in following all the details.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

As bhakti develops in our hearts, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains, we must give up those principles that contradict bhakti.

What is most surprising is that at the beginning he suggests we follow all the principles, even those that contradict bhakti.

There are actually many principles of varṇāśrama that contradict bhakti.

When we talk about Vedic culture, the first item that comes to mind is worship of the demigods.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

We are advised to worship this demigod or that demigod.

For instance, Śacīmātā used to worship the goddess who protects children.

She worshiped this goddess of snakes to prevent reptiles biting her little Nimāi.

Yet worshiping devatās contradicts bhakti.

Another principle of Vedic culture that contradicts bhakti is that we must respect a person according to their varṇa or their social position.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Following a similar principle of bhakti, we respect a person not because of their varṇa or their external position, but because of their devotional qualities.

Nevertheless, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that at the beginning we must follow all the principles.

This is because, first of all, we are attached to the body and, secondly, because we do not yet have sufficient bhakti ourselves to see bhakti in the others.



## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Therefore, from the very beginning, when we just begin our path of devotional service, we must follow the maximum of what is possible of secondary principles.

We must not neglect any details and nothing should be considered trifling.

The second step is that we renounce that which interferes with our bhakti.

And the third step is that we give up everything and become a pure soul.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

The third stage, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, is when we begin to understand that all the principles of varṇāśrama are servants of the main principle.

It is in this way that we follow these principles of varṇāśrama and understand which ones we ignore and which ones we do not ignore.

In other words if we return once again to the main thesis, we must first follow the maximum principles of dharma for our stage of advancement.

Only as bhakti develops in our hearts may we gradually give up some small things and see whether or not they hinder the development of the basic principle.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

There are also other very important points related to the principles of Vedic culture which we should consider.

In the Eleventh Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.11.32), Kṛṣṇa formulates the attitude to Vedic culture.

These are the words of Kṛṣṇa himself, addressed to us. Kṛṣṇa explains to Uddhava who is the best of men:

**ājñāyaivaṁ guṇān doṣān  
mayādiṣṭān api svakān  
dharmān santyajya yaḥ sarvān  
mām bhajeta sa tu sattamaḥ**

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

“A person who, understanding good and bad aspects of dharma as taught by me gives up all his duties and simply worships me is the best of all.”

Kṛṣṇa states that the best human being is the person who perfectly knows that the Lord has given the principles of Vedic scriptures to purify their heart, and that the principles of Vedic scriptures are beneficial.

The best person knows that someone who rejects these principles begins to degrade and eventually goes to hell.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

But despite knowing that Kṛṣṇa himself has given these principles to purify our hearts and that those who neglect these principles go to hell, such a person rejects these principles and starts worshiping Kṛṣṇa.

What Kṛṣṇa defines in this verse is exemplified by the gopīs.

We can reflect on their rejection of all principles, even those that are not rejected in decent society.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

They rejected not just some detailed dharmic principles, but they in fact abandoned their husbands and their children.

They abandoned everything they could and ran away to Kṛṣṇa.

In the dark, at night, they ran to the forest—to a stranger, to some cowherd boy who started playing his flute.

The gopīs gave up everything.

However, in the above verse Kṛṣṇa makes an extremely important statement that the best of humanity is not the person who rejects the value of dharma.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

At the outset, Kṛṣṇa says that the best persons are they who know that it is Kṛṣṇa who has given the numerous principles of the Vedic scriptures, that these principles purify our hearts, and that if we violate these principles we will become degraded.

Despite this, the person gives up everything and sees these principles as an impediment to serving Kṛṣṇa.

For example, when Kṛṣṇa had a headache, at his request Nārada Muni started asking different people, “Please give Kṛṣṇa the dust of your feet, because only the dust of your lotus feet can save him.”

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

What did they say?

“We can’t do that; we’ll go to hell. This is a violation of dharma.”

However, when Nārada Muni found the gopīs, they said, “Here, take the dust from our feet immediately!”

Nārada asked, “Aren’t you afraid that you will go to hell?”

“Who cares about hell? The main thing is that Kṛṣṇa will stop having a headache.”

Therefore, we should know all the principles of dharma knowing that they are meant to purify the heart.



# Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

We can have such knowledge only in practice, not theoretically, understanding that these principles purify our hearts and nevertheless still give them up at the right time.

In other words, first we have to understand that following Vedic culture is good.

The first aphorism of the karma-mīmāṃsā-sūtra by Jaimini Ṛṣi is: “Athāto dharma-jijnāsā.”

Now that we have obtained a human form of life, we should ask questions about dharma.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

We must ask ourselves what is good and what is bad; what is religion and what is not religion; what we should follow and what we should not follow.

The simplest definition of dharma is that by observing certain rules we get benefit in this life and in the next.

If people follow the laws of dharma consistently and as a principle, they will reap the benefit both now and in the future.

If they do not follow these principles, they are engaged in adharmā; and if someone violates these principles and acts against them, it is called vikarma, kukarma, or ugrakarma.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Such a person then is engaged in terrible activities which bring pain even in the present and bad reactions in the future.

An important point here is that principles of morality need to be applied realistically.

For example, we can say that sex is bad and that the highest principle of morality is not to engage in sex at all.

But it is an unrealistic goal for most people.

Therefore the Vedas say that we should marry and perform vivāha-vajina.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Sex should be done as a yajna, as a sacrifice.

We should focus our love on one person and develop a relationship with that person.

In the Eleventh Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, in the third chapter, Kṛṣṇa says that if a person has not curbed their senses and has also given up the principles of the Vedas, they will inevitably fall down from spiritual life.

If by our inner state of bhakti we have not yet developed our love to such an extent that we can renounce everything, but we still try to live according to the principles of renunciation, the result is very unfortunate.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Therefore, the Vedas try to make allowances for conditioned nature and operate in such a way that the conditioned nature does not impede the development of bhakti.

The Vedas offer the opportunity for a vivāha-yajna so we can live with our lawful wife or husband and there will be no sin attached to it.

The result is actual moral principles.

This is the glory of the Vedic principles—they try to give us an opportunity to actually progress and simultaneously cleanse our hearts.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Kṛṣṇa says that if you want to be rich, if you want to be happy, if you want to have a nice family life, then follow the principles of dharma.

Along with this candy, Kṛṣṇa also gives a medicine inside the sweets.

A person swallows the candy and thinks, “How sweet!”

Eventually when they reach the center, the very essence, they suddenly realize that they did not need the other part they had been sucking.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Despite this greatness of Vedic dharma, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says: na dharmam nādharmam śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṁ kila kuru—give up all dharma. In the end attachment even to dharma is unfavorable for three very important reasons.

First, when we are attached to dharma, we start to naturally depend on it.

In other words, when attached to dharma, to the law in our lives, we tend to put dharma above God.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

We can see this flaw in the classical religions, such as Judaism or Islam.

A Jewish rabbi once said that the best religion is Judaism, because to be an exemplary Jew one does not even need to believe in God.

All Jews need to do is simply follow all the Jewish principles and rules.

Faith in God is not required.

If a person becomes used to this, they become what Jesus Christ called them—a legalist, a Pharisee, a scribe—when the law displaces God from the heart.



## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Instead of depending on God, such a person starts to depend on the law and becomes a karmī.

That is why we speak disdainfully of karmīs.

But remember that karmī does not mean the general populace in the material world, who are not karmīs. Karmīs are those who actually follow all the principles of dharma.

Sometimes we may speak derisively of the gṛhamedhīs, but gṛhamedhī literally means a person who perfectly follows all the principles of dharma.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

They perform sacrifices every day, pour ghee onto the fire, chant mantras, and so on.

A gr̥hamedhī is a high term for a person who follows all the principles, but who nevertheless has forgotten the most important thing that these principles are meant for.

The second reason why attachment to dharma prevents us from attaining the supreme goal is a natural consequence stemming from the fact that, as we become attached to the adherence to dharma, simultaneously we become attached to the pleasures that come from dharma.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

As explained in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.5.15): *jugupsitaṁ dharmā-kṛte 'nuśāsataḥ svabhāva-raktasya mahān vyatikramaḥ*—Nārada Muni came to Vyāsadeva and started rebuking him, saying, “You have brought about the ruin of human society. You have given them all these Vedic scriptures and so have ensured their degradation.”

He said this because people will follow and become attached to the result, after which they ultimately forget about these very rules or dharma.

In this way human society becomes abased.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains the third reason.

He says that human psychology is such that we try to follow principles which are higher than our capability or qualification.

What drives such action is pride, because people want to prove as soon as possible to everyone that they are the greatest devotee.

I was once approached by a man who said that he had wanted to be great three times.

Once was when he finished school and did not yet know what kind of a great man he would become.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Then he decided to join the armed forces to become a great military man.

He did not succeed in achieving greatness that way, so his third attempt was when he decided to become a great devotee.

Therefore, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that first we must achieve stability in initially following some principles, such as chanting the mahā-mantra, before going any further.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

For instance, I may have started chanting six rounds, but I should not immediately try to chant sixteen rounds if it is difficult for me.

First, I must become very stable in chanting six rounds; then further on, I must become stable in chanting eight rounds.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that in order to move successfully from stage to stage, I must first be firmly established on the current platform and not jump over three or more stages.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

So we must achieve stability on a certain stage before we raise the bar too high.

Another problem is that when we achieve stability at this level, we can become attached only to this level.

We may think that we don't have to advance any further.

This attachment or pride to following the standard of a particular stage we have achieved becomes manifest in our attitude towards others.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

We despise those below us, and, more importantly, we despise those who are higher than ourselves.

We develop attachment to our particular level and say, “My level is the best. Those who are below me do terrible things.”

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that we can see this tendency at all different levels of development of human consciousness.

Consider the attitude of those who are living uncivilized lives to those who live by specific rules and principles.



## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

They often think, “They are wasting their precious human life. Human life is so rarely achievable and we can enjoy anything that no one else can enjoy, yet they spend their lives by following rules.”

And people who follow certain rules, have a contemptuous attitude towards those who believe in God.

Those who just believe in God hold those who are very devoted to God in disdain.

They say, “These bhaktas do not understand anything.”

The bhaktas who follow the principles of vaidhī-bhakti, think of the rāgānuga-bhaktas as mere sentimentalists.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Therefore, we must equally take care of our own hearts and neither hurry too much nor linger too long at each stage.

When we have reached a certain level, we must go higher.

And that is why the śāstras describe going the whole way up.

Sometimes we may wonder whether we need to hear descriptions of prema, but we need to know what the supreme goal is.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

Occasionally the description of prema may even frighten us.

However, the principle should be that we gradually move from one stage to the next and therefore attachment to varṇāśrama can be a hindrance.

So Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says here, na dharmam nādharmam śruti-gaṇa-niruktaṁ kila kuru—do not get attached to either dharma or to adharma.

# Verse-2

Notes on the Commentary  
by  
Urmila Devi Dasi

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī advises us to abandon both dharma and adharmā.

Such is not a call to become an avadhūta who appears crazy to the world.

Indeed, Rūpa Gosvāmī tells us in Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhuḥ “not to be neglectful in ordinary dealings.”

Rather, the point in verse two is to absorb our mind in eternal truth, tattva, rather than in the details of what is right or wrong in a karmic sense.

Such details are hard to discern even for the wisest persons.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

We can easily be diverted from love of God trying to unravel those complexities.

Ultimately, the underlying natural desire of the soul for balance, harmony, and goodness, which prompt our dedication to justice, morals, and ethics, is only found completely by transcending those concerns to come to full spiritual realization.

Nor should we calculate as to what actions of ours are likely or unlikely to bring us good results in a material sense.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

As stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.7.8):

“One whose consciousness is bewildered by illusion perceives many differences in value and meaning among material objects.

Thus one engages constantly on the platform of material good and evil and is bound by such conceptions.

Absorbed in material duality, such a person contemplates the performance of compulsory duties, nonperformance of such duties and performance of forbidden activities.”

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

Generally, Kṛṣṇa wants his devotees to act in ways equivalent to material piety, and to avoid behaviors equivalent to material impiety.

After all, such rules of piety and impiety originate with him, dharmam tu sākṣād bhagavat-praṇītam (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.3.19).

A serious practitioner of bhakti should act to please Kṛṣṇa as foremost, whether externally it appears that such a person's actions are fully in line with pious karma or not.



## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

After all, only low-level clerks enforce company rules blindly; at higher levels employees know the essence of company policy and can adjust externals according to the specific time, place, and circumstances.

Indirectly, therefore, here in the second verse we find a further implied description of the intended audience for this instruction manual.

These verses are intended for persons disinterested in karma, or the attempt to better oneself through enjoying the fruits of material action.

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

**yadā yasyānugṛhṇāti  
bhagavān ātma-bhāvitaḥ  
sa jahāti matiṁ loke  
vede ca pariniṣṭhitām**

When a person is fully engaged in devotional service, he is favored by the Lord, who bestows his causeless mercy. At such a time, the awakened devotee gives up all material activities and ritualistic performances mentioned in the Vedas. (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.29.46)

## Verse-2 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

Furthermore, verse two indicates that this book is intended not only for persons who aspire to the service of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana, but also specifically for those who follow the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.