

Śrī Caitanya-Śikṣāmṛta

Nectarean Teachings of Lord Śrī
Caitanya

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Thākura

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Vaidhi Bhakti

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However, devotees are not fully satisfied with cultivating devotion with body, mind and soul, because they see around them the material world as well.

They see their body, and within the body the mind and soul, as a small part of the universe, and think that the world should also be used to cultivate devotion to the Lord.

Infinite time and space and all the material forms may be used as ingredients for the worship of the Lord (Proof Below).

॥ 7.14.24 ॥

ta ete śreyasaḥ kālā
nṛṇām śreyo-vivardhanāḥ
kuryāt sarvātmanaiteṣu
śreyo 'moghaṁ tad-āyusaḥ

All of these special times (ete śreyasaḥ kālā) increase auspiciousness for humanity (nṛṇām śreyo-vivardhanāḥ). One should perform actions at these times (kuryāt sarva-ātmanā-eteṣu). This will produce unfailing success (amoghaṁ śreyah) in the whole of man's life (tad-āyusaḥ).

|| 7.14.27-28 ||

atha deśān pravakṣyāmi dharmādi-śreya-āvahān
sa vai puṇyatamo deśaḥ sat-pātram yatra labhyate

bimban bhagavato yatra sarvam etac carācaram
yatra ha brāhmaṇa-kulam tapo-vidyā-dayānvitam

Now I shall describe the places (atha deśān pravakṣyāmi) where religious performances may be well executed (dharmādi-śreya-āvahān). The most auspicious places are (sa puṇyatamo deśaḥ) where there are Vaiṣṇavas (yatra sat-pātram labhyate), who are equal to the deity of the Lord (bhagavataḥ bimban) who is the support of this entire cosmic manifestation, with all its moving and nonmoving living entities (sarvam etac carācaram), or where there are learned brāhmaṇas (yatra brāhmaṇa-kulam) endowed with austerity, education and mercy (tapo-vidyā-dayā-anvitam).

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Thinking in this way, they use place, time and matter in the cultivation of the Lord.

Cultivation involving the material world is of three types: cultivation using place, time and matter.

- ① Place
- ② Time
- ③ Matter.

Concerning place, devotees may go to holy places (tirthas), to temples and to devotees' houses.

Dvaraka, Puri, Kanci, Mathura mandala, Navadvipa are examples of tirthas.

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Having heard about the Lord's pastimes in those places, and becoming filled with faith, the devotees go to the tirthas or reside there.

With faith they take bath in the waters of the Ganga or Yamuna, which have washed the Lord's feet.

The devotees go to those places where the forms of the Lord are worshipped, and should always take shelter of the houses and villages of the great devotees.

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They visit the birthplaces and residences of the associates of Lord Caitanya with faith.

By visiting or residing in these places and constantly hearing topics about the Lord and His devotees, attraction for Krsna will arise.

Time should also be used to cultivate service to the Lord.

After working in the material world for two weeks, people must cultivate the Lord by giving up eating and sleeping on the ekadasi tithi (Proof Below).

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The eleventh tithi of both the waxing and waning phases of the moon is called ekadasi tithi.

This is a day for fasting or abstaining from foods, especially grains.

The principle purpose is pleasure of the Lord; the secondary purpose is health

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The devotees should also observe the vows during Damodara month, and observe the festivals commemorating the Lord's pastimes.

They should also observe the significant days in the lives of great devotees.

There are many ways of using matter in the service of the Lord.

Thus certain trees such as asvattha, dhatri and tulasi are used to serve the Lord.

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The images of the Lord are material objects, but the devotee must worship them as non-different from the Lord, Whose identical image resides in the heart of the pure devotee.

Among mountains, devotees may worship Govardhana; among rivers they may worship Ganga and Yamuna; among animals they may worship the cow and calf.

Whatever is suitable for bodies in this world is also fit to offer to the Lord.

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Thus there are rules for offering bed, cloth, scents, sandalwood and utensils to the Deity.

If the devotees offer their favorite object to the Lord, their service becomes first class.

The Deities are of eight types (Proof Below).

|| 11.27.12 ||

śailī dāru-mayī lauhī
lepyā lekhyā ca saikatī
mano-mayī maṇi-mayī
pratimāṣṭa-vidhā smṛtā

The deity form of the Lord is said to appear in eight varieties—stone,
wood, metal, clay, paint, sand, the mind or jewels.

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Devotees are happy that they can engage their body, mind, soul, place, time and matter in the service of he Lord, but something is lacking still.

If they can engage other people or society in the Lord's service, they will be happy. (Proof Below)

|| 11.3.29 ||

evam kṛṣṇātma-nātheṣu
manuṣyeṣu ca sauhṛdam
paricaryām cobhayatra
mahatsu nṛṣu sādhuṣu

One should learn to have friendship (sauhṛdam) with people who have devoted their lives to Kṛṣṇa (evam kṛṣṇātma-nātheṣu manuṣyeṣu) and to serve (paricaryām ca) Kṛṣṇa, the devotees (ubhayatra), those of higher status and those of equal status (mahatsu nṛṣu) in the proper manner (sādhuṣu).

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Thus there are rules for cultivation of devotion utilizing social tendencies: festive gathering of elevated devotees, increasing the vaisnava population, raising a vaisnava family, and spreading Vaisnava dharma to all souls.

The devotees should have festivals where they can live together, take prasadam together, listen to topics about the Lord and sing the Lord's name together.

Those amongst the devotees who are knowledgeable about madhura rasa can relish the meaning of the literatures such as Bhagavatam, which contain topics of rasa.

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Two things should be understood about devotee association, in order that Vaisnava offences are not committed.

Sri Caitanya has given us warnings in this regard.

The devotee should give up the association of the devotee pretender, understanding him to be a materialist (Proof Below).

|| 11.26.26 ||

(tato duḥsaṅgam utsrjya)

satsu sajjeta buddhimān

santa evāsyā chindanti

mano-vyasaṅgam uktibhiḥ

An intelligent person (**buddhimān**) should therefore reject (**tato utsrjya**) all bad association (**duḥsaṅgam**) and instead take up the association of devotees (**satsu sajjeta**). Only they can destroy (**santa eva chindanti**) the dangerous attachments in the mind (**mano-vyāsaṅgam**) by their words (**asya uktibhiḥ**).

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Towards those who are sincere, the devotee should offer service and respect.

Meeting a true Vaisnava, the devotee should associate with him and serve him with his heart; to the people who are favorable to the vaisnavas, he should show respect.

This respect is an external service.

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3 types of sympathetic people

①

These sympathetic people are of three types: those who fully accept the Vaisnava conclusions but are not practicing themselves; those who take up the Vaisnava signs and appearance, and act as if they are vaisnavas but are not real vaisnavas (with genuine faith), though they have respect for the real vaisnavas; those who are born in the families of great vaisnava acaryas, and wear the signs of a Vaisnava but are not real Vaisnavas.

Association

↓ True vaisnavas

→ Parameters of Advancement

Parameters of Advancement

a) Purity

b) depth of devotion.

c) Capacity to inspire others

②

A true Vaisnava is measured by the degree of purity, depth of devotion and capacity to inspire others.

③

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komala Shabdā

A person attains the status of a [real Vaisnava] as soon as just a little pure devotion appears in the heart.

If a person respects and takes association of the non-Vaisnava in the way that they respect the true Vaisnava or the ordinary Vaisnava, his devotion will decrease. (Proof Below)

kr̥ṣṇeti yasya giri taṁ manasādriyeta
dīkṣāsti cet praṇatibhiś ca bhajantam īsam
śuśrūṣayā bhajana-vijñam ananyam anya-
nindādi-śūnya-hṛdam īpsita-saṅga-labdhyā

One should mentally honor the devotee who chants the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, one should offer humble obeisances to the devotee who has undergone spiritual initiation [dīkṣā] and is engaged in worshiping the Deity, and one should associate with and faithfully serve that pure devotee who is advanced in undeviated devotional service and whose heart is completely devoid of the propensity to criticize others.

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Thus amongst those who wear the Vaisnava marks and appear to be Vaisnavas, certain ones mentioned below (false vaisnavas) should be avoided.

These people should be given the respect due to all human beings that is part of the secondary rules, but they should not be accepted or respected as real Vaisnavas.

If they happen to become pure devotees, then they are also qualified for association with other pure devotees.

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The false vaisnava should be avoided completely.

False vaisnavas are those who wear the Vaisnava marks for cheating; those who identify themselves as followers of the Vaisnava acaryas, for the purpose of introducing advaita philosophy to the Vaisnavas; and those who advertise themselves as Vaisnavas to gain money, position or some other material enjoyment.

You should not discuss topics of rasa with anyone except affectionate persons who have realization of rasa of a similar nature as ones own (Proof Below).

yasya yat-saṅgatiḥ puṁso
maṇivat syāt sa tad-guṇaḥ |
sva-kula-rddhyai tato dhīmān
sva-yūthān eva samśrayet

A man (**puṁsah**) will attain the qualities (**tad-guṇaḥ syāt**) of the person with whom he associates (**yasya yat-saṅgatiḥ**), just as a crystal takes up the color of the object next to it (**maṇivat**). Therefore (**tato**), the wise man (**dhīmān**) will take shelter of those who have qualities like his own (**sva-yūthān eva samśrayet**) for the prosperity of his family (**sva-kula-rddhyai**). (**Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya**)

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To increase the vaisnava population, the male devotee should only associate with a female vaisnava.

The wife should be initiated and if possible taught the Vaisnava philosophy.

By great fortune a person gets a Vaisnava wife.

By producing Vaisnava population with a Vaisnava wife, materialism cannot exist.

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In raising a family, the children should be understood to be servants of the Lord.

The parents should feel satisfaction by increasing the Vaisnava population.

The difference between the materialistic and devotional family is a difference, not of external form, but of consciousness.

Materialists also get married, earn money, build a house, and produce offspring, but their goal is to increase the happiness of the world or their own self and family.

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Vaisnavas perform the same activities, but do not claim the results as their own.

They act as servants of the Lord.

The Vaisnavas obtain satisfaction and peace, but the materialists, under the control of desire or anger bred from high aspirations and expectation of enjoyment or freedom, become disturbed.

Vaisnavas progress in their practice by the conviction that devotional cultivation will increase through raising a devotee family.

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As showing compassion to all living entities is the ornament of the devotee, the devotees devise various means of transforming the living entities into Vaisnavas.

According to the object, there are four types of relationship the devotee may have with others.

Towards the Lord, the devotees show prema; towards pure devotees, true friendship; towards immature devotees and ignorant people they show mercy (Proof Below).

|| 11.2.46 ||

īśvare tad-adhīneṣu
bāliṣeṣu dviṣatsu ca
prema-maitrī-krpopeksā
yaḥ karoti sa madhyamaḥ

An intermediate or second-class devotee, called madhyama-adhikārī (**madhyamaḥ**), offers his love to the Supreme Lord (**yaḥ karoti īśvare prema**), is a sincere friend to all the devotees of the Lord (**tad-adhīneṣu maitrī**), shows mercy to ignorant people who are innocent (**bāliṣeṣu kṛpā**), and disregards those who are envious of the Lord (**dviṣatsu upekṣā**).

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2 ways in which mercy is bestowed to devotees
a) Siksa b) ~~sakti sancara~~

Devotees distribute unlimited mercy to those who have developed qualification for bhakti through good association, by giving them spiritual instruction (siksa) and delivering them through bestowal of their spiritual energy (sakti sancara).

The devotees avoid those unfortunate people who, due to defective reasoning, refuse to admit the principle of elevation of the soul.