

Śuddha-bhakti Cintāmaṇi

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Chapter 14- Devotional Service in Love of God

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- Chapter thirteen described how devotees at the stage of ecstasy (bhāva) see Kṛṣṇa in their hearts.
- As advanced as they are, however, ecstatic devotees cannot see Kṛṣṇa at will.
- Such potency comes only with mature love of God (prema).
- At bhāva the influence of pure goodness reveals Kṛṣṇa to the devotees, either in their meditations or in rare, fleeting visions.
- Kṛṣṇa's appearance at this stage, called sphūrṭi, is described in the famous verse, sthāvara-jaṅgama dekhe nā dekhe tāra mūrti, sarvatra haya nija iṣṭa-deva-sphūrṭi: “The mahā-bhāgavata, the advanced devotee, certainly sees everything mobile and immobile, but he does not exactly see their forms. Rather, everywhere he immediately sees manifested the form of the Supreme Lord.” [Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 8.274]

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- Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura cites another well-known verse as an example of sphūrti:

pragāyataḥ sva-vīryāṇi
tīrtha-pādaḥ priya-śravāḥ
āhūta iva me śīghraṁ
darśanam yāti cetasi

- “The Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose glories and activities are pleasing to hear, at once appears on the seat of my heart, as if called for, as soon as I begin to chant His holy activities.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.6.33)
- Sākṣād-darśana is a fuller vision than sphūrti.
- It happens when love attracts Kṛṣṇa and He reveals His qualities and sweetness to the fully spiritualized senses.

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- Such a vision is not beheld only in the devotee’s purified heart in meditation, as it is with sphūrti.
- Rather, it is a physical vision.
- Kapiladeva describes sākṣād-darśana: “O My mother, My devotees always see the smiling face of My form, with eyes like the rising morning sun.
- They like to see My various transcendental forms, which are all benevolent, and they also talk favourably with Me.” [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.25.35]
- Here the question arises: If at bhāva devotees can see Kṛṣṇa in their heart, why would they desire to see him with their physical eyes?

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- Obviously, seeing Kṛṣṇa in one's heart is wonderful, but it is not good enough for ecstatic devotees, who consider such an internal vision a mere foretaste of seeing Him directly.
- Furthermore, these devotees consider the vision achieved with the material body an earthly foretaste of having the Lord's companionship in the spiritual world.
- Scripture confirms that seeing Kṛṣṇa directly is the greatest perfection, for it gives the greatest happiness and is the only means to achieve the topmost liberation. [In Prīti-sandarbha, anuccheda 8 Jīva Gosvāmī cites Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.12.12 and 12.9.5]
- How do ecstatic devotees become qualified to see Kṛṣṇa?
- A purified heart may serve as a mirror for Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, but it is not in itself a sufficient qualification to see Kṛṣṇa.

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- Jīva Gosvāmī says that the root from which the desire tree of Kṛṣṇa's direct association grows is the insatiable desire (lobha) to see Him. [Prīti-sandarbhā, anuccheda 8]
- Even devotees who have achieved the liberation of taking birth on the same planet as the Lord, or who have His bodily features or share His opulence generally only see Him in the heart.
- Only the devotees who want His direct company (sāmīpya-mukti) see Him face to face. [Prīti-sandarbhā, anuccheda 10]
- Again devotees may ask: But when Kṛṣṇa appears in this world ordinary people, even demons, see Him.
- If some transcendentalists are unqualified for Kṛṣṇa's darśana, how can the materialists see Him?

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- Jīva Gosvāmī says that the nondevotees see only a reflection (ābhāsa) of Kṛṣṇa's form. [Prīti-sandarbha, anuccheda 7]
- Kṛṣṇa Himself states that He remains invisible to the world, covered by His internal potency. [Bhagavad-gītā As It Is 7.25]
- This truth is proven in how differently nondevotees and pure devotees perceive Kṛṣṇa.
- For example, although pure devotees know that Kṛṣṇa is the source of bliss, nondevotees think He makes others suffer; although He is most handsome, they think He is ferocious; and although He is a friend to all, some see Him as their enemy.
- Therefore when Kṛṣṇa appears on earth He is not truly seen by anyone but His unalloyed devotees.

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- Some devotees may find this explanation hard to accept.
- They may argue that simply by seeing Kṛṣṇa, even inimical kings attained liberation.
- This is true, but simply because demons attain liberation upon seeing Kṛṣṇa does not negate the fact that prior to liberation they saw only an ābhāsa.
- That is, Kṛṣṇa is so potent that even the reflected vision of His form purifies the ordinary people who happen to see Him when He is present on earth.
- Once purified, these same people are then able to see Him directly and thus they attain perfection.

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- Similarly, those demons who became so antagonistic toward Kṛṣṇa that Kṛṣṇa chose to kill them with His own hands are purified by the Lord's touch at the final moment of their lives.
- With purified hearts, these demons truly see Kṛṣṇa and thus achieve liberation.
- The Viṣṇu Purāṇa supports this understanding by referring to Śiśupāla's death. [Viṣṇu Purāṇa 4.15.9]
- There it states that at the moment Śiśupāla was killed, he gazed at Hari.
- Cleansed of hatred and all other vice, Śiśupāla no longer saw Kṛṣṇa as his cousin and constant rival but as the Supreme Lord, His eternal form garlanded by the effulgence of the Sudarśana cakra and filled with power and glory.

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- Nondevotees, demons, or even advanced devotees do not easily achieve the highest perfection of seeing Kṛṣṇa directly.
- To receive the Lord's darśana requires a pure heart imbued with an intense desire to see Him.
- Such desire is cultivated by ecstatic service in the mood of separation, which matures first into loving devotion and finally into the mellow of devotion.
- In rasa Kṛṣṇa becomes the visible recipient of their services.
- This chapter further describes the loving devotion that is the means to see Kṛṣṇa and to enter into His eternal service.

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- Śrīla Prabhupāda often quoted the following verse to describe the inconceivable behaviour of devotees who have achieved love of God: [Mostly Śrīla Prabhupāda would quote the second line of this verse as follows: vaiṣṇavera kriyā-mudrā vijñeha nā bujhaya]

yāñra citte kṛṣṇa-premā karaye udaya
tāñra vākya, kriyā, mudrā vijñeha nā bujhaya

- “Even the most learned man cannot understand the words, activities, and symptoms of a person situated in love of Godhead.” (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 23.39)
- Love for Kṛṣṇa is a manifestation of the Lord’s internal, spiritual potency and is completely free from the contamination of His lesser, external potency.

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- The effect of love for Kṛṣṇa is beyond the influence of time and the material modes.
- Therefore conditioned souls and even practising devotees cannot understand the behaviour of perfect devotees with the material mind and intelligence.
- Held completely under the jurisdiction of love, the premi-bhaktas cannot conceive of doing anything that would displease Kṛṣṇa.
- If in the course of serving Kṛṣṇa such devotees transgress religious codes or even the rules of devotional practice, lesser Vaiṣṇavas should simply offer them respect.
- If the practising devotees are unable to make this kind of internal adjustment in perception, they should not remain in close proximity to a mahā-bhāgavata.

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- Echoing this principle Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, “Sometimes coming too near the deity or the spiritual master degrades the neophyte devotee.
- Personal servants of the deity and the spiritual master should therefore always be very careful, for negligence may overcome them in their duty.” [Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 12.212, purport]
- Once, in the ecstasy of love, Lord Nityānanda kicked Śivānanda Sena on the chest and cursed his three sons to die.
- This was incomprehensible to the less advanced Śrīkānta Sena, Śivānanda’s nephew, who later complained to Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- But Śivānanda Sena, a highly advanced Vaiṣṇava, was not in the least disturbed; rather, he considered the Lord’s kick and curse a blessing.

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- Such unconditional acceptance of a great devotee's behaviour is compulsory in the practice of devotional service.
- Again, persons without this kind of discriminating judgement should maintain a respectful distance from highly elevated devotees so as to avoid finding fault in them.
- Immunity from censure does not extend to devotees in sādhana-bhakti, because practising devotees are not directly and fully under the guidance of the internal energy but are still in touch with the material energy and subject to its defects.
- Practising devotees who imitate the spontaneous behaviour of mahā-bhāgavatas are held accountable for whatever acts they perform against the Vedic principles.
- Thus, if they engage in irreligion (adharma) in the name of religion, they suffer a severe reaction. [Bhagavad-gītā As It Is 16.17, 19]

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- The activities of practising devotees must conform in all details to standard Vaiṣṇava etiquette.
- Neither should devotees accommodate the deviant behaviour of other practitioners simply to avoid being criticized.
- And devotees who deviate from proper behaviour should not intimidate well-meaning critics with the threat that these critics have become offenders.
- Unfortunately, everything discussed above goes on in the Vaiṣṇava community.
- It would be helpful if devotees could recognize their own and others' qualification for bhakti.
- Based on such wisdom they should then act properly and evaluate others truthfully.

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- Scripture is emphatic about standard conduct among spiritual aspirants.
- This book has repeatedly cited Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.26) on this subject: “It is firmly declared that the steady adherence of transcendentalists to their respective spiritual positions constitutes real piety and that sin occurs when a transcendentalist neglects his prescribed duty.”
- Truly perfect devotees don’t involve themselves in the above dualities.
- Loving ecstasies enrich their character, and their spiritual duties are entirely beyond the scope of worldly affairs and worldly people.
- Devotees in love with Kṛṣṇa are unconcerned when persons in the bodily concept of life ridicule, praise, respect, or criticize them.

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- Śrī Kavi describes this divine condition to Mahārāja Nimi:

evam-vrataḥ sva-priya-nāma-kīrtiā
jātānurāgo druta-citta uccaiḥ
hasaty atho roditi rauti gāyaty
unmāda-van nṛtyati loka-bāhyaḥ

- “By chanting the holy name of the Supreme Lord, one comes to the stage of love of Godhead. Then the devotee is fixed in his vow as an eternal servant of the Lord, and he gradually becomes very much attached to a particular name and form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. As his heart melts with ecstatic love, he laughs very loudly or cries or shouts. Sometimes he sings and dances like a madman, for he is indifferent to public opinion.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.2.40)

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- It should be noted that not all devotees at the stage of love display such symptoms.
- Sometimes mahā-bhāgavatas restrain themselves, internalizing their ecstasy to facilitate the Lord's purpose.
- For instance, Śrīla Prabhupāda, obviously a premi-bhakta, was reserved in his dealings.
- Had he allowed himself to be overwhelmed by his ecstasy he could not have executed his service of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world.
- The reader may wonder whether there is a way to recognize the exalted stature of mahā-bhāgavatas who do not display ecstatic symptoms.

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- Śrīpāda Madhvācārya answers this question by quoting a verse from the Varāha Purāṇa, [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.2.40, purport] which in essence states that some devotees display extreme symptoms, such as acting like madmen, others appear introspective, and still others display both natures at different times.
- In any case, the only criteria one should use to judge the stature of devotees are the steadfastness of their surrender to the Lord and the wonderful effect the merciful vibrations emanating from their mouths have on the hearts of great numbers of people.
- The distinguishing feature of love for Kṛṣṇa—whether it is expressed as amorous attraction (kāma-rūpa) or through familial relationship (sambandha-rūpa)—is distinguished by its completeness and exclusivity.

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- According to exalted persons such as Bhīṣma, Prahlāda, Uddhava, and Nārada loving devotion is a state of consciousness in which devotees have an unflinching sense of ownership or possessiveness toward Kṛṣṇa.
- Such devotees think of Him, and no one else, as the object of love. [This paragraph is based on the description of loving devotion given in the Nārada Pañcarātra and cited in Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 23.8]
- Based on the authoritative description in Nārada Pañcarātra, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī defines loving devotion as follows:

samyañ-masṛṇita-svānto
mamatvātiśayāṅkitaḥ
bhāvaḥ sa eva sāndrātmā
budhaiḥ premā nigadyate

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- “When that bhāva softens the heart completely, becomes endowed with a great feeling of possessiveness in relation to the Lord, and becomes very much condensed and intensified, it is called prema [love of Godhead] by learned scholars.” (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.4.1)
- In his commentary on this verse, Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura answers a potential challenge from Sāṅkhya philosophers.
- In order to foster a deeper understanding of our rasācārya’s flawless definition of loving devotion and to assist preachers in their service, the following three paragraphs present a summary of Viśvanātha’s brilliant argument.
- Rūpa Gosvāmī’s verse implies that once the devotees achieve love, they relish ongoing symptoms of ecstatic devotion along with their newfound sentiments of prema.

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- But Sāṅkhya philosophers, like contemporary empiricists, maintain that a thing's immediate cause (in this case bhāva) must abandon its condition when it transforms (in this case, when bhāva transforms into prema).
- For instance, when molasses is cooked down it transforms into sugar; it has abandoned its original condition and is no longer molasses.
- According to this logic, the symptoms of ecstatic devotion should cease to exist once a devotee has reached love of God.
- By the same logic, once love matures, in stages, to affection (sneha), loving anger (māna), love (praṇaya), attachment (rāga), subattachment (anurāga), ecstasy (bhāva), and sublime ecstasy (mahābhāva), the symptoms of the previous stages should disappear and no longer be within a devotee's perception.

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- This argument challenges the description of love given by realized devotees, in which all states of love from rati to mahābhāva are relished by fully accomplished devotees.
- Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura argues that the aforementioned example of molasses transforming into sugar can be compared to Kṛṣṇa's external, inferior potency.
- Attachment (rati), however, in which a devotee enjoys the transformations from ecstatic devotion to sublime ecstasy in love of God, is a function of the Lord's internal, superior potency.
- Acintya-śakti is one aspect of that internal potency, and it refers to the ability to make the inconceivable possible.

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- By this potency, attachment attains successively higher states such as bhāva and prema, and none of these progressive states abandons the qualities of its previous state.
- In this way the symptoms of ecstasy and love exist separately from one another at each successive stage of the awakening of full-blown love of Godhead, and they continue to exist side by side and to be relished by the spiritually enlivened senses of a pure devotee.
- Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura concludes that, as always, Rūpa Gosvāmī's definition is perfect and complete in every way.
- The primary characteristic of love of God is its deepened state of ecstatic emotion (bhāvaḥ sa eva sāndrātmā).

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- The secondary characteristics, which cause the primary one, are complete softening of the heart (samyāṅ-masṛṇita-svāntaḥ) and extreme possessive attachment to Kṛṣṇa (mamatvātiśayāṅkitaḥ).
- Up to the stage of ecstasy, a devotee's mood is that of belonging to Kṛṣṇa—"I am Kṛṣṇa's." At the stage of ecstasy (bhāva) that mood changes to one of possessiveness—"Kṛṣṇa is mine."
- At the stage of love for Kṛṣṇa (prema), a devotee's feelings of possessiveness are further intensified by the kind of exclusiveness unique to pure love.
- The transformation of the sense of belonging to one of intense ownership is not sudden or artificial.
- It takes place progressively as attachment (rati) matures into the actual mellows of love (rasa).

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- In ecstatic devotion, devotees realize their eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa in principle but not in practice.
- Because at the stage of attachment love is not yet mature, such attachment does not qualify devotees to enter into Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.
- By chanting the holy names, bhāva-bhaktas cultivate transcendental ecstasies that combine with attachment to eventually transform into the mellows of love.
- As premi-bhaktas, such devotees finally enter an active relationship with Kṛṣṇa as His friend, parent, or lover, in which they think, “Kṛṣṇa is my friend,” “Kṛṣṇa is my son,” or “Kṛṣṇa is my beloved.”
- This is the development of intense, possessive love.

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- Accompanied by a variety of ecstasies and the unprecedented happiness of directly serving Kṛṣṇa, these feelings cause the condensed and intensified ecstatic emotions characteristic of love of God.
- To get a hint of the variety of moods that appear in a devotee at the stage of prema, the reader may consider the following: There are thirty-three transitory ecstasies (vyabhicāri-bhāvas), seven secondary forms of attachment (rati), and five mellows in the devotees' permanent relationships (sthāyi-bhāva) with Kṛṣṇa.
- This makes forty-one bhāvas, which become manifest to various degrees and further combine in numberless ways.
- The unfolding of love is thus truly a wonder to behold, like a handful of flower seeds that blossom to become a beautiful garden.

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- In this way the devotee-gardener becomes prosperous with the ecstatic emotions of love for Kṛṣṇa.
- The heart, already softened by ecstatic devotion, melts with intense feelings of possessiveness.
- This extreme tender-heartedness has two states of being: permanent composure or serenity, and temporary symptoms of agitation caused by overwhelming spikes of ecstasy.
- Permanent tenderness of heart in loving service makes devotees naturally composed.
- It is in this state that premi-bhaktas generally serve Kṛṣṇa. Such composure makes devotees steady, empowered, and compassionate to the extreme.

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- Soft-heartedness is a living entity's original feature.
- Śrīla Prabhupāda displayed this soft-heartedness in various ways, such as how he stood fast in the face of overwhelming odds, or how he cried out of compassion for the souls lost to the humdrum of day-to-day material life.
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- Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī also feels such compassion.
- Vaiṣṇavas describe how once some children near Rādhā-kuṇḍa were tormenting a jackal.
- When Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī heard the jackal's pitiful cries She interceded on the jackal's behalf and not only gave it shelter but a position as one of Her associates.
- Such is the softness of Her heart. [This well-known pastime comes from the oral tradition of the residents of Rādhā-kuṇḍa.]

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- When devotees in love with Kṛṣṇa contact something or someone that stimulates their remembrance of Him, they become overwhelmed by ecstatic symptoms.
- Their hearts thus softened even more, they may laugh, cry, speak unintelligibly, or exhibit extraordinary behaviour.
- Lord Śiva once displayed such symptoms when he became so absorbed in dancing in kīrtana that he did not notice that his clothes had fallen off.
- The state of devotees' hearts is reflected in their mental disposition (citta-vṛtti), and this mental disposition reveals itself either as steadiness and composure or as overwhelming ecstatic symptoms.
- When the devotees' subdue their inner ecstasies, they are composed, but when they are unable to control their inner ecstasies, their minds are overwhelmed and the ensuing ecstatic symptoms disrupt their normal behaviour.

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- The visible symptoms that result from a softened heart, whether it is softened by permanent love or love’s transitory ecstasies, are unique to each devotee because each devotee’s relationship with Kṛṣṇa is unique.
- Rūpa Gosvāmī characterizes the disposition of the ecstatic heart as either hard (karkaśa) or soft (komala). [Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.4.258–59]
- In this context “hard” does not refer to hard-heartedness but to gravity.
- Śrīla Prabhupāda explains, “When there is an ecstatic sensation within the mind, the golden heart or grave heart is not agitated, but the soft heart immediately becomes agitated.” [The Nectar of Devotion, chapter 31]
- To elaborate on the effects that various ecstatic stimuli have on hearts softened by love for Kṛṣṇa, Rūpa Gosvāmī further subdivides the karkaśa disposition into three: heavy like gold, deep like the ocean, and big like a city.

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- Similarly, he subdivides the komala disposition into three: light like cotton, shallow like a pond, and tiny like a cottage.
- In this way, the ācārya describes the softening of devotees' hearts in terms of how they perceive and display ecstasy.
- Thus individuality is expressed on the spiritual platform according to the influence various ecstasies have on different types of hearts.
- The infinite variety in such expressions of love lays to rest the doubt that liberation results in the sacrifice of one's individuality.
- In contrast to the qualities that material nature forces on conditioned souls, the perfected devotee's personality is unfettered and is the full blossoming of his or her very being.

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- Ultimately, it is the only true expression of individuality.
- Like ecstatic devotion (bhāva), loving devotion (prema) can be achieved either by cultivation or by special mercy.
- If loving devotion is rarely achieved by cultivation, then one can only imagine how rare it must be to attain it by special mercy.
- Two kinds of love are awakened through the cultivation of ecstatic devotion: love arising from regulated practice (vaidha-bhāvottha-prema) and love arising from spontaneous practice (rāgānugīya-bhāvottha-prema). [Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.4.6–7]
- Devotees at the stage of ecstasy generally fulfil their relentless aspiration for prema by taking shelter of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

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- The wise know these devotees as aspirants for love (prema-rurukṣu).
- They may also cultivate many limbs of devotion, but nothing gives them as much satisfaction and benefit as chanting and hearing the Lord's holy names.
- Kṛṣṇa's holy name is the eternal form of transcendental mellows.
- When chanted purely by fully surrendered devotees, it quickly bestows all ecstasies and gives devotees entrance into a particular mood of service.
- Devotees who have come to the state of ecstasy by regulative practice and who maintain reverence for Kṛṣṇa as the supreme divinity attain love mixed with knowledge of the Lord's majesty (māhātmya-jñāna-prema).
- They are eligible for any one of the four kinds of Vaikuṇṭha liberation previously discussed.

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- This same kind of love is found in the inhabitants of Dvārakā.
- Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, “If someone simply desires conjugal love but does not follow in the footsteps of the gopīs, he is promoted to association with the Lord at Dvārakā.” [The Nectar of Devotion, chapter 16]
- Devotees whose ecstasy has arisen from regulative practice and who give up their attachment to worshipping Kṛṣṇa in His majesty take to the path of spontaneous devotion.
- They attain unmixed love (kevala-prema), as do the devotees who come to bhāva through spontaneous practice.
- This is the type of love relished by the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana.
- In either case, what is important is the mood the devotees cultivate.

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- Thākura Bhaktivinoda stresses that even while engaged in the activities of spontaneous devotion, devotees who harbour a reverential mood attain love mixed with awareness of Kṛṣṇa's majesty, [Śrī Caitanya-śikṣāmṛta, chapter 7] and those encumbered by regulative activities from past habit, but whose mood is spontaneous, attain pure love.
- Prema arises from ecstatic devotion, the seed of which is pure attachment to Kṛṣṇa.
- Devotees' particular mood of attachment depends on their constitutional taste, which arises when they purely chant the holy names.
- In this way, devotees regain their eternal service to the Lord and come to see Him face to face.

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- Prema is a state of intense transcendental bliss millions of times greater than the delights of ecstatic devotion, what to speak of the fickle pleasures of material enjoyment or the miniscule joy of liberation.
- But when loving devotion reaches immeasurable heights, it attracts Śyāmasundara and His retinue, who then appear before the devotees' love-anointed eyes.
- Kṛṣṇa Himself acknowledges that only pure loving devotion can bring Him under His devotees' control.

na sādhayati mām yogo
na sāṅkhyam dharma uddhava
na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo
yathā bhaktir mamorjitā

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- [The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, said:] “My dear Uddhava, neither through aṣṭāṅga-yoga [the mystic yoga system to control the senses], nor through impersonal monism or an analytical study of the Absolute Truth, nor through study of the Vedas, nor through practise of austerities, nor through charity, nor through acceptance of sannyāsa can one satisfy Me as much as one can by developing unalloyed devotional service unto Me.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.14.20, as quoted in Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā 17.76)
- Along with the intense bliss derived from love of God, devotees taste what seems to be a kind of poison, the ever-increasing need to see Kṛṣṇa.
- It is poisonous in that it plunges devotees into oceans of remorse—remorse that only the intensely hot, blissful influence of seeing Kṛṣṇa face to face can evaporate.

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- Neither the dissolution of the universe nor an unlimited host of ills can impede the desire of such devotees to see their Lord.
- By love's independent will, Kṛṣṇa then appears in the hearts of His loving devotees. By that same will the devotees unceasingly relish Kṛṣṇa's form, pastimes, and qualities.
- Then again, in order to intensify itself through feelings of separation, love removes the vision (sphūrti) of sweet Kṛṣṇa from the love-laden eyes of His devotees. [The text beginning with this paragraph to the end of this chapter is based on the eighth chapter of Mādhurya-kādambinī]
- Vaiṣṇavas who have even once simultaneously tasted the poison and nectar of love of God have no interest in family, friends, mundane obligations, or even their own body.

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- Their only concern is Kṛṣṇa, and in the absence of the Lord's company they lament like persons deranged.
- Tossed about in the waves of the ocean of love, devotees pass their lives careening from the unusual behaviour caused by the intense happiness of meeting Kṛṣṇa to the intense sorrow of losing Him.
- Only advanced devotees will recognize the exalted state of consciousness underlying such behaviour and will instruct others to offer respect to these souls and not to commit offence.
- Then, as Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda describes, by Lord Caitanya's grace the devotee obtains direct vision of Kṛṣṇa.
- At that moment, all spiritual desires are fulfilled.

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kr̥ṣṇa-nāme anurāga to ha'be he
(takhona) anāyāse saphala ha'be jīvera jīvana
kr̥ṣṇa-rati vinā jīvan to miche he
(ese) vṛndāvane rādhā-śyāmera pa'be darśana
gaura-kṛpā ha'le he

- “The life of a living being becomes successful very easily when attachment to the holy name of Kṛṣṇa arises.
- Without affection for Kṛṣṇa, life is simply useless.
- At the end of life, by the mercy of Gaura, you will obtain the beautiful vision of Rādhā and Śyāma in Vṛndāvana.” (Gītāvalī, Śrī Nāma-kīrtana, Song 2.3.)

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- On that day, the beautiful cowherd Śyāmasundara appears before His devotee and reveals the sweetness of His transcendental qualities.
- The beauty of Kṛṣṇa's form showers the eyes with nectar, the fragrance of His limbs fills the nose with unbounded sweetness, and the sound of His voice pours ambrosial honey into the ears.
- Although such a greatly fortunate devotee has anticipated this meeting for what felt like millennia, he is instantly overwhelmed by ecstasy and faints, again losing direct perception of the goal of his life.
- By His touch, Kṛṣṇa then revives His beloved, who again gazes at Him, confused. Directed by insatiable love, each of the devotee's senses relishes all of Kṛṣṇa's qualities at the same time.

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- Because such an inconceivable feat cannot be accomplished without the Lord's grace, Kṛṣṇa expands His mercy (kṛpā-śakti) to satisfy His devotee.
- Love (prema) embraces Kṛṣṇa as much as it does His devotees, and His heart melts as He recalls the austerity, sacrifice, and ardent practice His devotees voluntarily underwent to serve Him with love.
- The Lord thinks, “How will I repay these devotees for their unrivalled efforts?” Kṛṣṇa, controlled by His foremost quality—pure affection for His devotees—then reveals the spiritual abode of Vṛndāvana and, according to the mood of the devotees, places them in the company of suitable eternal companions.
- All Vaiṣṇavas, by carefully following Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings, will know the wonders that transpire along with the direct vision of Kṛṣṇa, His associates, and His abode, and they too will incessantly lament like an infant separated from its mother when that most wonderful and beautiful revelation disappears.

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- As only a mother can pacify her child, only the direct eternal service of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and Their associates can satisfy devotees in whose hearts love of God resides.
- Thus having received Kṛṣṇa's śakṣād-darśana, the Vaiṣṇavas will continue to serve Śrīla Prabhupāda in this world, anxiously awaiting relief from the burden of the material body.
- When by Lord Caitanya's grace that day arrives, they will return back home, back to Godhead to give Śrīla Prabhupāda the greatest satisfaction.
- “If you practice in your life, while you are human being,...if you utilize your life in that way, then at the end, when you give up this body, you go back to Godhead for eternal life, eternal bliss, eternal knowledge, and live happily, without any material miseries. That is the result.” [Lecture, Bhagavad-gītā As It Is 2.55–56, New York, 19 April, 1966]