

Śrī-Upadeśāmata

With

Commentaries by

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Verse – 3

Upadeśa-prakāśikā

By

Śrīla Rādhā-ramaṇa dāsa
Gosvāmī

**utsāhān niścayād dhairyāt
tat-tat-karma-pravartanāt
saṅga-tyāgāt sato vatteḥ
ṣaḍbhir bhaktiḥ prasidhyati**

There are six principles favorable to the execution of pure devotional service: (1) being enthusiastic, (2) endeavoring with confidence, (3) being patient, (4) acting according to regulative principles [such as śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ smaraṇam [SB 7.5.23]—hearing, chanting and remembering Kṛṣṇa], (5) abandoning the association of nondevotees, and (6) following in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas. These six principles undoubtedly assure the complete success of pure devotional service.

Upadeśa-prakāśikā-ṭikā

The word utsāha, enthusiasm, refers to eagerness to perform the limbs of sādhana, which enhance bhakti.

The word niścaya, conviction, signifies firm faith.

Dhairya means not slackening one's execution of the limbs of bhakti, even when there is delay in obtaining the desired goal.

The meaning of tat-tat-karma-pravartana is to fully renounce one's material enjoyment while endeavouring exclusively for the attainment of Bhagavān.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.19.24) Bhagavān Śrī Kaṣṇa says to Uddhava:

Upadeśa-prakāśikā-ṭīkā

evam dharmair manuṣyāṇām
uddhavātma-nivedinām
mayi sañjāyate bhaktiḥ
ko 'nyo 'rtho 'syāvaśiṣyate

Devotion that is saturated with love for Me arises in the hearts of those who offer their very souls unto Me and who follow the religious principles favourable for bhakti. What other object remains to be obtained for those who have attained bhakti for Me?

The meaning of sato-vatti is to adopt the exalted conduct of devotees.

Pīyūṣa-varṣiṇī-vatti

By

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Pīyūṣa-varṣiṇī-vatti

Maintaining one's existence by appropriate means and cultivating bhakti are two essential activities for devotees.

The first half of this verse indicates attitudes that are favourable for the cultivation of bhakti, and the second half describes how a devotee should conduct his life.

Enthusiasm, optimism, patience, executing activities that nourish bhakti, renouncing bad association and adopting the good behaviour of devotees are the means of obtaining success in bhakti.

Pīyūṣa-varṣiṇī-vatti

(1) Utsāha – eagerness to follow the rules and regulations of bhakti is called utsāha. Without this enthusiasm, one's bhakti will vanish. Following the limbs of bhakti with great respect is real utsāha.

(2) Niścaya – the meaning of niścaya is firm faith.

(3) Dhairya – not slackening one's execution of the limbs of bhakti, even when there is delay in obtaining the desired goal, is called dhairya, patience.

Pīyūṣa-varṣiṇī-vatti

(4) Bhakti-poṣaka-karma – there are two types of activities that nourish bhakti: regulations (vidhi) and prohibitions (niṣedha). Performing the limbs of bhakti, headed by śravaṇa and kīrtana, is the prescribed regulation. Renouncing one’s personal enjoyment for the purpose of giving pleasure to Śrī Kaṣṇa is the primary prohibition.

(5) Saṅga-tyāga – one should renounce the association of non-devotees, women and those attached to women. “Non-devotees” here means sense enjoyers, māyāvādīs and those who make a pretentious display of religiosity.

Pīyūṣa-varṣiṇī-vatti

(6) Sad-vatti – one should adopt the virtuous conduct of pure devotees and thereby maintain one's life in a suitable manner.

Renunciant devotees should beg alms, preferably by performing mādhlukarī.

This is a process of begging where, like a bee (madhukara) taking nectar from many different flowers, they accept very little alms from many different households.

Householder devotees should sustain their lives by means that are favourable to the regulations pertaining to the Vedic system of social order (varṇāśrama).

Anuvatti

By

**Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta
Sarasvatī Gosvāmī
Prabhupāda**

Anuvatti

Utsāha means to remain indifferent to the cultivation of jñāna, the activities of karma, spiritual practices that have any aim other than to please Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and one's preferred variety of material enjoyment, while resolutely executing the limbs of sādhana-bhakti.

“Bhagavad-bhakti alone is the ultimate objective of all living beings” – such firm faith is called niścaya.

Sometimes wandering onto the paths of karma, jñāna and so forth makes one's mind restless, and following their sādhanas will only produce suffering in the end.

Anuvatti

“Therefore, the path of bhakti is the sole constitutional path for all jīvas” – such firm conviction is called dhairya, fortitude.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.2.32–3) describes those jñānīs who commit offence at Bhagavān’s lotus feet by falsely considering themselves liberated, and also the steadfastness of loving (premī) devotees upon the path of bhakti:

Anuvatti

|| 10.2.32 ||

ye 'nye 'ravindākṣa vimukta-māninas
tvayy asta-bhāvād aviśuddha-buddhayaḥ
āruhya kacchreṇa param padam tataḥ
patanty adho 'nādata-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ

O lotus-eyed Lord (**aravindākṣa**), although nondevotees (**ye anye**) who accept severe austerities and penances to achieve the highest position (**āruhya kacchreṇa param padam**) may think themselves liberated (**vimukta-māninaḥ**), their intelligence is impure (**aviśuddha-buddhayaḥ**). They fall down from their position of imagined superiority (**tataḥ asta-bhāvād patanty adhah**) because they have no regard for Your lotus feet (**anādata-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ**).

Anuvatti

|| 10.2.33 ||

tathā na te mādhave tāvakāḥ kvacid
bhraśyanti mārgāt tvayi baddha-sauhadāḥ
tvayābhiguptā vicaranti nirbhayā
vināyakānīkapa-mūrdhasu prabho

O Mādhava, Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord of the goddess of fortune (**mādhava prabho**), if devotees (**tāvakāḥ**) completely in love with You (**tvayi baddha-sauhadāḥ**) sometimes fall from the path of devotion (**kvacid bhraśyanti mārgāt**), they do not fall like nondevotees (**na tathā**), for You still protect them (**tvayābhiguptā**). Thus they fearlessly traverse (**vicaranti nirbhayā**) the heads of their opponents and continue to progress in devotional service (**vināyakānīkapa-mūrdhasu**).

Anuvatti

Concerning the path of bhakti, Haridāsa Ṭhākura took a steadfast vow to chant in the face of all obstacles.

This ideal in the realm of bhakti is related in this verse from Śrī Caitanya-Bhāgavata (Ādi-khaṇḍa 16.94):

**khaṇḍa-khaṇḍa hai deha jāya yadi prāṇa
tabu āmi vadane nā chāḍi harināma**

Regardless if my body is cut to pieces and the life-air exits my body, I will never abandon the chanting of harināma.

Anuvatti

Such determination to remain upon the path of bhakti is called dhairya, fortitude.

To execute the limbs of bhakti, such as hearing hari-kathā, performing kīrtana of bhagavannāma and meditating on Bhagavān's names, form and pastimes with such determination, is tat-tat-karma-pravartanāt.

Anuvatti

The association of Bhagavān's devotees is very desirable.

One should never associate with karmīs, jñānīs or those who are filled with extraneous desires, knowing them to be less intelligent and of an enjoying tendency.

What to speak of approaching them to fulfil any type of desire for prestige, to maintain any type of relationship with them is not proper.

Keeping such bad association at a safe distance, one should adopt the ways of those saintly devotees who are always immersed in chanting harināma.

Anuvatti

Karma, jñāna, aṣṭāṅgayoga and so forth, which are devoid of the desire to please Kaṣṇa, are not steps along the path of bhakti.

Even if one possesses all good qualities, if he is devoid of bhakti, those very qualities merely transform into faults.

But all virtuous qualities certainly reside within one who possesses bhakti.

Therefore the path of bhakti is characterised by saintly conduct.

Anuvatti

Enthusiasm to serve Śrī Kaṣṇa, full faith and steadfastness in that service, ensuring that all endeavours are solely for Kaṣṇa's service, renouncing the company of all others except

Kaṣṇa's devotees and following in the footsteps of Kaṣṇa's devotees – these six practices enhance bhakti.

Translation and
Purport by Srila
Prabhupada

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

Devotional service is not a matter of sentimental speculation or imaginative ecstasy.

Its substance is practical activity.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, in his *Bhakti-rasāmata-sindhu* (1.1.11), has defined devotional service as follows:

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

**anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam
jñāna-karmādy-anāvatam
ānukūlyena kaṣṇānu-
śīlanam bhaktir uttamā
[Cc. Madhya 19.167]**

"Uttamā bhakti, or unalloyed devotion unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kaṣṇa, involves the rendering of devotional service in a way that is favorable to the Lord. This devotional service should be free from any extraneous motive and devoid of fruitive karma, impersonal jñāna and all other selfish desires."

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

Bhakti is a sort of cultivation.

As soon as we say "cultivation," we must refer to activity.

Cultivation of spirituality does not mean sitting down idly for meditation, as some pseudo-yogīs teach.

Such idle meditation may be good for those who have no information of devotional service, and for this reason it is sometimes recommended as a way to check distracting materialistic activities.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

Meditation means stopping all nonsensical activities, at least for the time being.

Devotional service, however, not only puts an end to all nonsensical mundane activities, but also engages one in meaningful devotional activities.

Prahlāda Mahārāja recommends:

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ
smaraṇam pāda-sevanam
arcanam vandanam dāsyam
sakhyam ātma-nivedanam
[SB 7.5.23]

The nine processes of devotional service are as follows:

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

1. hearing the name and glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead
2. chanting His glories
3. remembering the Lord
4. serving the Lord's feet
5. worshiping the Deity
6. offering obeisances unto the Lord
7. acting as the Lord's servant
8. making friends with the Lord
9. surrendering oneself fully to the Lord

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

Śravaṇam, or hearing, is the first step in acquiring transcendental knowledge.

One should not give aural reception to unauthorized persons, but should approach the proper person, as recommended in the Bhagavad-gītā (4.34):

**tad viddhi praṇipātena
paripraśnena sevayā
upadekṣyanti te jñānam
jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ**

"Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized soul can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth."

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

It is further recommended in the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad, tad-vijñānārthaṁ sa gurum evābhigacchet: [MU 1.2.12]

"To understand that transcendental science, one must approach a bona fide spiritual master."

Thus this method of submissively receiving transcendental confidential knowledge is not merely based on mental speculation.

In this regard, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu told Rūpa Gosvāmī:

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

**brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva
guru-kaṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja**

"In the course of traversing the universal creation of Brahmā, some fortunate soul may receive the seed of the bhakti-latā, the creeper of devotional service. This is all by the grace of guru and Kaṣṇa." (Cc. Madhya 19.151)

The material world is a place of confinement for the living entities who are by nature ānandamaya, pleasure-seeking.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

They actually want to be free from the confinement of this world of conditional happiness, but not knowing the process of liberation, they are bound to transmigrate from one species of life to another and from one planet to another.

In this way the living entities are wandering throughout the material universe.

When by good fortune one comes in contact with a pure devotee and hears from him patiently, one begins to follow the path of devotional service.

Such an opportunity is offered to a person who is sincere.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness is giving such a chance to humanity at large.

If by fortune one takes advantage of this opportunity to engage in devotional service, the path of liberation immediately opens.

One should accept this opportunity to return home, back to Godhead, very enthusiastically.

Without enthusiasm, one cannot be successful.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

Even in the material world one has to be very enthusiastic in his particular field of activity in order to become successful.

A student, businessman, artist or anyone else who wants success in his line must be enthusiastic.

Similarly, one has to be very enthusiastic in devotional service.

Enthusiasm means action, but action for whom?

The answer is that one should always act for Kaṣṇa—*kasnārthe akhila-cestā* (Cc Madhya 22.126).

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

In order to attain perfection in bhakti-yoga, one has to perform devotional activities under the direction of the spiritual master in all phases of life.

It is not that one has to confine or narrow one's activities. Kṣṇa is all-pervading.

Therefore nothing is independent of Kṣṇa, as Kṣṇa Himself states in the Bhagavad-gītā (9.4):

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

mayā tatam idaṁ sarvaṁ
jagad avyakta-mūrtinā-
mat-sthāni sarva-bhūtāni
na cāhaṁ teṣv avasthitaḥ

"By Me, in My unmanifested form, this entire universe is pervaded. All beings are in Me, but I am not in them."

Under the direction of the bona fide spiritual master, one has to make everything favorable for Kṛṣṇa's service.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

For example, at present we are using a dictaphone.

The materialist who invented this machine intended it for businessmen or writers of mundane subject matters.

He certainly never thought of using the dictaphone in God's service, but we are using this dictaphone to write Kṣṇa conscious literature.

Of course, the manufacture of the dictaphone is wholly within the energy of Kṣṇa.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

All the parts of the instrument, including the electronic functions, are made from different combinations and interactions of the five basic types of material energy—namely, bhūmi, jala, agni, vāyu and ākāśa.

The inventor used his brain to make this complicated machine, and his brain, as well as the ingredients, was supplied by Kaṣṇa.

According to the statement of Kaṣṇa, mat-sthāni sarva-bhūtāni: [Bg. 9.4] "Everything is depending on My energy."

Thus the devotee can understand that since nothing is independent of Kaṣṇa's energy, everything should be dovetailed in His service.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

Endeavor executed with intelligence in Kaṣṇa consciousness is called utsāha, or enthusiasm.

The devotees find the correct means by which everything can be utilized in the service of the Lord (nirbandhaḥ kaṣṇa-sambandhe yuktaṁ vairāgyam ucyate).

The execution of devotional service is not a matter of idle meditation but is practical action in the foreground of spiritual life.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

These activities must be executed with patience.

One should not be impatient in Kāṣṇa consciousness.

Indeed, this Kāṣṇa consciousness movement was started single-handedly, and in the beginning there was no response, but because we continued to execute our devotional activities with patience, people gradually began to understand the importance of this movement, and now they are eagerly participating.

One should not be impatient in discharging devotional service but should take instructions from the spiritual master and execute them with patience, depending on the mercy of guru and Kāṣṇa.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

The successful execution of Kaṣṇa conscious activities requires both patience and confidence.

A newly married girl naturally expects offspring from her husband, but she cannot expect to have them immediately after marriage.

Of course, as soon as she is married she can attempt to get a child, but she must surrender to her husband, confident that her child will develop and be born in due time.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

Similarly, in devotional service surrender means that one has to become confident.

The devotee thinks, *avaśya rakṣibe kaṣṇa*: "Kaṣṇa will surely protect me and give me help for the successful execution of devotional service."

This is called confidence.

As already explained, one should not be idle but should be very enthusiastic about executing the regulative principles—*tat-tat-karma-pravartana*.

Neglect of the regulative principles will destroy devotional service.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

In this Kaṣṇa consciousness movement there are four basic regulative principles, forbidding illicit sex, meat-eating, gambling and intoxication.

A devotee must be very enthusiastic about following these principles.

If he becomes slack in following any of them, his progress will certainly be checked.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī therefore recommends, tat-tat-karma-pravartanāt: "One must strictly follow the regulative principles of vaidhī bhakti."

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

In addition to these four prohibitions (yama), there are positive regulative principles (niyama), such as the daily chanting of sixteen rounds on japa-mālā beads.

These regulative activities must be faithfully performed with enthusiasm.

This is called tat-tat-karma-pravartana, or varied engagement in devotional service.

Furthermore, in order to be successful in devotional service one must give up the association of undesirable people.

This includes karmīs, jñānīs, yogīs and other nondevotees.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

Once Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was asked by one of His householder devotees about the general principles of Vaiṣṇavism, as well as the general routine activities of a Vaiṣṇava, and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu immediately replied, *asat-saṅga-tyāga,—ei vaiṣṇava-ācāra:* [Cc. Madhya 22.87]

"Characteristically, a Vaiṣṇava is one who gives up the association of worldly people, or nondevotees."

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura has therefore recommended, *tāndera caraṇa sevi bhakta-sane vāsa*: one has to live in the company of pure devotees and execute the regulative principles laid down by the previous ācāryas, the Six Gosvāmīs (namely, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and Śrī Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī).

If one lives in the association of devotees, there is little chance of associating with nondevotees.

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness is opening many centers just to invite people to live in the company of devotees and practice the regulative principles of spiritual life.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

Devotional service means transcendental activities.

On the transcendental platform there is no contamination by the three modes of material nature.

This is called viśuddha-sattva, the platform of pure goodness, or goodness free from contamination by the qualities of passion and ignorance.

In this Kaṣṇa consciousness movement we require everyone to rise early in the morning, by four o'clock, and attend maṅgala-ārati, or morning worship, then read Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, perform kīrtana, and so forth.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

Thus we hold continuous activities in devotional service twenty-four hours daily.

This is called *sato vatti*, or following in the footsteps of the previous *ācāryas*, who expertly filled every moment of time with *Kaṣṇa* conscious activities.

If one strictly follows the advice given in this verse by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī—namely, being enthusiastic, being confident, being patient, giving up the association of unwanted persons, following the regulative principles and remaining in the association of devotees—one is sure to advance in devotional service.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

In this regard Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura remarks that the cultivation of knowledge by philosophical speculation, the collection of mundane opulence by the advancement of fruitive activities, and the desire for yoga-siddhis, material perfections, are all contrary to the principles of devotional service.

One has to become thoroughly callous to such nonpermanent activities and turn his intention instead to the regulative principles of devotional service.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

According to the Bhagavad-gītā (2.69):

**yā niśā sarva-bhūtānām
tasyām jāgarti saṁyamī
yasyām jāgrati bhūtāni
sā niśā paśyato muneh**

"What is night for all beings is the time of awakening for the self-controlled; and the time of awakening for all beings is night for the introspective sage."

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

Engagement in the devotional service of the Lord is the life and soul of the living entity.

It is the desired goal and supreme perfection of human life.

One has to become confident about this, and one also has to be confident that all activities other than devotional service—such as mental speculation, fruitive work or mystic endeavor—will never yield any enduring benefit.

Complete confidence in the path of devotional service will enable one to attain his desired goal, but attempting to follow other paths will only succeed in making one restless.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

In the Tenth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is stated: "One must be calmly convinced that those who have given up devotional service to engage in severe austerities for other purposes are not purified in their minds, despite their advanced austerities, because they have no information of the transcendental loving service of the Lord."

It is further stated in the Tenth Canto: "Although mental speculators and fruitive actors may perform great austerities and penances, they still fall down because they do not have information about the lotus feet of the Lord."

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

The devotees of the Lord, however, never fall down. In the Bhagavad-gītā (9.31), the Supreme Personality of Godhead assures Arjuna, *kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati*: "O son of Kuntī, declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes."

Again in the Bhagavad-gītā (2.40) Kaṣṇa says:

***nehābhikrama-nāśo 'sti
pratyavāyo na vidyate
svalpam apy asya dharmasya
trāyate mahato bhayāt***

"In this endeavor there is no loss or diminution, and a little advancement on this path can protect one from the most dangerous type of fear."

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

Devotional service is so pure and perfect that once one has begun it, one is forcibly dragged to ultimate success.

Sometimes a person will give up his ordinary material engagements and out of sentiment take shelter of the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord and thus begin the preliminary execution of devotional service.

Even if such an immature devotee falls down, there is no loss on his part.

On the other hand, what is the gain of one who executes the prescribed duties according to his varṇa and āśrama but does not take to devotional service?

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

Although a fallen devotee may take his next birth in a low family, his devotional service will nonetheless resume from where it left off.

Devotional service is ahaituky apratihata: it is not the effect of any mundane cause, nor can it be terminated by any mundane cause or permanently curtailed by any material interruption.

Therefore a devotee should be confident about his engagement and should not be very interested in the activities of the karmīs, jñānīs and yogīs.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

There are certainly many good qualities among fruitive actors, philosophical speculators and mystic yogīs, but all good qualities automatically develop in the character of a devotee. No extraneous endeavor is needed.

As confirmed by Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (5.18.12), all the good qualities of the demigods progressively become manifest in one who has developed pure devotional service.

Because a devotee is not interested in any material activity, he does not become materially contaminated.

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

He is immediately situated on the platform of transcendental life.

However, one who engages in mundane activity—be he a so-called jñānī, yogī, karmī, philanthropist, nationalist or whatever—cannot attain the higher stage of mahātmā.

He remains a durātmā, or cripple-minded person. According to the Bhagavad-gītā (9.13):

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

**mahātmānas tu mām pārtha
daivīm prakatim āśritāḥ
bhajanty ananya-manaso
jñātvā bhūtādim avyayam**

"O son of Pathā, those who are not deluded, the great souls, are under the protection of the divine nature. They are fully engaged in devotional service because they know Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, original and inexhaustible."

Translation and Purport by Srila Prabhupada

Since all the devotees of the Lord are under the protection of His supreme potency, they should not deviate from the path of devotional service and take to the path of the karmī, jñānī or yogī.

This is called utsāhān niścayād dhairyāt tat-tat-karma-pravartanāt, enthusiastically executing the regulative activities of devotional service with patience and confidence.

In this way one can advance in devotional service without hindrance.

**Commentary by
Srila Bhakti
Rakshak Sridhara
Maharaj**

Utsaha

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Eagerness should always be to serve the wishes of the highest plane of Krsna-bhakti.

That is very, very rarely to be found in this mundane world. We shall be eager to catch the telegraphic language of the highest plane.

We must try to catch that and be subservient to that.

That should be the nature of our quest and the utilization of our energy.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

How to develop that?

With the contact of the sadhu and with the help of the scriptures we can try to increase that inner feeling, that inner demand.

That inner demand can only be satisfied by Krsna consciousness.

The source of eagerness is only from a real sadhu.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

We will find some interest to hear about the Lord from him.

The proper beginning is there.

The bhakti school is independent of varnasrama or jnana etc.

One may not be a wise man, one may not be a very energetic man, one may not be master of opulence and other powers.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Only the minimum is demanded from him – that he has very earnest hunger.

He must have the smallest taste for the Lord.

He must find some sweetness, some taste in His words, in His affairs when it is coming from a proper source through a genuine sadhu, a proper agent.

That taste will take him farther and gradually into the highest domain.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Laulyam api mulyam ekalam – the only passage-money is our sincere inclination.

The hearts natural flow – that is the passage-money, nothing else.

Our sincere earnestness to get that is the only price we have to pay in advance.

No other price but earnest desire.

It is not to be purchased by any money or anything else which is acquired by so many formal practices in millions of births.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Substance is necessary and not form.

Form may be adopted only as much as it may connect me with that higher thing.

Sarva dharman parityaja – “Give up all phases of duty that you perceive as perfect. At once try to jump into the ocean of nectar. I am the ocean of nectar. Try to jump.”

That is the direct teaching. Our addiction to this or that, to vanaprastha-dharma, sannyasa-dharma, or grhastha-dharma has a very negligent value.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

But earnest desire – that is to be acquired by any means.
That is bhakti proper.

**tatra laulyam api mulyam ekalam
janma-koti-sukrtair na labhyate**

The only price to pay is intense eagerness for that is not
obtained even after millions of births. (Cc. Madhya 8.70)

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Not by your good deeds that you have acquired in your previous innumerable paths – that is not taken in to account, only the recognition of the sincere earnestness within you.

The very gist of your ego they want.

That is their demand and that plane is built up with that material.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

The most sincere part of the heart – that is the material by which that domain has been created.

It is eternal but it is with that substance.

Back to home, back to the home of your eternal inner self.

Externally, by so many of our demands for the senses, we are being carried forcibly in this direction and that direction, dragging us here and there.

We have to find out our innermost existence.

That is to be a member of Vrndavana.

Niscaya

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Confidence means raksisyati-visvaso (expecting the Lord's protection).

That is a particular stage of saranagati.

I will have so much confidence that He will protect me from any danger.

One may run to protect oneself knowing there is danger, but still he is thinking, "My guardian will save me. Whom do I care for? I don't care for anyone. He is my master and He is there on my head, He will protect me."

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

There is no necessity of any apprehension from any quarter at all.

Saranagati reaches to such a zenith, to such a height that not only will He save me if I go on in a right way, I shall risk everything for the Lord, and if necessary, He may come to my relief.

Such audacious aggression is there.

This may be found in all stages.

That particular mentality is there in the ordinary soldier – he has got confidence in his general.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

They may take the risk of entering the camp of the enemy thinking, “The general will come and devastate them.”

It may be found in many places, in many stages of life.

But here, that confidence is found not in this world, but in the highest quarter.

That sort of confidence, that “For whom do we care?” So much indulgence they enjoy, so much confidence they enjoy, so much faith they have in their protector that they do not care about anyone or anything.

They will even go to catch a snake or a tiger.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Jiva Gosvami Prabhu has discussed that goptrtve-varana (praying for the Lord's shelter) is the main thing in the whole of saranagati.

That is the whole gist, the substance – to pray to Him for His shelter.

“You are my protector.”

That is the main thing in the whole of saranagati and all others are subsidiary.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

To maintain the faith that He will save us – He cannot but do this.

The question will remain whether I have surrendered totally or not.

My ego – has it allowed me to surrender to His holy feet fully or is it self-deception?

The question is there.

There is no doubt that if anyone surrenders to Him totally, He will protect him – that is unquestionable.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

But the question remains here whether I have successfully surrendered myself to Him or not.

Self-analysis. That is the truth.

It is His intrinsic nature that at all times His eternal habit is that He will protect whoever comes under the shelter of His protection.

That is one of His intrinsic characteristics.

It cannot be otherwise. However, the question is only whether I can surrender to Him or not.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

To offer one's own self.

To cast one's own self to His custody, and at the same time to go on with the idea that He will surely protect me.

The example is given by Bhaktivinoda Thakura – the cow boys are welcoming so many risks in their life backed by the confidence that, “My friend is there and He will surely protect me.”

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara
Maharaj

raksa karabi tuhun niscaya jani
pana korobun hama yamuna-pani
kaliya-dokha karabi vinaca
sodhobi nadi-jala, badaobi asa

I am confident that You will protect me, so I will drink the waters of the Yamuna. Kaliya's venom will be vanquished. You will purify the waters of the Yamuna, and such heroic acts will increase our faith. (Saranagati 3.6)

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

In a part of the Yamuna a serpent was living and his poison contaminated the whole area.

But the cowherd friends of Krsna did not care for that.

At the bottom of their heart, they were so confident of Krsna's continuous assistance at their back, they were going and rushing towards that poisonous thing and swallowing poison.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

“Oh, Krsna is at our back, whom do I fear? We don't fear anyone.”

They are going into the Kaliya-ghata, that poisonous place on the Yamuna and they are drinking that water and fainting, but without any fear.

“My friend is there. We do not care for any poison or anything.

He will save us. He will protect us.”

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

They went ahead to invite danger with that confidence.

“We don’t care for any danger because our support, our friend is there who has got some supernatural power.”

Then Krsna had to go and again revive them from the poisonous effect.

Generally they are always in a position that they do not want that, “You protect me!”

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Very rarely – as in the case of Govardhana where the whole locality prayed for protection from Indra the king of heaven, when his annual worship was closed.

Indra was very much enraged and he wanted to punish the general section of that gostha (group) by heavy rain, hail, storm and thunder.

Then the whole gostha came and took refuge of Krsna, “You protect us from this great destruction.”

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

And Krsna managed.

Otherwise they are always fostering this idea that, “He is there, our protector. We do not care for anything else. We are not afraid of any danger. He is there. He cannot but protect us.”

That is the idea they maintain.

In sakhya-rasa that raksisyati-visvaso is very, very clear, and at the same time there is some challenging at the time of play.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

“You could not do this. I gained over you. You failed.”

Such homely play – God and His servant appear to be in equal positions on the surface.

Sometimes the Lord even holds a lower position.

Family life, sweet family life – and the devotees of the higher type see devotion only when the Absolute is defeated.

That peculiar thing is devotion. That is yogamaya.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Devotion means leaving everything, and saying that, “We want devotion only. If we get devotion, the Absolute will come to our door.”

Devotion is such – devotion is all in all.

Where is it found that the servant has defeated the master?

That is devotion.

There you can trace what is devotion.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Aham bhaktaparadhino hy asvatantra iva dvija – “My absolutism is forgotten at that time. I forget that. I go as one of them sometimes. I approach them to serve.”

That peculiar thing is devotion.

It is so high.

How will this worldly energy and knowledge cope with it?

Devotion means mystique, miracle.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Goptrtve-varana is to invite Him as our protector and raksisyati visvaso is to believe that He will surely protect me.

The first part is to invite Him, to pray to Him, "Please protect me. I am under Your protection, accept me."

And then to maintain the idea that, "He will surely protect me, in all possible danger He will come."

Two parts. Saranagati is one and the same, but if analyzed then these parts are found there.

Dhairya

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

We should not think that our path will be very smooth.

So many troubles may come from outside.

In India, when you go out in the streets with the kirtana party, so many may come and say, “You monkeys! Lal-bandara – you red-faced monkeys!

These things must come to you from so many directions, in so many forms of hindrances and opposition.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

They will come and try to affect you, to dissuade you from this path.

But, taror api sahisnuna – the example of a tree is given and that is analyzed.

If somebody does not pour any water, the tree does not say, “Oh, give some water to me!”

If anyone is coming and disturbing, snatching the leaves, cutting the branches – even cutting the whole thing, the tree is silent.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

No opposition.

We should rather try to see that insults, poverty, punishment, and unfavorable dealings are all coming to purify me.

These things are necessary and with the least punishment I am going to be released.

I have become connected with the highest object of life, but what price am I going to pay for that?

What price?

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

I am confident that I am going to attain the highest fulfillment of life, but what price is sufficient for that?

It is inconceivable.

Whatever little demand comes to be exacted from you, with a smiling face you have to accept that in consideration of your highest goal.

If you are really confident and you have faith in your brightest future, then whatever small price nature wants through these miscreants – that must be accepted.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Submissiveness and modestly – that is the law of Mahaprabhu.

Trnad api sunicena taror api sahisnuna amanina manadena – these things must be repeatedly preached.

Trnad api sunicena means I must not be so rigid that I may not accommodate others.

Taror api sahisnuna – if still someone is aggressive towards to me, I shall try to tolerate.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

And amani –I must never insist on any fame from the environment, still I will always be ready to give honor to all.

With this attitude we should march on our way.

This maxim should be given a very broad circulation.

To become a Vaisnava we must be deceit-free and have discipline of this type and this comes from none other than Mahaprabhu Himself.

Once we were told that our Gaura-kisora Dasa Babaji Maharaja was doing madhukari-bhiksa and was returning to his quarters.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

The people did not spare him either.

The boys were pelting him with some small stones and he remarked, “Krsna, you are cruelly dealing with me!

I shall complain to Mother Yasoda about You.”

That was his outlook. Harmonized!

When anything came and he would say, “Oh Krsna, by philosophical calculation, without You nothing can happen. You are with these children and You are disturbing me and I shall teach You a lesson. I know how to deal with You.”

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

In that way, he took everything like that.

That is our beacon light to adjust with things that are apparently unfavorable.

A sweet adjustment is there.

Don't give any opposition – still opposition will come to disturb you and you must forbear.

You will accept them in such a way.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

We should not create resistance for the environment.

If there is some attack, some undesirable things come towards me, I am to forbear that to my utmost patience.

I am to silently tolerate.

I won't harm.

Our attitude should be this – whatever comes, this is earned by my previous karma.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

My previous karma has earned such an environment and it is a necessity to teach me.

And whenever my teaching will finish, the environment will change.

Whatever the circumstance, the environment may be undesirable but if we are sincere we must take it with a good motive because the Lord has sent it.

Without His sanction nothing can happen.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Not even a straw can move. I am put in such an unfavorable environment – He is seeing this thing and as soon as this necessity ends it will be removed and I shall be placed in another environment.

There is no error in His decision.

In the divine decision there cannot be any error.

We have to face all circumstances with such an attitude.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara
Maharaj

tat te'nukampam su-samiksamano
bhunjana evatma-krtam vipakam
hrd-vag-vapurahir vidadhan namas te
jiveta yo mukti-pade sa daya-bhak

One who lives his life while joyfully seeing everything as Your mercy even as he experiences the adverse conditions arising from his past deeds, and constantly pays respects to You with his mind, body and words, is certain to attain your lotus feet, the object of all devotion. (Bhag.10.14.8)

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

It is our environment, our own past deeds.

I must not quarrel with what my own deeds have produced, but I must finish this effect.

It is necessary for me.

And as soon as the necessity will be finished, it will be withdrawn and I will be put in another separate environment.

We have to wait for the decision, the divine dispensation. That will be the highest policy.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

The most sacred, desirable and helpful policy is everywhere.

It will increase our faith in the Supreme.

The supreme command of all environments may come now or in the future.

This policy of a devotee will be most suitable and helpful.

Tat te'nukampam susamiksamano – the undesirable things have not come suddenly to punish me, but it is necessarily self-acquired and it will get its fulfillment and then vanish, and then I shall get another chance.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

But if I avoid this, it may be finished for now but again it will come to clear my debt.

With this attitude we should face all circumstances, and that will be the best attitude of any progressive devotee.

**Tat Tat Karma
Pravartanat**

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

There are innumerable practices of devotion. In Bhaktirasamrta-sindhu, Rupa Gosvami has given sixty-four. Then again in Bhagavatam we find nine:

**sravanam kirtanam visno'
smaranam pada-sevanam
arcanam vandanam dasyam
sakhyam atma-nivedanam**

Hearing about the Lord, chanting the Lord's glories, remembering Him, serving His lotus feet, worshipping His transcendental form, offering prayers to Him, becoming His servant, considering Him as one's best friend, and surrendering everything to Him. These nine processes are accepted as pure devotional service. (Bhag. 7.5.23)

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu has again given five practices of devotion:

**sadhu-sanga nama-kirtana, bhagavata-sravana
mathura-vasa sri-murtira sraddhaya sevana**

The quintessential practices of devotion are association with the pure devotee, chanting the Holy Name, hearing the Srimad Bhagavatam, residing in Mathura-dhama, and faithfully worshiping the Deity. (Cc. Madhya 22.128)

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

It is a special opinion.

But the serving attitude, sevonmukhata – that must be present in all types of bhakti.

Otherwise it is all imitation and for millions of lives we may imitate without any success.

**asadhu-sangete bhai nama nahi haya
namaksara bahiraya bate nama kabhu naya**

O brother! You cannot chant the Holy Name in the association of non-devotees. The sounds of the Holy Name may come out of your mouth, but this will not really be the Name. (Prema-vivarta 7.1-3)

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Yadi karibe Krsna-nama sadhu-sanga kara – only with the help of the devotees, may we invite that ‘electric connection’ – that may connect us with the higher place and if He is pleased to come down and connect with this body then this body can show bhakti.

Otherwise it is all imitation!

Imitation won't take us to that plane.

Sadhu-sanga – the dynamo is necessary to move the fan, to light the light bulb.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Without sadhu-sanga we cannot connect with the higher level.

**atah sri Krsna-namadi na bhaved grahyam indriyaih
sevonmukhe hi jihvadau svayam eva sphuraty adah**

The Holy Name, form, qualities, and pastimes of Sri Krsna are divine and transcendental. They cannot be experienced by material senses. The Lord manifests Himself spontaneously on the tongue of a devotee who is eager to serve Him. (BRS 1.2.234)

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

The universal necessity is to learn and acquire a serving attitude, and if that is applied to our bhajana, that will be of great help to us.

Jihva means the tongue, and namadi means the nama, rupa, guna and lila.

On the tongue the Lord's Name will appear: within the eye, His form; within the mind, His qualities; and in the heart, His pastimes.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

All these will come down to you, and everything about you will connect with that vaikuntha-tattva.

It is not just a question of increasing the quantity, but the quality must be present.

To be real bhakti, sevonmukha and seva presuppose surrender, and all this presupposes sadhu-sanga.

It all originates from the association of a sadhu.

From the positive direction it can come to us, so we must be thankful to that positive source.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

The Lord is there, but His grace is coming through His agents.

His agents should be welcomed and dealt with properly.

Whatever we can collect with our energy we should devote towards sadhu and Sastra.

Sadhu and sastra are our two friends everywhere.

Sanga Tyaga

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

If the practice of a student of the Vaisnava school is to be limited to only one, then that is *asat-sanga tyaga* – to renounce bad association.

That does not mean that the *sadhu* is also eliminated if he is found.

***asat sanga tyaga – ei vaisnava acara
'stri-sangi' – eka asadhu krsnabhakta'ara***

It is the policy of a Vaisnava to reject mundane association such as those who are overly attached to women and people averse to Krsna-bhakti. (Cc. Madhya 22.87)

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

There are two types of acara (practice).

One is stri-sangi or yosita sangi –those who are attached to sensual pleasure.

Another is Krsnabhakta, one who has no attraction for Krsna but is engaged in some other errand.

We should be careful and follow the caution against these two – sense enjoyers and those that have no relation to Krsna.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

This is our only practice.

They may be scholars or yogis, they may be so many things, but if they are not devotees of Krsna, their association should be eliminated.

It is said that a man is known by his company.

The test that is the criterion is whether he is hankering for the association of the good or for the material environment.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Whichever way his taste progresses should be looked upon.

What does he like?

Does he have more and more affinity towards the sadhus and the sastra?

Is the environment progressively increasing his taste for that particular thing?

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

That will prove whether we are making progress or deteriorating.

It can be known by the measurement of our external environment.

Am I standing still? Am I going back?

Internal satisfaction will also stand as a guarantee.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

I shall be my own witness from within, whether I am gaining or losing. My own understanding will stand as a guarantee.

**bhakti` paresanubhavo viraktir
anyatra caisa trika eka-kala`
prapadyamanasya yathasnata` syus
tusti` pusti` ksud-apayo `nu-ghasam**

Devotion, direct experience of the Supreme Lord, and detachment from other things – these three occur simultaneously for one who has taken shelter of the Lord in the same way that pleasure, nourishment and relief from hunger come simultaneously and increasingly, with each bite, for a person engaged in eating. (Bhag.11.2.42)

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

In Bhagavatam it is mentioned how we should measure our progress.

A mundane example has been given – when we are hungry we take food and when we take food three things occur simultaneously, what are they?

Tusti' pusti' ksud-apayo – when we are hungry we feel uneasiness, and with every morsel we take the uneasiness is removed. When we are hungry we feel weakness.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

With every morsel of food gradually the weakness is removed and ksud-apayo – when we are hungry we feel the pain and that also disappears step by step with every morsel.

Similarly, when we are progressing in our spiritual life towards the Divine, we shall experience three things and we are to measure them carefully.

What are they? Bhakti, parecanubhava and virakti.

Bhakti means a serving tendency and our attraction increases with acceleration.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Paresanubhava means some sort of accurate conception of the subjective world, superseding my subject on the other side – at first our conception may be hazy but gradually it will become clearer.

Virakti – we will withdraw from the environment and feel disgust with the stale experience of this world.

The negative side loses its charm as the positive side gives us a peep into the world of the super-subjective.

Bhakti' paresanubhavo viraktir – these three things must be there when we are making our journey.

Sato Vrtti

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

The footsteps of the mahajanas (sadhus) are our only hope – mahajano yena gata' sa pantha'.

We have to depend on that only for our relief.

Their footsteps are like so many lighthouses to guide us across the infinite ocean.

A hope in the infinite – Vaikuntha means infinite, but Sraddha contains within it good faith and good hope.

Sraddha means surcharged with some good hope in the infinite.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Vaikuntha is infinite, and Sraddha is our only means to draw the attention of the infinite to us.

The only way is Sraddha, for by Sraddha we can attract the infinite.

There is nothing else.

And when it gets a definite form through bhava, it becomes prema, divine love.

Columbus floated his ships in the ocean and gradually he went to the Americas. He found land.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Similarly, after crossing this universe we may find the spiritual cosmos, Vaikuntha, and Sraddha is the light in the darkness.

Only Sraddha can guide us there.

We are travelers in the infinite ocean.

In the Bhagavatam are the footsteps of those great personages that have traveled on the way – the broad line chalked out by the footsteps of those that are going to the divine world.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Only that should be our surest guide.

All else may be eliminated because calculation is fallible and all justification comes from the Absolute Infinite.

Any form of justification can come from anywhere, at anytime.

We are floating in a boat in the infinite ocean.

Anything may come to help or to hinder.

Only our optimistic good faith can be our guide.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

**nr-deham adyam sulabham sudurlabham
plavam sukalpam guru-karna-dharam
mayanukulena nabhasvateritam
puman bhavabdhim na taret sa atma-ha**

The human body can award all benefit in life, and is automatically obtained by the laws of nature, although it is a very rare achievement. This human body can be compared to a perfectly constructed boat having the guru as the captain and the instructions of the Lord as favorable winds impelling it on its course. Considering all these advantages, a human being who does not utilize his human life to cross the ocean of material existence should be considered the killer of his own soul. (Bhag. 11.20.17)

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Guru-karna-dharam – the guru is the guide.

In the infinite ocean I have boarded my small boat and the destination is uncertain and inconceivable to me.

But it is conceivable to my Gurudeva and I am moving with that sincere faith within.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

**svayam samuttirya sudustaram dyuman
bhavarnavam bhimam adabhra-sauhrda
bhavat-padambhoruha-navam atra te
nidhaya yata sad-anugraho bhavan**

O effulgent One! Your mercy towards Your devotees is unlimited! By your grace they take shelter of the boat of Your lotus feet and cross over the ocean of material existence, which is difficult to cross. These devotees in their turn are so kind towards the conditioned souls that they keep this boat of Your lotus feet in this material world for their redemption. (Bhag. 10.2.31)

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

It is a horrible ocean with so many waves and so many sharks, timingila, whales and other things – full of danger.

Bhavat padambhoruha-navam atra te – their footsteps are our only hope.

We are to depend on that. It is only for our relief that so many lighthouses, the footprints of the saints, are in the infinite ocean to guide us to that place.

The instructions of the mahajanas are always true, but their conduct may not always be useful to the beginner.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Their instructions are always useful, but not always their practices.

A mahajana may do something that may not be helpful for my stage.

He has such great spiritual power that a little defect may not harm him in any way in his practice.

An intelligent person will accept those practices that are backed by his words.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara
Maharaj

isvaranam vacah satyam
tathaivacaritam kvacit
tesam yat sva-vaco yuktam
buddhimams tat samacaret

The statements of great persons are always true, and the acts they perform are exemplary when consistent with those statements. Therefore one who is intelligent should carry out their instructions. (Bhag. 10.33.31)

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

isvaranam vaca' satyam – the leaders of the higher order, what they say, that is true – vaca' satyam.

But sometimes their conduct is not always the same – tathaivacaritam kvacit.

Always try to follow their advice, but don't try to imitate their conduct – caritam kvacit.

An intelligent man will accept that conduct which is one and the same with their advice – buddhimams tat samacaret.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

When he has realized a higher state he may not be very ardent to follow the conduct of the lower stage.

But when he comes to advise me, he will tell me what is necessary for my position.

But he himself may not accept the same thing as his own conduct. He is above that.

He has finished that class and he is reading in a higher class and when a student of that class comes he gives the lessons of his level, isvaranam vaca' satyam.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Because he knows that he is giving advice to a particular section he will always give advice in a proper line – tathaivacaritam kvacit.

But their own practice is not always the same as their advice.

They themselves may go to a higher position.

There is no necessity of that sort of practice.

And an intelligent man will accept that conduct which is always corroborated by his advice.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

We should not imitate but rather we should follow. Not anukarana (imitation) but anusarana.

Anusarana means to follow in the footsteps.

We must understand the difference.

Anusarana means sincerity and anukarana is only for pratistha – without inner purity, only to imitate things outwardly, to get the glory of being a sadhu.

Anusarana means sincere progress from the heart.
Anukarana is artificial.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

Once the renowned dramatist, Girish Chandra Ghosh made one drama about Caitanya-deva and wanted Bhaktivinoda Thakura to open the drama because Bhaktivinoda Thakura had a good name in the devotion to Caitanya-deva.

But Bhaktivinoda Thakura hatefully dismissed him, “I am not going to give connection with this false thing.”

Bhaktivinoda Thakura dismissed this awkward imitation, “I don’t want to come in touch with that.”

Instead of trying to follow in Bhaktivinoda Thakura’s footsteps, he was making a show of his connection.

It was imitation, so Bhaktivinoda Thakura avoided it.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

One prostitute, Vinodini, was selected to play the part of Caitanya-deva.

Then Ramakrishna was chosen instead of Bhaktivinoda Thakura and he went to see the drama.

That Vinodini began to cry, shedding tears while taking the Name of Krsna and Ramakrishna was very much impressed with that, so much so that the next morning he went to see that Vinodini.

He told that prostitute, “You are very fortunate, you are taking the Name of Krsna and shedding tears. You have created such an impression in me, I feel very fortunate, so I have come to see you again.”

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

And she was very ashamed, “No, no, no!”

And Ramakrishna told her, “One that can rouse devotion in the hearts of so many by shedding tears and all these things when playing Caitanya-deva – she is not an ordinary person.”

In this way Ramakrishna eulogized her.

But we are not a party to that.

We don't recognize that.

The Gaudiya Matha, the devotees of Prabhupada, they cannot accept such appreciation and such a false representation. It is all imitation, a sham, not real.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

It won't help our real progress.

In a drama a man may take the role of Narada Gosvami and chant, "Haribol! Haribol!" and tears may appear from his eyes, but it is simply artificial!

It may be articulated cent percent to show these symptoms in the body and in the mind.

One can learn the art without any touch of divinity.

It is possible.

Some people are naturally of that temperament; very easily they can shed tears, their temperament is such. And there are others who can learn the art of doing so.

Commentary by Srila Bhakti Rakshak Sridhara Maharaj

There are two classes of people who, without a slight touch of divinity, can show the public so many high sentiments.

Without the least touch of suddha-sattva they can freely exhibit all these things to deceive people.

Devotion does not mean only to shed tears and to shiver and to wear tilaka and tulasi and dance and chant – these are all external feats.

We must not be misguided seeing these imitating aspects, these feats of devotion.

We must try to save the ordinary people from the false exhibition of the higher Vaisnava's character.

Commentary by
Srila Bhakti
Siddhanta Saraswati
Thakura
(Upadesamrta
Bhasa)

Upadesamrta Bhasa

Verse – 1

**bhajane utsaha yara bhitare bahire
sudurlabha krsna-bhakti pabe dhire dhire**

By performing bhajana with enthusiasm both internally and externally, then gradually one will attain devotion to Krsna, which is very rare to achieve.

Upadesamrta Bhasa

Verse – 2

krsna-bhakti prati yara viśvasa niścaya
śraddhavan bhaktiman jana sei haya

If one has firm belief in the path of devotion to Krsna, he is certainly a man of faith and devotion.

Upadesamrta Bhasa

Verse – 3

**krsna-seva na paiya dhira-bhave yei
bhaktira sadhana kare bhaktiman sei**

Even if one fails to quickly gain service to Krsna, if one cultivates patience in his devotional practices then such a person will ultimately be imbued with bhakti.

Upadesamrta Bhasa

Verse – 4

yahate krsnera seva krsnera santosa
sei karme vrati sada na karaye rosa

Those that serve Krsna simply to give Him pleasure never feel any anger while performing such activities.

Upadesamrta Bhasa

Verse – 5

**krsnera abhakta-jana-sanga parihari
bhaktiman bhakta-sange sada bhaje hari**

Rejecting the company of the non-devotees, one who is blessed with devotion should take the association of devotees and always worship Śri Hari.

Upadesamrta Bhasa

Verse – 6

**krsna-bhakta yaha kare tad anusarane
bhaktiman acaraya jivane marane**

Following the instructions of the pure devotees of Krsna, one who has devotion will always follow the path of bhakti, both in life and in death.

Upadesamrta Bhasa

Verse – 7

ei chaya jana haya bhakti adhikari
viśvera-mangala kare bhakti paracari

Those who imbibe these six qualities become qualified to attain devotion and their preaching brings auspiciousness to the entire world.