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# D) BHAKTI IS CULMINATION OF ALL METHODS: LESSON 6, TEXTS 95-105

- **All duties culminate in devotion [Text 95]**
  - “Devotion to Lord Krsna is indeed to be aimed at thru charity, vows, penances, fire sacrifices, reciting mantras, study of the Vedas, controlling the senses, and other various deed.” [10.47.24]
  - Nārada echoes: “In this world a human being’s birth, activities, lifespan, mind, and speech are successful only if used to serve Lora Hari, who is the Supreme Controller if used to serve Lord Hari, who is the Supreme Controller and the Soul of the cosmos.” [4.31.9]

- “The immense labor expended in discharging prescribed duties pertaining to one’s varṇāśrama, and in undergoing penance, study of the Vedas, and other similar practices, culminate only in wealth accompanied by fame. But by hearing and repeating the glories of Lord Hāriṁ, one attains unbroken remembrance of the lotus feet of the Lordm who is the support of the Goddess of fortune.”  
[12.12.54]
- **Devotion includes awareness [Text 96]**
  - Even the jñāna prescribed in SB is part of bhakti only: “O unlimited Lord, in the past many yogīs in this world offered all their activities and prescribed duties unto You. By doing so, they acquired devotion unto You in the form of hearing and reciting Your pastimes. By such devotion, they realized the self, O infallible Lord, and easily attained Your supreme destination.”  
[10.14.5]

## ■ Bhakti is the source of all perfection [Text 97]

- All other means of attaining perfection described in SB are similarly rooted in bhakti, as Śrīdama Vipra exemplifies: “Worship of Your lotus feet is the basis of all perfection and opulence that human beings can achieve in heaven, on earth, in the lower planets, or in salvation.” [10.81.19]
- Yudhiṣṭhira: “O lotus-navelled Lord, those who constantly serve Your sandals, which destroy all inauspiciousness', who meditate upon them with pure minds and praise them, obtain freedom from bondage to the material world. And even if they should so desire, they can attain any material boon. But these things are not available to others.” [10.72.4]

## ■ Bhakti is independent of all methods [Text 98]

- This because bhakti is the life of all these different methods. Bhakti alone has been proclaimed everywhere as the methodology. All perfection is attained simply by bhakti, w/out reliance on any other method.
- “An intelligent person, whether desireless, full of desire, or desiring liberation, should worship the Supreme Person with fervent bhakti-yoga.” [2.3.10]
- The author (Sri Sartyanarayana Dasa) of this book comments: “As bhakti is so much emphasized, even those who lack acumen worship Lord Viṣṇu, yet they do so only as a part of karma, or as part of whatever process they are following, in order to achieve the results of their respective practice. This is an offense of bhakti. As a result, bhakti awards them only their respective desires, and of that also there is no assurance.”

## ■ Success in bhakti is assured, not in karma [Text 99]

- Unlike the practice of karma-yoga, where there is both uncertainty and misery involved, success is assured in the practice of bhakti-yoga and the devotee experiences happiness even in the stage of practice.
- “By performing sacrifice for a long time, our bodies have become dark from the smoke. Yet there is no certainty of success in this endeavor. You are satisfying us by making us drink, the sweet nectar from the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa.” [1.18.12]
- “The immense labor expended in discharging prescribed duties pertaining to one’s varṇāśrama, and in undergoing penance, study of the Vedas, and other similar practices, culminate only in wealth and fame. But by hearing and chanting the glories of the Lord, one attains unbroken remembrance of the lotus feet of Lord Hari, who is the support of the Goddess of fortune.”

## ■ Inauspiciousness never ensues from bhakti [Text 100]

- “If one renounces his prescribed duty and engages in the service of the lotus feet of Lord Hari, but falls down before becoming perfect, what inauspicious can befall him? On the other hand, if a person not engaged in the service of the Lord executes his prescribed duty, what does he gain?” [1.5.17]
- “I offer obeisances unto the all-powerful Lord. Just by taking shelter of His devotees, all types of sinful people become purified, including the Kiratas, Hunas, Andhras, Pulindas, Pukkakas, Abhiras, Kankas, Yavanas and the Khasas.” [2.4.18]

## ■ Brāhmaṇism is of no value, if devoid of bhakti [Text 101]

- “To hell with all of our threefold births [biological, brahminical and ritual], our vows, our extensive spiritual knowledge, our lineage and our expertise in the rituals, when we have turned against the One Beyond the Senses.” [10.23.40]

## ■ Bhakti excels over the practice of offering one's prescribed duties to the Lord [Text 102]

- “Therefore with resolute determination one should continuously hear about, glorify, meditate on, and worship the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, the guardian of His devotees.” [1.2.14]

## ■ Bhakti surpasses yoga [Text 103]

- Nārada Muni to Vyāsadeva: “The mind, which is repeatedly overwhelmed by lust and greed, is not restrained as effectively by the path of yoga, beginning with the practice of yama, as it is by service to Lord Kṛṣṇa.” [1.6.36]
- “Neither practice of yoga, nor sāṅkhya, nor prescribed duties, nor the study of the Vedas, nor penances, nor renunciation, can captivate Me as does emphatic devotion unto Me.” [11.14.20]



## ■ **Bhakti surpasses jñāna [Text 104]**

- “O Lord, those whose hearts have been purified by bhakti, drinking the nectar of Your glories , acquire knowledge permeated with renunciation and easily attain Vaikuṅṭha. But others, the jñānīs, after conquering the powerful material nature on the strength of their yoga trance on the self, enter in You only. They undergo a great deal of hardship, but not those who serve You.” [3.5.46-47]

## ■ **Jñāna cannot be accomplished w/out bhakti [Text 105]**

- Brahmā’s statement: “O almighty Lord, those who undergo pains to attain realization of the inscrutable, giving up the most beneficial path of bhakti, gain only labor and nothing else, like those engaged in threshing coarse husk devoid of grain.” [10.4.4]

# E) BHAKTI IS INTRINSIC DUTY: LESSONS 7 & 8, TEXTS 106-113

## ▪ LESSON 7, TEXTS 106-107: TAKING SHELTER OF COMPLETE WHOLE

- Demigods themselves emphasize the necessity of Krsna-bhakti while disregarding the idea of independently worshiping the demigods: “There is nothing astonishing for the Lord. His desires are fulfilled by virtue of bliss inherent within His own nature. He is equipoised and completely peaceful. If one abandons Him and takes shelter of someone else, he is certainly a fool, like a person who wishes to cross the ocean by holding the tail of a dog.”  
[6.9.22]

- “Those who possess the nature of rajas and tamas and whose character is thus identical [to that of the forefathers, ghosts, and progenitors], worship a desire to get money, opulence and progeny.” [1.2.27]
- **Brahmā & Śiva should be worshiped as Vaiṣṇavas**
  - “Lord Brahmā, the first god and spiritual teacher of the world, while sitting atop his lotus base, looked about with a desire to create but was unable to understand how to go about it.” [2.9.5]
  - Markeṇḍeya to Śiva: “However, I ask one boon from you, who are complete in yourself and who fulfill the desires of your devotees, that I may have unfailing devotion to Him, and to yourself as well.” [12.10.34]
  - Śiva is the greatest Vaiṣṇava. To regard him as equal to Viṣṇu cannot award devotion; rather, it is offensive.

- “The foolish, who equate Śiva with Viṣṇu, cannot obtain unalloyed devotion to Lord Hari, even if they worship Him with one-pointed attention. One who regards the demigods, like Brahmā & Śiva, is equal to Lord Nārāyaṇa certainly becomes heretic.” [Vaiṣṇava-tantra]
- Śiva referring to Markeṇḍeya as a pure Vaiṣṇava: “This brāhmaṇa-sage certainly does not desire any benedictions even up to the point of salvation, because he has attained supreme devotion to the immortal Lord, the Supreme Person.” [12.10.6]
- **One shouldn't, however, disrespect the demigods**
  - “Only Lord Hari, the Supreme Master of all other worshipful deities and controllers, should be worshiped always. Other gods headed by Brahmā and Rudra should never be disrespected.” [Padma-Purāṇa]

## ■ The nature of the entity of highest shelter [Text 107]

- Akrura's prayers: "What scholar would approach anyone for shelter other than You who are filled with love for Your devotees, truthful, a well-wisher to all, and grateful? Not only do You fulfill all the desires of those who worship You and who are affectionate towards You, but You also give them Your own self. Yet there is no loss or gain for You."

[10.48.26]

- Because the Lord is *suhṛda*, the one whose nature is to help others, and moreover, because He is *kṛra-jña*, the one who considers even the slightest favor as significant, He fully grants all the desires of those who worship Him.

- **LESSON 8, TEXTS 108-113: BHAKTI IS INTRINSIC DUTY**
- **Wastage of human potentiality [Text 108]**
  - Brahmā to the demigods: “This human form of life is desired even by us because in it, one can attain knowledge of the Absolute along with the path of religion. Alas! Those who in spite of obtaining this human form do not worship the Lord, are bewildered by the Lord’s all-pervading Māyā.” [3.15.24]
  - If, despite acquiring human form, people do not worship the Lord, who is the root of all religion and knowledge, they are completely deluded: “Alas, the ears of a person that do not hear about the heroic deeds of Kṛṣṇa are but two holes. And, O Sūta, the tongue which does not sing the glories of the Lord is unchaste, like the tongue of a frog.” [2.3.20]

## ■ **Absence of virtue [Text 109]**

- “The demigods constantly dwell with all good qualities in that person who has pure bhakti for the Lord. There are no good qualities in the non-devotee who chases after temporary material objects with desire for material pleasure.” [5.8.12]

## ■ **Disregard for the sage void of devotion [Text 110]**

- “O Lord, what to speak of others, even if the great sages are not interested in hearing Your pastimes they wander in the cycle of birth and death in this world. In daytime they are disturbed by various engagements, and at night they lie unconscious in sleep which is disrupted repeatedly because of various thoughts. By the will of providence all their endeavors to achieve their goals are foiled.” [3.9.10]

- **The mystery of dharma hidden even from the sage**
  - Yamarāja: “The Lord Himself has propagated dharma. Even the sages, the gods and perfected beings do not know the import of dharma, so what to speak of the human beings, the Vidyādhara, the Cāraṇas and the Asuras. My dear servants, only Brahmā, Nārada, Siva, the Kumāras, Kapila, Manu, Prahlāda, Janaka, Bhīṣma, Bali, Śukadeva and I—these 12 people—know dharma related to the Supreme Lord. By knowing this dharma, which is confidential, pure and difficult to ascertain, one becomes immortal. This alone is said to be the supreme duty of human beings in this world to engage in bhakti to the Supreme Lord by chanting His names and other such activities.” [6.33.19-22]



- “A faithful person endowed with fortitude who hears or relates the amorous pastimes of Krsna with the damsels of Vraja is blessed with the supreme devotion to the Lord and is quickly freed from lust, the disease of the heart.” [10.33.39]
- Because of the supremacy and confidentiality of this bhāgavata-dharma, Yamarāja continues: “Generally, even great souls do not know this religion.” [6.3.25]
- **Devotion is the intrinsic duty of all [Text 111]**
  - Krsna to Uddhava: “The duties of a mendicant are control of the mind and non-violence, and the duties of one who resides in the forest are penance and discrimination of spirit from matter.”  
Worship of Me is the common duty for everyone.” [11.18.42-43]

## ■ The defect of nonfulfillment of intrinsic duty

- One of the Nava-Yogendras: “From the mouth, arms, thighs, and feet of the Lord respectively, appeared the four varṇas, or as castes, along with āśramas, or stages of life. The varṇas were distinctly divided into vipra, ksatriya, vaisya and sudra according to their corresponding modes of natures. Out of these divisions, those ”who do not worship the Supreme Person, who is the direct source of all souls and the Master of all, and who disregard Him fall from their status and become degraded.” [11.5.2-3]
- “Therefore, O Uddhava, understanding your true identity thru deliberation on scriptural truths, and being endowed with knowledge and realization of your relationship with the Lord, worship Me with devotion.” [11.19.5]

- **Bhakti continues even at the stage of liberation [Text 112]**
  - After having been purified of all influence of karma by prema bhakti continues: “Just as gold, when smelted in fire, gives up its impurities of all contamination caused by impressions of karma by bhakti-yoga and then serves Me directly.” [11.14.25]
- **Bhakti is incumbent even upon the demigods [Text 113]**
  - Kapiladeva: “Lord Śiva became known as Śiva, or auspicious, when he accepted upon his head the sacred water of the Gangā, which is known as the best of rivers because it washed the feet of the Lord at its source.” [3.28.22]
- Thus, the fact that bhakti is the perpetual and invariable duty for all is another reason why it has been established as the abhidheya.