

# Practical and Transformational Insights

## Excerpts from Śrīla Prabhupāda's Text 10 Purport

At the present moment almost everyone is engaged in some kind of fruitive activity. Those who are desirous of gaining material profits by working are called *karmīs*, or fruitive workers.

Although such persons may be elevated to the heavenly planets by their pious activities and although they may enjoy life there for many thousands of years, they nonetheless must return to this planet when the results of their pious activities are exhausted.

Among the *karmīs* are some *vikarmīs*, people who act without the guidance of Vedic knowledge. Those who act on the basis of Vedic knowledge perform sacrifices for the satisfaction of Lord Viṣṇu and to receive benedictions from Him. In this way they are elevated to higher planetary systems. Such *karmīs* are superior to the *vikarmīs*, for they are faithful to the directions of the *Vedas* and are certainly dear to Kṛṣṇa.

(But) One should be eager to understand the science of the soul (*ātma-tattva*). Unless one comes to the platform of *ātma-tattva*, by which one understands that the soul and not the body is oneself, one remains on the platform of ignorance. Out of thousands and even millions of ignorant people who are wasting their time simply gratifying their senses, one may come to the platform of knowledge and understand higher values of life. Such a person is called a *jñānī*. The *jñānī* knows that fruitive activities will bind him to material existence and cause him to transmigrate from one kind of body to another. Thus a *jñānī* is considered superior to a *karmī* because he at least refrains from the blind activities of sense enjoyment.

However, although a *jñānī* may be liberated from the ignorance of the *karmīs*, unless he comes to the platform of devotional service he is still considered to be in ignorance (*avidyā*). Although one may be accepted as a *jñānī*, or one advanced in knowledge, his knowledge is considered impure because he has no information of devotional service and thus neglects the direct worship of the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When a *jñānī* takes to devotional service, he rapidly becomes superior to an ordinary *jñānī*.

After taking to devotional service under the regulative principles, a person may come to the platform of spontaneous love of Godhead, following in the footsteps of great devotees like Nārada and Sanaka and Sanātana. The Supreme Personality of Godhead then recognizes him to be superior. The devotees who have developed love of Godhead are certainly in an exalted position.

Of all these devotees, the *gopīs* are recognized as superior because they do not know anything other than satisfying Kṛṣṇa. Nor do the *gopīs* expect any return from Kṛṣṇa. Indeed, sometimes Kṛṣṇa puts them into extreme suffering by separating Himself from

them. Nonetheless, they cannot forget Kṛṣṇa.....Thus of all the devotees who have developed unalloyed devotional love for Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* are most exalted, and out of all these exalted *gopīs*, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is the highest.

No one can excel the devotional service of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Indeed, even Kṛṣṇa cannot understand the attitude of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī; therefore He took Her position and appeared as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, just to understand Her transcendental feelings.

In this way Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī gradually concludes that Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is the most exalted devotee of Kṛṣṇa and that Her *kuṇḍa* (lake), Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa, is the most exalted place.

Therefore everyone interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness should ultimately take shelter of Rādhā-kuṇḍa and execute devotional service there throughout one's life. This is the conclusion of Rūpa Gosvāmī in the tenth verse of Upadeśāmṛta.