

SB 05.05.18
gurur na sa syat sva-jano na sa syat
pita na sa syaj janani na sa syat
daivam na tat syan na patis ca sa syan
na mocayed yah samupeta-mrityum

Translation: One who cannot deliver his dependents from the path of repeated birth and death should never become a spiritual master, a father, a husband, a mother or a worshipable demigod.

Purport: There are many spiritual masters, but Rishabhadeva advises that one should not become a spiritual master if he is unable to save his disciple from the path of birth and death. Unless one is a pure devotee of Krishna, he cannot save himself from the path of repeated birth and death. Tyaktva deham punar janma naiti mam eti so'rjuna [Bg. 4.9]. One can stop birth and death only by returning home, back to Godhead. However, who can go back to Godhead unless he understands the Supreme Lord in truth? Janma karma ca me divyam evam yo vetti tattvatah [Bg. 4.9].

We have many instances in history illustrating Rishabhadeva's instructions. Sukracarya was rejected by Bali Maharaja due to his inability to save Bali Maharaja from the path of repeated birth and death. Sukracarya was not a pure devotee, he was more or less inclined to fruitive activity, and he objected when Bali Maharaja promised to give everything to Lord Vishnu. Actually one is supposed to give everything to the Lord because everything belongs to the Lord. Consequently, the Supreme Lord advises in Bhagavad-gita (9.27):

yat karosi yad asnasi

yaj juhosi dadasi yat

yat tapasyasi kaunteya

tat kurusva mad-arpanam

"O son of Kunti, all that you do, all that you eat, all that you offer and give away, as well as all austerities that you may perform, should be done as an offering unto Me." This is bhakti. Unless one is devoted, he cannot give everything to the Supreme Lord. Unless one can do so, he cannot become a spiritual master, husband, father or mother. Similarly, the wives of the brahmanas who were performing sacrifices gave up their relatives just to satisfy Krishna. This is an example of a wife rejecting a husband who cannot deliver her from the impending dangers of birth and death. Similarly, Prahlada Maharaja rejected his

father, and Bharata Maharaja rejected his mother (janani na sa syat). The word daivam indicates a demigod or one who accepts worship from a dependent. Ordinarily, the spiritual master, husband, father, mother or superior relative accepts worship from an inferior relative, but here Rishabhadeva forbids this. First the father, spiritual master or husband must be able to release the dependent from repeated birth and death. If he cannot do this, he plunges himself into the ocean of reproachment for his unlawful activities. Everyone should be very responsible and take charge of his dependents just as a spiritual master takes charge of his disciple or a father takes charge of his son. All these responsibilities cannot be discharged honestly unless one can save the dependent from repeated birth and death. (End)

Kalakantha Prabhu: This verse has many interesting facets. For one thing, it puts the position of father, mother, husband and guru on the same level. Nobody should take any of these responsible positions unless they are capable of giving real shelter to their dependents. No one would think I cannot be a perfect mother or father, therefore I should not become one.

Similarly, no one should think I cannot be perfect as a spiritual master, therefore I should not become one. Caitanya Mahaprabhu encouraged everybody, yare dekha, tare kaha 'krishna'-upadesa amara ajnaya guru hana tara' ei desa. (CC Madhya 7.128) Everybody, wherever you go, whomever you meet, tell them about Krsna and that way become a spiritual master and try to liberate your mind.

So there are two things to consider in becoming responsible and capable and avoiding the ocean of reproachment. Have you ever heard those two words together? Except from Srila Prabhupada. So poetic. The ocean of reproachment, we can see if somebody takes responsible position and then fails how condemned and how much criticism they will get. This is a warning verse. But I didn't mean to speak in a negative way because there is something very wonderful about the commonality between gurus, husbands, and parents and the responsible people. And that is they have the wonderful ability to give unconditional love to their dependents, love that is given so freely regardless of how the dependent responds, that is the unifying quality of these various positions.

Sanatana Goswami spoke to Haridas Thakur about two things a leader must have, acara and pracara. The ability to teach the real knowledge ever and the ability to behave very nicely.

We have been hearing very wonderful classes this week by Vaisesika Prabhu, Bhurijan Prabhu, Bhakti Caitanya Maharaj on this theme of leadership. And everytime the same thing comes up: the quality of

the devotee, the behavior of the devotee. Krishnadas Kaviraj says in the Caitanya-caritamrta that religious principles are not established by logic or debate or even by internet arguments.

They are established how? By the behavior of the devotee. That is what touches people's hearts. If all the devotees of the Krsna consciousness movement, if all of Srila Prabhupada's followers become very saintly, then the whole world will come to our temples, they will buy our books, they will want to become like us. Everything depends upon our behavior. So this is the wonderful opportunity, Krsna consciousness.

Ravindra Swarup Prabhu wrote a very beautiful and eloquent praise of Srila Prabhupada. In which he described how he went, this elderly swami went to the lower east side of New York City Manhattan very degraded place, and presented sainthood as a viable career option.

So what does it mean to become a saint? For one thing, a saint, as we have been hearing, from the classes this week is friendly to everyone. Titksava karunika suridhama sarvabhutana. Friendly to everyone, giving love to everyone.

Sometimes we have a heart that feels like a very ripe, luscious plum, full of juice ready to give its delicious nectar at the slightest touch to everyone. And sometimes our hearts feel like a dried up prune, you can't squeeze one drop out. Either way, it is our duty to give love to others and that is the behaviour of saintly persons.

I know this sounds a little sentimental, while some people say manava seva, the impersonalists say this that if you serve mankind, you serve God. Or in the faith that I was brought up in, they say that loving man is the highest expression of God consciousness. We are not talking about the same thing in Krsna consciousness for the simple reason that Krsna is included, there is no knowledge in others that we have to offer by the grace of Srila Prabhupada. We have real knowledge but how do we deliver it that is the deciding factor, whether or not people will hear from us.

So my dear Godbrother Caru Prabhu in the Western United States has developed a wonderful project, beautiful temple, hundreds and thousands of people attending these festivals. I visited him last summer and he told me an interesting story from his days as temple president in Australia, I visited him last summer. He told me an interesting story from his days as a temple president in Australia. When Srila

Prabhupada came to Australia in the early 70's, Caru Prabhu was alone in the room with him and thought it was a great opportunity to ask a question that was very much on his mind.

He asked, "Srila Prabhupada, after you start chanting Hare Krsna, how long does it take to become purified?"

Srila Prabhupada thought for a moment and he said "about forty years." Laughter

I was very happy to hear this answer. I looked at the calendar. Just four months away would be my fortieth anniversary. So four months came and went and nothing much changed.

Laughter

So I was thinking about what has kept me in Krsna consciousness for forty years. In every case, it was the loving reciprocation, the loving presentation of the devotees. Starting from 1975 when Vaisesika Prabhu and myself and many devotees came here for the big Mayapur festival here and Keshav Bharati Maharaja and others came here. Remember the temple room was down here in the lotus building and there were 200 of us and it seemed like a big crowd and the lotus building was the only building for a kilometer in any direction.

Srila Prabhupada was there each morning giving class, taking us around, circumambulating the Deities and ringing the bell, making everyone dance in ecstasy. Speaking from the 7th canto telling us how the same hand that ripped apart Hiranyakashipu was patting the head of Prahlad Maharaja.

In this way so many wonderful memories were there. I was twenty years old, very inexperienced, I felt like I was living the Caitanya-caritamrta and those memories of Srila Prabhupada and his kindness have kept me in Krsna consciousness.

And there are three wonderful devotees. May I tell you about them?

One is H.H.Bhakti Tirtha Maharaja. He and I lived in the back of a van together for years. We have very different backgrounds. He was very experienced, college educated, and he was very strong in his

spiritual life. Every morning he would get up at midnight every day and he would chant many rounds and write a letter to Srila Prabhupada every day and read and then he would wake me up.

He never ever made me feel anything but very much appreciated and respected and loved. Never did I feel like he is laying some kind of guilt trip on me or feeling better than me. I never thought I felt anything from him but this unconditional love. That sustained me for many, many years.

Later, H.H. Tamal Krishna Maharaja. When I was a brahmachari, I would avoid him very carefully. He was so heavy. Then later, when I was a grhastha, I went to work with him in Texas and he had changed so much. He was so kind to all of the families in the community and very accommodating to everybody and very respectful and appreciative and so unconditional in his love. So I was

appreciating him. One day we were walking in the Dallas community. He said not everybody can oversee a community. He said the six goswamis could do this, dhir dhira jana priyo. He quoted this same verse, they were dear to every body, both devotees and non devotees. And they would come to them for advice, and he said not everybody could do this.

I always remember these very potent instructions he gave. You have to give love to everybody the devotees and the non-devotees if you want to be a leader. That was what I imbibed from him not only through that conversation but through all of his wonderful years with us.

And finally one very special devotee, Yamuna Devi Prabhu, Prabhvi. I don't dare call her mother Yamuna. I tried that one time and she said, yes, father Kalakantha. In the last few years of her life, I had this wonderful opportunity, my wife and I to spend much time with her in her Saranagati Ashram in Canada. We would go to her ashram for Srimad Bhagavatam class. It was so sweet. She and Dina Tarini were so learned and also loving in their approach to Krsna consciousness

They would tell such nice stories. Can I share one with you? When she was at the first temple in London at Bury Place, they were having a festival. She had worked up a menu for the feast and called George Harrison to invite him. She told him the event and the menu and said should I save a sweet for you? He said, you should probably save two. He was so inspired by her cooking.

She told about the time that they were recording the Radha Krsna temple album. All of the devotees were at the studio in Apple records. George was in the control room mixing. They were recording for

several hours. As devotees are expert at doing, they were crashed out everywhere around the studio. She was awake by herself, so she sat down at the harmonium began singing a bhajan. They had no song books with them. They were alone there in London, no song books, all they had were tapes of Srila Prabhupada which she would listen to incessantly. She listened to this bhajan over and over

again, never seeing it in print. Just to pass the time, she started singing as best as she could remember bhaja hu re mana. Of course she sang bhaja mana hu re. And she was just singing and when she finished George came out of the studio and said I was recording that and I want to put it on the album. You know this bhajan right? With this voice, you can't really tell if its male or female So devotional, so sweet. She had no idea it was being recorded. She did not want to put it on the album but George insisted, "have to put it on" There were many mistakes in the language and the words.

Later Srila Prabhupada heard the bhajana and said, "You have made a mistake". She was so embarrassed and said "I'm sorry". He said, "no no, that's alright, you can fix it later".

These are some of the devotees in my life who have given me unconditional love and shown me how to teach Krsna consciousness like that so that people will take it.

In the last few years I was asked to run a small temple in Gainesville Florida. Like many temples in the west it was very, it was depleted, there were actually only four devotees each day for the morning program and we were all like in their forties and fifties. So this temple is right next to the big university, University of Florida and there are fifty thousand students and for the last forty years devotees have been distributing prasadam there every day and it is a very popular program. So that was basically all that was going on in the temple.

It was a little depressing. I was talking to Yamuna and others about this and we decided to open a student hostel, as Bhaktisiddhanta called it, or BACE as it is known here in India. A place where students could live attend college while practicing Krsna consciousness. It had never been done before in the west, at least for many, many years. By this principle of unconditional love, we crafted a program, that would allow the devotees to come in a very flexible way. If they had the slightest interest in Krsna consciousness, we would accommodate them say for example not wearing devotional clothes. But they had to come to the morning program every day and they had to atleast chant eight rounds. That was the deal.

Then they could pay a little lakshmi or do some service and we got three students the first semester. Then something very amazing happened. More students came and saw the other students and said it looks like fun. And we said it is fun, we just have our parties in the morning instead of at night.

(Laughter)

Since then, over a 100 students have come through. Right now there are 30 students there and the biggest problem we have is where to put everybody, so many people want to come.

This is what Srila Prabhupada called applied knowledge. We tried to apply the principles according to the time place and circumstances. And things which work very nicely and easily here in India, may not work there without some adjustments.

So I would like to share with you few, I think this is why they asked me to give class, because the truth is I have no knowledge and realization. Somehow our program is thriving. I had boiled it down to three things that we found helpful in bringing people to Krsna consciousness. Would you like to hear that? First thing is amanina mana dena (Shikshashtakam). Whatever you can find in somebody that is better than you, look at that thing. This was the assignment given to Duryodhana by Dronacarya, and he could not do it. Glorifying somebody who is superior to you in some way. He came back

empty handed to which Dronacarya said, "therefore he is fit to be eaten by jackals".

While Yudhistira on the other hand was told find somebody who is inferior to you. He also came back empty handed. Drona said "you are fit to rule the world".

So when talking to new people, look for some way in which they are better than you. Maybe they are older than you, maybe younger, more educated, better looking more experienced, something in them that is superior to you and then talk about that thing.

Prabhodananda Sarasvati gave the same advice. You are very wise and so very learned. Now please forget everything you know and consider the mercy of Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

I am talking about the same thing but in very slow motion. Where you can give sustained respect to someone and make them feel respectful. Amaanina maan dena, Catch them doing something right, as Vaisesika Prabhu was pointing out. Encourage the heck out of them. That's right.

The second thing yena tena prakarena, manah krsna nivesayat (NOD) first of all, think about Krsna, the rules and regulations can come later. This one is a little more difficult because we are kind of a conservative movement. But we decided this is what it is going to take. We have been doing this for so many years, no one was joining us, try something different.

There is a story of Thomas Edison who invented the light bulb. He was just trying to find some kind of element that electricity could go through and throw off light for a sustained period of time. He failed over a thousand times. So a co-worker came and said "how do you feel after failing a thousand times?"

He said "I haven't failed a thousand times, I've just found a thousand things that don't work."

If we are afraid to try some new things, then we have to be satisfied with what we have, because the definition of insanity is to do the same thing and expect different result.

We took some radical steps and said you know don't worry about the clothing. The cultural part that can come later, the external part.

Another thing that was very radical I noticed whenever students came to the temple room, they would see the murti of Srila Prabhupada in our small temple room and they would become very disturbed, just very strange. We had a full size murti of Srila Prabhupada in a small temple and it just dominated everything. So we opened a Bhaktivedanta Library in another room and we moved the murti there. Then the students seemed to feel more comfortable. It was less strange because they did not know who Prabhupada was. So when they came we started teaching them about Prabhupada, reading Lilamrta over lunch everyday, talking about his life, teaching the words of the songs he taught us and explained the meaning and then more and more of them started joining and then they said, "why is the murti of Srila Prabhupada not in the temple room?"

When they asked for it, then we brought it back. And now it's cool because they tell the other students, oh yeah, that's Prabhupada, he's so cool.

We let them come in on the basis of an experiment. We say just enroll for a semester, you have to get up early and chant eight rounds, but there is no commitment. You don't have to be a member of ISKCON, you don't have to join ISKCON, you don't even have to like ISKCON. Just learn bhakti and then decide. You do this for one semester and you attend your classes and then after a semester, you decide if you want more. If you don't like what you got then you go right back to where you were, karma back guaranteed (Laughter).

This has done more than anything to take away the stigma of a cult. People are told by other don't join, I am not joining anything, I am just studying in the ashram for one semester. This is yena tena prakarena, manah krsna nivesayat (NOD) let the rules and regulations, the cultural thing let them come later.

And one more important point in this, conversely to catch them doing something right, we have learned not to catch them doing something wrong. Somebody is eating with their left hand. What do we do? "Oh, Stop that." they are going to feel very uncomfortable like they are on trial. Any moment they can be punched. So we just started noting down, I and the other senior devotees, in our little notebook that they are doing something wrong. Once a week, we sit down together and say here are some of the rules of etiquette we would like you to learn. And without pointing any fingers, we say, eat with the right hand and so many other details.

So flexible. This is titiksava. You have to tolerate that people are doing things wrong in the beginning. Just think of Srila Prabhupada. All of these people Robert Nelson teaching him how to roll chapatis, David Allen is taking LSD, people who were high on LSD were living on the storefront for months, Prabhupada tolerated until people came who were willing to go to a higher standard. This is also the saintly quality to teach them. Be flexible. yena tena prakarena, manah krsna nivesayat (NOD) Let the rules come later. Don't get hung up on the externals. Let them live the way they are.

The third thing that worked out is anandamayo abhyasat this understanding that every living entity, all of us run on pleasure. If we feel loved, then we feel pleasure. That is the beginning part and then as we advance, we learn that if we give love we feel even more pleasure.

How can people stay in Krsna consciousness for forty years? This means they have to be in the right position. They should not be told that if you do this its maya. And if you do this its Krsna consciousness. They have to be told, you have learned about Krsna, now you make your decisions. You are ready to get

initiated that's another issue but for the most part, people need to be given respect and freedom and the chance to make their own mistakes. This is anandamayo abhyasat

Its' hard. This analogy of guru and parent is very similar. Nothing in my life has prepared me more for taking disciples than having children. You give them love and love and love and that is very natural, but then they do what they are going to do. You learn the meaning of unconditional love when you have children. But with disciples, it is so much nicer. No diapers. And in most cases, they do what you suggest.

In between, there are people who are just experimenting with Krsna consciousness and they have to make their own decisions and we have to let them.

You know Srila Prabhupada was coming back to the west in 1977 and he said I have established 50% of my mission, book distribution, and now I want to establish the other 50%, varnashrama. But he did not make it for that much so that was left on us to understand that instruction and then there is so much debate about it so many views on what that means.

To me it means just one thing, how someone can stay in Krsna consciousness for forty years. That means we have to look at their life in a very broad way and let the new devotees feel free and voluntary in their devotional service. Individual spontaneous and voluntary.

So these are the three things that have worked. Maybe you will find them helpful in your part of the world. It is my great pleasure to be in your association. Because this love amongst devotees is even on a higher level than this unconditional love we are talking about. The love amongst the devotees is the very key to spiritual life.

satam prasangan mama virya-samvido

bhavanti hrit-karna-rasayanah kathah

taj-joshanad asv apavarga-vartmani

sraddha ratir bhaktir anukramishyati (SB3.25.25)

Shraddha, our faith comes from it, rati our taste comes from it and ultimately our bhakti comes from it. If to know Krsna is the perfection of devotee's life then we must have that association of devotees.

Being at events like this is like being at a feast where there are just too many preparations to eat. There are so many sweet devotees you want to spend all day with them but you only get a minute here and a minute there. Wish we had thousands of arms to hug all the Vaishnavas and live in the hours but we don't.

But this love for the conditioned souls, that is a quality of the saintly person. Suhrdam sarva bhutanam. To see people equally is only possible by loving everybody. There is not a clinical verse in Bhagavad Gita Vidya vinyaa sampanne, the Mayavadis might see it like that oh I see everyone as a spirit soul, they might say, to help them all, I see them equally, I don't care for anybody. But what it really means is to love everybody. That means we in our own lives and have to soften our hearts. We have to learn to forgive people and not carry grudges around with us as if that is going to hurt them. It is just hurting us. To behave to give unconditional love, like these great devotees. We have seen it. Srila Prabhupada was not a failure (?) guru, his disciples got these great qualities like Tamala Krsna Maharaj, Bhakti Tirtha Maharaj and Yamuna Prabhu. They have imbibed those qualities. We can also imbibe. Then the whole world will come to us. Because everybody is looking for that unconditional love.

In the 10th canto, there is this wonderful pastime. After the Aghasura pastime, I am sorry, Brahma vimohan lila pastime, Sukadeva Goswami is explaining how Lord Krsna replaces all the boys and the calves and how the mothers were so affectionate. Then Pariksit Maharaja asked this question, how is this possible since the mother loves the child so much, how could the mothers love the Krsna-replacement children even more? Sukadeva explains love between family members is based on an extension of one's own self-love. Because I love myself so I love you because you are related to me. When Krsna took the place of these extended loved ones, then the mothers were encountering the person who is the basis of their own ability to love themselves. Because Krsna is the source of the soul and He loves every soul unconditionally. When the mothers encountered this Person, they loved even more than their children even more than their own extended self. So this is the explanation

It is not possible to love Krsna without loving everyone else. That is the fruit of staying in Krsna consciousness whether it is forty or fifty or sixty years. We should know that's the indication we are advancing, when we don't feel enmity towards anyone else when we feel love towards when we can see ourselves honestly, if I would have been in that person's position then I would probably be doing the same thing. We could see how we are common. Not distinguishing by gender or age or race or country and we can give that affection unconditionally. That is a signpost that we are actually coming

closer to loving Krsna. That will be the success of our movement and that will be the glory of Srila Prabhupada. When all the followers of ISKCON show unconditional love, then the whole world will become Krsna conscious.

Thank you very much.

Comments or questions?

Kesava Bharati Maharaja: First of all, thank you very much for that lovely and relevant class. May I have your permission to document what you just said with an example from Sanatana Goswami's Brhat Bhagavatamrita?

When Narada Muni was sent to the Yadus by the Pandavas because the Pandavas thought that the Yadus were better devotees than they, he approached the Sudharma Assembly hall. It was a big hall and he saw the senior to junior Yadus sitting in a horseshoe shape. There was a throne in the middle, it was Krsna's. They were waiting for Krsna to come and conduct the affairs of the state. He was overwhelmed by the effulgence that was coming from their bodies. So much so that their decorations were decorated by the body or the body was decorated by the decorations.

Then Sanatana Goswami explains in the commentary what that effulgence is.

May I?

The love that they had for Krsna and the love they had for one another. That is the spiritual world. That gives that effulgence which will attract the whole world.

KKP: Thank you very much. Haribol. We have time for one question.

Mataji: My mind is always around here and there. Why?

KKP: It is because we are not happy in our hearts the mind is trying to find happiness somewhere else but it doesn't exist. It is only in you.

Mataji: Please bless me all of devotees.

KKP: Haribol. Srila Prabhupada ki jaya!