

Bhakti Vriksha Modules - Shraddhavan
Week 6 – Members’ Section

The Nectar of the Holy Name

Chanting of the Holy Name Yields All Results of Austerity

If one wants to perform austerities and penances in order to attain the supreme goal, one must attain the favor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If one achieves the favor of the Supreme Lord, it is to be understood that he has finished all kinds of austerities and penances and has attained efficiency in their execution.

On the other hand, if one does not attain the perfect stage of devotional service, all austerities and penances actually have no meaning, for without the Supreme Lord no one can attain the highest results derived from performing them. As stated in Bhagavad-gita (5.29), Lord Sri Krishna is the master of all penances and sacrifices. *Bhoktāraṁ yajña-tapasāṁ sarva-loka-maheśvaram*. Thus the desired result of performing austerities may be derived from Lord Krishna....

Even if a person is born in a family of caṇḍalas—the lowest birth one can get in human society—he is glorious if he chants the holy names of the Lord, for it is to be understood that by such chanting a devotee definitely proves that he underwent all kinds of austerities in his previous life.

By the grace of Lord Chaitanya, one who chants the Mahamantra (Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare) attains the highest perfectional stage, which had previously been attained by people who entered the ocean and executed austerities for ten thousand years. In this age of Kali, if a person does not take advantage of chanting the Hare Krishna mantra, which is offered as a great concession to the fallen human beings of this age, it is to be understood that he is very much bewildered by the illusory energy of the Lord.

Srimad Bhagvatam 4.24.14

Passage for Discussion

The KC Movement and life after Death

Purification of consciousness is the purpose of this Krishna Consciousness movement. Presently we are preparing this divine consciousness, for our consciousness goes with us at the time of death. Consciousness is carried from the body just as the aroma of a flower is carried by the air. When we die, this material body composed of five elements—earth, water, air, fire, and ether—decomposes and the gross materials return to the elements. Or, as the Christian Bible says, “Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return.” In some societies the body is burned, in others it is buried and in others it is thrown to animals. In India, the Hindus burn the body and thus the body is transformed into ashes. Ash is simply another form of earth. Christians bury the body and after some time in the grave, the body eventually turns to dust, which again, like ash, is another form of earth. There are other societies—like the Parsee community in India—that neither burn nor bury the body but throw it to the vultures, and the vultures immediately come to eat the body, and then the body is eventually transformed into stool. So in any case, this beautiful body, which we are soaping and caring for so nicely, will eventually turn into stool, ashes, or dust.

At death, the finer elements (mind, intelligence, and ego), which, combined, are called consciousness, carry the small particle of spirit soul to another body to suffer or enjoy, according to one's work. Our consciousness is molded by our work. If we associate with stool, our consciousness, which is like the air, will carry the aroma of stool and thus at the time of death will transport us to an undesirable body. Or, if the consciousness passes over roses, it carries the aroma of roses, and thus we are transported to a body wherein we can enjoy the results of our previous work. If we train ourselves to work in Krishna Consciousness, our consciousness will carry us to Krishna. Different types of body are developed according to consciousness; therefore, if we train our consciousness according to the yogic principles, we will attain a body wherein we can practice yoga. We will get good parents and a chance to practice the yoga system, and automatically we will be able to revive the Krishna Consciousness practiced in our previous body. Therefore it is stated in this last verse, "By virtue of the divine consciousness of his previous life, he automatically becomes attracted to the yogic principles—even without seeking them." Therefore, our present duty is to cultivate divine consciousness. If we want divine life, spiritual elevation, and eternal, blissful life, full of knowledge—in other words, if we want to go back home, back to Godhead—we have to train ourselves in divine consciousness, or Krishna Consciousness.

This can be easily done through association (*saṅgāt sañjāyate kāmāḥ*). Through divine association, our consciousness is made divine, and through demoniac association, our consciousness is made demoniac. Therefore, our consciousness must be trained to be divine through the proper association of those in Krishna Consciousness. That is the duty of one in this human form, a form that gives us a chance to make our next life completely divine. To attain this end, we should try to contact those who are developing divine consciousness.

Krishna Consciousness is a method for connecting directly with the Supreme. This is the special gift of Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Not only is this method direct and immediate, but it is also practical. Although many people entering this Society have no qualifications, they have become highly advanced in Krishna Consciousness simply by coming in contact with the Society.

Path of Perfection

Discovery:

1. What is the purpose of the Krishna Conscious movement?
2. What happens to our bodies at death?
3. What happens to our souls at death?

Understanding:

1. Why is it important to purify our consciousness? Explain with the examples mentioned.
2. What are the benefits of going back to the spiritual world to Krishna?
3. Why is it very important to associate with the devotees in Krishna consciousness?

4. 4. How does the Krishna consciousness movement easily elevate everyone, even if they are without any previous qualifications?

Application:

1. Do you enjoy coming regularly for the program? Share the obstacles if any that you face in attending the sat-sanga regularly.

Preaching is the Essence

Krishna Consciousness should be distributed to everyone, without discrimination

With great respect, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu requested Advaita Acharya, “Give Krishna Consciousness, devotion to Krishna, even to the lowest of men [caṇḍalas].”

This is Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s order to all His devotees. Krishna-bhakti, devotion to Krishna, is open to everyone, even low-class men like candalas. One should follow this order in the disciplic succession stemming from Sri Advaita and Nityananda Prabhu and distribute Krishna Consciousness without discrimination throughout the world.

There are different kinds of men, beginning with the brahmaṇa and going down to the lowest platform known as candala. Whatever one’s position, everyone in this age of Kali needs to be enlightened in Krishna Consciousness. That is the greatest need of the day. Everyone is acutely feeling the pangs of material existence.... everyone is feeling the resultant pinpricks of Kali-yuga brought about by human society’s indulging in illicit sex, meat-eating, gambling and intoxication. Now is the time for the members of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness to distribute Krishna-bhakti all over the world and thus follow the orders of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. The Lord has ordered everyone to become a guru (Cc. Madhya 7.128).... Everyone in every town and village should be enlightened by the instructions of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Krishna Consciousness should be distributed to everyone indiscriminately. In this way, the entire world will be peaceful and happy and everyone will glorify Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, as He desires.

The word candala actually refers to a dog-eater, who is considered the lowest of men. Even candalas can be enlightened in Krishna Consciousness due to Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s benedictions. Krishna-bhakti is not the monopoly of a certain caste. Everyone is eligible to receive this great benediction given by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Everyone should be given a chance to receive it and be happy.

Cc. Madhya 15.41