



Guru Tattva

Srila Gour Govinda
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TATTVA VICARA  PUBLICATIONS

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Preface

The information in this booklet was compiled by His Divine Grace Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami Mahārāja, a swan-like personality, whose only aim in life was to inculcate and spread the teachings of Śrīmān Mahāprabhu to everyone. After many of his Godbrothers fell from their positions as *sannyasis* and *gurus*, Srila Gour Govinda Mahārāja presented this paper to the GBC members (of ISKCON) in 1989 for the sole purpose of establishing the absolute conception of (*sad-*) *guru* and to console Śrīla Prabhupāda's grand-disciples so that they would not lose faith in devotional service and Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

This same information was printed in Australia as a booklet in late 1990 and presented to His Divine Grace in India in early 1991 prior to the opening of the Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa Balarama Temple in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. From there the booklet was widely distributed, as many devotees were at the time confused and experiencing difficulty in their spiritual lives after being abandoned by those whom they considered their *gurus* and well-wishers.

In the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā* 5.131, it is stated, *yāha bhāgavata paḍa vaiṣṇavera sthāne*, if you want to understand *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* you must approach a self-realised Vaiṣṇava and hear from him submissively. Self-realised Vaiṣṇavas, or *bhakta-bhāgavatas*, are rare agents of the Lord's mercy in this world. Such *bhakta-bhāgavatas* are pure devotees who are absorbed in *bhakti-rasa*, the mellows of loving devotion and are themselves the epitome of humility.

This booklet, wherein His Divine Grace expertly explains the absolute necessity of accepting a bona fide spiritual master (*sad-guru*), is being reprinted and made freely available with the specific intent of assisting and encouraging those sincere devotees searching for *sad-guru* as well as those whose *gurus* may have fallen from grace.

We have taken the liberty of adding two appendices, which were taken from *darśanas* with Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami Mahārāja. We hope that all who read this booklet will greatly benefit from it by the mercy of Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga.

Your lowly servants,

The Publishers





The Absolute Necessity for Accepting a Bona Fide Spiritual Master

In the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, it is said:

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

“According to their *karma*, all living entities are wandering throughout the entire universe. Some of them are being elevated to the upper planetary systems, and some are going down into the lower planetary systems. Out of many millions of wandering living entities, one who is very fortunate gets an opportunity to associate with a bona fide spiritual master by the grace of Kṛṣṇa. By the mercy of both Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master, such a person receives the seed of the creeper of devotional service.” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā* 19.151)

By taking shelter at the lotus feet of a spiritual master, an otherwise tiny insignificant living entity can be freed from all kinds of danger. Therefore, the eternal well-wishers of all living entities advise us to take shelter of such a spiritual master. In the *Skanda Purāṇa* it is said:

‘gu’ śabda ‘sty andhakārasya
‘ru’ śabdā tan nirodhakah



*andhakāra-nirodhatvād
guru ity abhidhīyate*

The word ‘gu’ means darkness and the word ‘ru’ means that which dispels the darkness. Forgetting their own identities, since time immemorial, the living entities are wandering in the darkness of the illusory energy, *māyā*. Thus being effected by illusory attachment based on ignorance, they accept temporary, unreal, material things as theirs and with false feelings of ‘I’ and ‘mine’ consider themselves to be the possessor of those: *janasya moho ‘yam ahaṁ mameti (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.5.8)*

Out of deep illusion the living entity thus develops the idea and feelings of ‘I’ and ‘mine’. This is called *moha* or delusion. To remove these illusory attachments which grow out of ignorance, one must take shelter at the lotus feet of Śrīla Gurudeva, whereby fear of illusion will be removed forever. By taking shelter at the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master, the *jīva* successfully revives his otherwise lost pure knowledge. Thus he can engage himself in the service of his worshipable Supreme Lord, Kṛṣṇa, who is the only object to be served eternally. If one renders loving devotional service under the benevolent guidance of a bona fide spiritual master, he will succeed in attaining supreme transcendental pleasure and bliss. Therefore it is absolutely essential to take shelter at the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is said:

*sarva-deśa-kāla-daśāya janera kartavya
guru-pāṣe sei bhakti praṣṭavya, śrotavya*

“It is therefore the duty of every man—in every country, in every circumstance and at all times—to approach a bona fide spiritual master, question him about devotional service and listen to him explain the process.” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 25.122*)

In the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* it is said:

*tad-vijñānārthaṁ sa gurum evābhigacchet
samt-pāṇiḥ śrotriyaṁ brahma-niṣṭham*

“To learn transcendental subject matter, one must approach the spiritual master. In doing so, one should carry fuel to burn in sacrifice. The symptom of such a spiritual master is that he is expert in understanding the Vedic conclusion, and therefore he constantly engages in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 1.2.12, quoted *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.28.65)

In this way many *śāstric* injunctions can be cited about why one should accept a bona fide spiritual master. However instead of going into the detail, I am seeking the kind permission of the assembled devotees and my dear Godbrothers and Godsisters to present a brief introductory background to the necessity of accepting a bona fide spiritual master [*sad-guru*].

Qualities of a True Spiritual Master

Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has given a very simple definition of *guru*:

*kibā vipra, kibā nyāsī, śūdra kene naya
yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā, sei ‘guru’ haya*

“Whether one is a *brāhmaṇa*, a *sannyāsī* or a *śūdra*—regardless of what he is—he can become a spiritual master if he knows the science of Kṛṣṇa.” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 8.128)

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is stated:

*tasmād guruṃ prapadyeta
jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam
śābde pare ca niṣṇātām
brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam*

“Therefore any person who seriously desires real happiness must seek a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him by initiation. The qualification of the bona fide *guru* is that he has realised the conclusions of the scriptures by deliberation and is able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken shelter of the

Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, should be understood to be bona fide spiritual masters.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.3.21)

One cannot become a *guru* based on his mundane scholarship. In this context *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* states:

*śabda-brahmaṇi niṣṇāto
na niṣṇāyāt pare yadi
śramas tasya śrama-phalo
hy adhenum iva rakṣataḥ*

“If through meticulous study one becomes expert in reading Vedic literature but makes no endeavour to fix one’s mind on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then one’s endeavour is certainly like that of one who works very hard taking care of a cow that gives no milk. In other words, the fruit of one’s laborious study of Vedic knowledge will simply be the labour itself. There will be no other tangible result.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.11.18)

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has stated in his *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*:

*vāco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam
etān vegān yo viśaheta dhīraḥ
sarvām apīmām pṛthivīm sa śiṣyāt*

“A sober person who can tolerate the urge to speak, the mind’s demands, the actions of anger and the urges of the tongue, belly and genitals is qualified to make disciples all over the world”. (*Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* verse 1)

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has stated, *upaśamāśrayam krodha-lobhādy-avaśī-bhūtam*: a bona fide spiritual master cannot be under the control of ordinary anger, greed and lust.

A spiritual master strictly follows the principles of disciplic succession and of the scriptures. The knowledge received from *guru* descends from the Lord Himself through disciplic succession.

In this regard our revered spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda has

said, “The transcendental knowledge of the Vedas was first uttered by God to Brahmā, the creator of this particular universe. From Brahmā the knowledge descended to Nārada, from Nārada to Vyāsadeva, from Vyāsadeva to Madhva, and in this process of disciplic succession the transcendental knowledge was transmitted by one disciple to another until it reached Lord Gaurāṅga, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, who posed as the disciple and successor of Śrī Īśvara Purī. The present Ācāryadeva is the tenth disciplic representative from Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, the original representative of Lord Caitanya who preached this transcendental tradition in its fullness. The knowledge that we receive from our Gurudeva is not different from that imparted by God Himself and the succession of the *ācāryas* in the preceptorial line of Brahmā.” (The Science of Self Realisation)

If one follows the system of disciplic succession one can become the *guru* for the whole world. In this age of Kali there are four bona fide *sampradāyas* i.e. Śrī, Brahmā, Rudra and Sanaka:

Śrī-sampradāya - Śrī Rāmānujācārya
 Rudra-sampradāya - Śrī Viṣṇu Svāmī
 Brahmā-sampradāya - Śrī Madhvācārya
 Sanaka-sampradāya - Śrī Nimbārkācārya

Śrīmān Mahāprabhu accepted a *guru* from the Brahmā-Madhva-Sampradāya i.e. He accepted Śrī Īśvara Purī as His *guru*. From that time, the title Gauḍīya has been added to that *sampradāya* which became the Brahmā-Madhva-Gauḍīya-sampradāya. Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came in the 15th century. Prior to that the four *ācāryas* had come, namely Viṣṇu Svāmī, Nimbārkācārya, Rāmānujācārya, and Madhvācārya.

There are some subtle differences in the philosophies of these four *ācāryas* regarding *dvaita* and *advaita-vāda*. The philosophies of Viṣṇu Svāmī, Nimbārkācārya and Rāmānujācārya explain *śuddhādvaita* [purified monism]; *dvaitādvaita* [monism and dualism]; and *viśiṣṭādvaita* [specific monism] respectively, whereas the philosophy of Madhvācārya stresses *śuddhā-dvaita-vāda* [purified dualism]. Integrating the philosophies of these four *ācāryas*, Śrīmān Mahāprabhu, took the essence of these four philosophies and introduced *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*. Thus the disciplic succession beginning from Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu is con-

sidered the only bona fide pure Vaiṣṇava *paramparā* in Kali-yuga. Therefore, the bona fide spiritual master should come in the disciplic succession that begins from Śrīmān Mahāprabhu. In other words, he should be a *gaura-priya-jana*, a beloved devotee of Śrīmān Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu.

Definition of an Ācārya

The *Vāyu Purāṇa* gives the following definition of an *ācārya*,

*ācinoti yaḥ sāstrārtham
ācāre sthāpayaty api
svayam ācarate yasmād
ācāryas tena kīrtitaḥ*

“The *ācārya* is one who knows the import of all the Vedic literatures, abides by their rules and regulations, and teaches his disciples to act in the same way.”

To be accepted as an *ācārya* one must understand *Vedānta-sūtra*. As stated by our beloved Gurudeva Śrīla Prabhupāda, “To sit on the *vyāsāsana* one must be conversant with all systems of philosophy.”

Besides Vyāsadeva, there are other sages who are the founders of the six Vedic philosophical systems, namely Gautama, Kaṇāda, Kapila, Patañjali, Jaimini and Aṣṭāvakra. Theism is explained completely in the *Vedānta-sūtra*, whereas in these other systems, practically no mention is given to the ultimate cause of all causes. One who sits on the *vyāsāsana* must be conversant in all these philosophies so that he can establish the theistic conclusion of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* over other schools of thought. The spiritual master must be a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, *śuddha-bhakte laibena guru-rūpe bare*.

The spiritual master’s qualification is that he is *brahma-niṣṭham*, he has given up all other activities and has dedicated his life to working only for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. The spiritual master must be a pure devotee, *mahā-bhāgavata* and *uttama-adhikārī*. Śrīla Prabhupāda has said, “One cannot become a spiritual master unless he is a pure devotee of the Lord.” Such a person is a true *guru*. In the *Padma Purāṇa* it is said:

ṣaṭ-karma-nipuṇo vipro
mantra-tantra-viśāradaḥ
avaiṣṇavo gurur na syād
vaiṣṇavaḥ śva-paco guru

“Even if a *brāhmaṇa* is very learned in the Vedic Scriptures and knows the six occupational duties of a *brāhmaṇa*, he cannot become *guru* unless he is a devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. However, if one is born in the family of dog-eaters but is a pure devotee of the Lord, he can become a spiritual master.” (*Padma Purāṇa*)

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in this regard, “The conclusion is that one cannot become a spiritual master unless he is a pure devotee of the Lord. One should therefore take shelter of such a bona fide spiritual master. Success in life means accepting a spiritual master who knows Kṛṣṇa as the only supreme beloved personality.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.29.51 purport)

The spiritual master must teach by example. One whose actions in life do not correspond with *śāstra-tattva* cannot be accepted as an *ācārya*. In the *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa* it is stated:

*aparīkṣyopadiṣṭam yat
loka-nāśanam tad bhavet*

Without first putting into practice the principles of *sādhana-bhakti* in one’s own life, one should not advise others as it will only create chaos in the society.

Śrīla Prabhupāda has stated, “Only an *uttama-adhikārī* can become the spiritual master. It is better for a disciple to accept an *uttama-adhikārī* than a *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* or *madhyama-adhikārī* as a spiritual master.”

“... One should not become a spiritual master unless he has attained the platform of *uttama-adhikārī*. A neophyte Vaiṣṇava or a Vaiṣṇava situated on the intermediate platform can also accept disciples, but such disciples must be on the same platform, and it should be understood that they cannot advance very well toward the ultimate goal of life under his

insufficient guidance. Therefore a disciple should be careful to accept an *uttama-adhikārī* as a spiritual master ...” (*Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* 5 purport)

Symptoms of the Uttama-Adhikārī

In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is stated,

śāstra-yuktye sunipūṇa, dṛḍha-śraddhā yānra
’uttama-adhikārī’ sei tārāye saṁsāra

“One who is well conversant and an expert in *śāstric* presentation of facts and analysis, having unflinching faith in *śāstric* injunctions, is to be considered as an *uttama-adhikārī*, who can deliver the world”. (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā* 22.65)

śrī-havir uvāca
sarva-bhūteṣu yaḥ paśyed
bhagavad-bhāvam ātmanaḥ
bhūtāni bhagavaty ātmany
eṣa bhāgavatottamaḥ

“Śrī Havir said: The most advanced devotee sees within everything the soul of all souls, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Consequently he sees systematically everything in relation to the Supreme Lord and understands that everything that exists is eternally situated within the Lord.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.2.45)

sthāvara-jaṅgama dekhe, nā dekhe tāra mūrti
sarvatra haya nija iṣṭa-deva-sphūrti

“The *mahā-bhāgavata*, the advanced devotee, certainly sees everything mobile and immobile, but he does not exactly see their forms. Rather, everywhere he immediately sees manifest the form of the Supreme Lord.” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā* 8.274)

Also in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is written:

visṛjati hṛdayam na yasya sākṣād
dharir avasābhīhito 'py aghauḡha-nāśaḡ
praṇaya-rasanayā dhṛtāṅghri-padmaḡ
sa bhavati bhāḡavata-pradhāna uktah

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is so kind to the conditioned souls that if they call upon Him by speaking His holy name, even unintentionally or unwillingly, the Lord is inclined to destroy innumerable sinful reactions in their hearts. Therefore, when a devotee who has taken shelter of the Lord’s lotus feet chants the holy name of Kṛṣṇa with genuine love, the Supreme Personality of Godhead can never give up the heart of such a devotee. One who has thus captured the Supreme Lord within his heart is to be known as *bhāḡavata-pradhāna*, the most exalted devotee of the Lord.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāḡavatam* 11.2.55)

Regarding the symptoms of the *uttama-adhikārī*, our revered spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda has written in his commentary on Srīla Rupa Goswami’s *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* (Nectar of Instruction):

“ ... The *uttama-adhikārī*, or highest devotee, is one who is very advanced in devotional service. An *uttama-adhikārī* is not interested in blaspheming others. His heart is completely clean as he has attained the realised state of unalloyed Kṛṣṇa consciousness. According to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, the association and service of such a *mahā-bhāḡavata*, or perfect Vaiṣṇava, are most desirable ... (*Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* verse 5, purport)

“... Out of many such Vaiṣṇavas, one may be found to be very seriously engaged in the service of the Lord and strictly following all the regulative principles, chanting the prescribed number of rounds on *japa* beads and always thinking of how to expand the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Such a Vaiṣṇava should be accepted as an *uttama-adhikārī*, a highly advanced devotee, and his association should always be sought” (*Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* verse 5, purport)

“When a person realises himself to be *kṛṣṇa-dāsa*, an eternal servitor of Kṛṣṇa, he loses interest in everything but Kṛṣṇa’s service. Always thinking of Kṛṣṇa, devising means by which to spread the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, he understands that his only business is in spreading the

Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world. Such a person is to be recognised as an *uttama-adhikārī*, and his association should be immediately accepted according to the six processes (*dadāti pratigṛhṇāti*, etc.). Indeed, the advanced *uttama-adhikārī* Vaiṣṇava devotee should be accepted as a spiritual master.” (*Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* verse 5, purport.)

“Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has given some practical hints to the effect that an *uttama-adhikārī* Vaiṣṇava can be recognised by his ability to convert many fallen souls to Vaiṣṇavism.” (*Śrī Upadeśāmṛta* verse 5, purport.)

All Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* and *śāstra* have said that both *śikṣā-guru* and *dikṣā-guru* are required. One who teaches how to serve Hari is the *śikṣā-guru*. The spiritual master who initiates according to the regulations of *śāstra* is called the *dikṣā-guru*.

The spiritual master who gives instructions to elevate one in their spiritual life is the *śikṣā-guru*. Both the *śikṣā-guru* and *dikṣā-guru* are equal in status. If one thinks either of them as superior or inferior he commits an offence. The initiating spiritual master, i.e. *dikṣā-guru*, is a personal manifestation of Śrīla Madana-Mohana *vigraha* and the instructing spiritual master, *śikṣā-guru*, is a personal representative of Śrīla Govindadeva *vigraha*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in this respect, “Śrī Govindajī acts exactly like the *śikṣā-guru* by teaching *Bhagavad-gītā* to Arjuna. He is the original preceptor, for he gives instructions and an opportunity to serve Him. The initiating spiritual master or *dikṣā-guru* is a personal manifestation of Śrī Madana-Mohana *vigraha*. Both of these deities are worshipped in Vṛndāvana. *Dikṣā-guru* gives the first requisite *sambandha-jñāna* the other name of which is *divya-jñāna* or *dikṣā*.” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā* 1.47, purport)

In the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* it is stated:

*divyaṁ jñānaṁ yato dadyāt
kuryāt pāpasya saṅkṣayam
tasmāt dikṣeti sā proktā
deśikais tattva-kovidaiḥ*

“*Dīkṣā* is the process by which one can awaken his transcendental knowledge and vanquish all reactions to sinful activities performed in the past. A person who is expert in the study of the revealed scriptures knows this process as *dīkṣā*.” (*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 2.9, quoted from *Viṣṇu-yāmala*)

Since it gives *divya-jñāna* or *sambandha-jñāna* and roots out all the sins and their seeds, therefore, the spiritually advanced, wise and learned saints name this institutional initiation as *dīkṣā*. *Dīkṣā* is not merely the instruction to recite a sacred *mantra*, rather it is the process which enables the disciple to develop *sambandha-jñāna*.

A person may read hundreds of scriptures by himself but if he does not do *hari-bhajan* he will never obtain the ultimate goal of the scriptures, which is love of God. The wisdom that results out of the recitation of the holy *mantras* helps the disciple to properly understand the inner meanings and purports of the *śāstra*. Thus *śikṣā* and *dīkṣā* are complimentary in spiritual life and both are equally important.

Previously it has been stated that the *dīkṣā-guru* is the personal representation of Śrīla Madana-mohana. In other words, he is the one who enables the disciples to establish their relationship with the lotus feet of Śrīla Madana-mohana, because they have forgotten their own real identities, their constitutional position and the Supreme Lord, the conditioned souls are unable to move in the holy *dhāma* of Vṛndāvana. The *dīkṣā-guru*, out of his causeless mercy, fixes the feet of those conditioned souls, disciples, in the holy Vṛndāvana *dhāma*, and thus gives them the opportunity to re-establish their relationship with the Supreme Lord, and to move in the holy abode of Vrajabhūmi.

Also, the *śikṣā-guru* out of his causeless mercy through instructions enables the disciples, the other-wise conditioned souls to effectively travel in the holy land of Vrajabhūmi and gives them the knowledge to eternally and perfectly serve the lotus feet of Śrīla Govindadeva.

Our, revered Gurudeva Śrīla Prabhupāda has stated:

“... the *guru* who first initiates one with the *mahā-mantra* is to be known as the initiator, and the saints who give instructions for progressive advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness are called instructing spiritual masters. The initiating and instructing spiritual masters are equal and identical manifestations of Kṛṣṇa, although they have different dealings.

Their function is to guide the conditioned souls back home, back to Godhead ...” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 1.34, purport)

A devotee can have only one initiating spiritual master but can have unlimited instructing spiritual masters. In this respect Śrīla Prabhupāda further states:

“A devotee must have only one initiating spiritual master because in the scriptures acceptance of more than one is always forbidden. There is no limit, however, to the number of instructing spiritual masters one may accept. Generally a spiritual master who constantly instructs a disciple in spiritual science becomes his initiating spiritual master later on.” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 1.35, purport)

Also, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in his purport on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* states:

“... Actually, Dhruva Mahārāja’s mother, Sunīti, was his *patha-pradarśaka-guru*. *Patha-pradarśaka-guru* means “the *guru*, or the spiritual master, who shows the way.” Such a *guru* is sometimes called *śikṣā-guru*. Although Nārada Muni was his *dikṣā-guru* (initiating spiritual master), Sunīti, his mother, was the first who gave him instruction on how to achieve the favour of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. It is the duty of the *śikṣā-guru* or *dikṣā-guru* to instruct the disciple in the right way, and it depends on the disciple to execute the process. According to *śāstric* injunctions, there is no difference between *śikṣā-guru* and *dikṣā-guru*, and generally the *śikṣā-guru* later on becomes the *dikṣā-guru* ...” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.12.32 Dhruva *vākyaṇa*, purport)

When the Spiritual Master can be Rejected

In this context I may quote the opinion of Śrīmad Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda Mahārāja, about who is not eligible to be *guru*. In his opinion a person who poses to be a *guru* but by nature and character remains as money-minded, desirous of sense enjoyment, attached to women, pretentious, a servant of the ruling chief of the government, attached to family, posing as a religious leader, desirous of name, fame and adoration, and makes a business out of selling *mantram*, should not be accepted as a Vaiṣṇava. Rejecting such a bogus *guru* one should take

shelter at the lotus feet of a devotee. A bona fide *guru* is he who is always fixed at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa and well versed in the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness — *kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā*.

As stated in the *Udyoga-parva* of the *Mahābhārata*:

*guror apy avaliptasya
kāryākāryam ajānataḥ
utpatha-pratipannasya
parityāgo vidhīyate*

“One who is materially very much attached to sense gratification lacks the conscience and consciousness to determine the right duty, and being devoid of pure devotion follows the lower path (other than *bhakti*), such a person should be rejected, even if in name only he is *guru*”. (*Mahābhārata, Udyoga-parva* 179.25, quoted *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 8.20.1 purport)

Similarly Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī in his *Bhakti-sandarbha* has said:

*paramārtho-gurv-āśrayo
vyavahārika-gurv-adi-parityāgenāpi kartavyah*

“Rejecting the so-called worldly minded, useless *guru*, family priest, one should take shelter at the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master who can help one advance towards the ultimate goal of life, *kṛṣṇa-prema*.” (*Bhakti-sandarbha, anuccheda* 210)

On rejecting an unfit spiritual master, our revered Gurudeva Śrīla Prabhupāda has commented:

“Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura remarks that Bali Mahārāja remained silent at a critical point. How could he disobey the instruction of Śukrācārya, his spiritual master? It is the duty of such a sober personality as Bali Mahārāja to abide by the orders of his spiritual master immediately, as his spiritual master had advised. However, Bali Mahārāja also considered that Śukrācārya was no longer to be accepted as a spiritual master, for he had deviated from the duty of a spiritual master.

According to *śāstra*, the duty of the *guru* is to take the disciple back

home, back to Godhead. If he is unable to do so, and instead hinders the disciple in going back to Godhead, he should not be a *guru*. *Gurur na sa syāt* [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.5.18], one should not become a *guru* if he cannot help his disciple to advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The goal of life is to become a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa so that one may be freed from the bondage of material existence—*tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma naiti mam eti so 'rjuna* [*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.9]. The disciple attains this stage by developing Kṛṣṇa consciousness under the guidance and discipline inflicted by the spiritual master.

Now Śukrācārya has advised Bali Mahārāja to deny the promise to Vāmanadeva. Under the circumstances, therefore, Bali Mahārāja thought that there would be no fault if he disobeyed the order of his spiritual master. He deliberated on this point—should he refuse to accept the advice of his spiritual master, or should he independently do everything to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead? He took some time. Therefore it is said, *tūṣṇīm bhūtṅā kṣaṇam rajann uvācāvahito gurum*. After deliberating on this point, he decided that Lord Viṣṇu should be pleased in all circumstances, even at the risk of ignoring the *guru*'s advice to the contrary.

Anyone who is supposed to be a *guru* but who goes against the principle of *viṣṇu-bhakti* cannot be accepted as *guru*. If one has falsely accepted such a *guru*, one should reject him ...” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 8.20.1 purport Bali Mahārāja *upākhyāna*)

Similarly, in his purport to *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* chapter 2, verse 5, Śrīla Prabhupāda has said, “According to scriptural codes, a teacher who engages in an abominable action and has lost the sense of discrimination is fit to be abandoned.”

Concluding Instructions

Now at the concluding part of my brief presentation on *guru-tattva*, I would like to quote these pertinent verses from *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Bhajanāmṛta*, by Śrīla Narahari Sarakāra Thākura:

*sakalā vaiṣṇava eva guravaḥ
tarā dīkṣā-guravaḥ*

*śikṣā-gurava eva viśeṣataḥ santi
etayor eva kim ācaraṇīyam*

“All the pure Vaiṣṇavas are *gurus* because all of them, through instructions and pure character, generate devotional energy in the heart of the living entities. Among them the pure Vaiṣṇava, from whom the proper initiation is taken, is the *dīkṣā-guru*, and from whom the science of devotion is learned is the *śikṣā-guru*. What kind of conduct should be shown towards the *dīkṣā-guru* and *śikṣā-guru*?” (*Śrī Kṛṣṇa Bhajanāmṛta*, verses 42-44)

*ājñā pālanam tu tayor eva kāryam
yadi tāv alpa-balau tathāpy anyatra
mahatām mukhāt, śikṣā-viśeṣam jñātvāpi gurave deyam
tad eva guruṣu paṭhanīyam na tu gurau hela yathā bhajana-putro
‘rthopārjanam kṛtvā pitari dattvā prārthyitvā bhujñita
yadi svayam anīya khādati tataḥ kuputraḥ pāpī syāt*

“It is the duty of the disciple to be obedient to both the *dīkṣā-guru* and *śikṣā-guru*. If the initiating *guru* appears to be lacking in spiritual potency then the disciple may approach a more advanced Vaiṣṇava for spiritual instruction. The disciple should respect the instructing *guru*, but while receiving instruction, he should not neglect his *dīkṣā-guru*; just as a good son dutifully brings his earnings to his father and is allocated a certain amount to spend freely, similarly the good disciple presents all he has learned to his *dīkṣā-guru*, who may then confirm what he has understood and instruct him further on certain points. The bad son who keeps his earnings for himself is considered useless. Similarly, the bad disciple, who does not confirm with his spiritual master the instructions he has received from another, is sinful.” (*Śrī Kṛṣṇa Bhajanāmṛta*, verses 45-49)

*kintu gadi-gurur asamañjasam
karoti tarhi yuktisiddhyaiḥ
siddhāntais tasya rahasi daṇḍaḥ
karaṇīyo na tu tyajyaḥ*

“If the spiritual master commits a wrongful act breaking the Vaiṣṇava regulative principles or gives instructions which do not correspond to

the *śāstric* injunctions, then in that case one should in a solitary place, chastise him for his rectification by quoting from *sādhu*, *guru* and *śāstra*. If by that the *guru* accepts this punishment by pleasure and rectifies himself accordingly, he is not to be abandoned.” (*Śrī Kṛṣṇa Bhajanāmṛta*, verse 59)

*guror apy avalistasya
kāryākāryam ajānataḥ
utpatha-pratipannasya
tasya daṇḍo vidhīyate
anena sarvaṁ suśobhanam iti*

“One should not be fearful because one is confronting or challenging his spiritual master, for it has been prescribed that one must appropriately discipline even a spiritual master, who is inexperienced or ignorant, who has deviated from the Kṛṣṇa conscious path or if he is bewildered by false pride.”

“These statements of the revealed scriptures are applicable at all time under all circumstances. This does fairly good to both spiritual masters as well as to the disciples.” (*Śrī Kṛṣṇa Bhajanāmṛta*, verse 60)

*svabhāva eva vaiṣṇavānām
kṛṣṇāśraya eva mūlam
atra tad-guṇa-gaṇa
yaśo-varṇana vilāsa vinodāḥ
pratyakṣeṇa jīvanam
sarve tadartham eva guru
mukhād vā svabuddhyā vā
vyavaharantīti kramam*

“The natural behaviour of the Vaiṣṇava devotee is to take complete refuge of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The very life of the devotees, Vaiṣṇavas, is singing the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa, describing and expanding the fame of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and discussing the nectar of His transcendental pastimes. One may take guidance through the instructions from the Vaiṣṇavas as all Vaiṣṇavas are considered *gurus* or one may use one’s own intelligence duly considering the relevant

instructions from *sādhu*, *śāstra* and *guru*. In all cases one should continue one's devotional service.” (*Śrī Kṛṣṇa Bhajanāmṛta*, verses 62-63)

*tatra yadi guru-viṣa-druśākārīśvare
bhrāntaḥ kṛṣṇa-yaśo
vilāsa vinodaṁ nāṅgīkarati
svayaṁ vā durabhimānī loka-stavaiḥ
kṛṣṇatvaṁ prāpnoti
tarhi tyājya eva*

“However, if the spiritual master acts enviously towards the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is averse to expanding the fame of Lord Kṛṣṇa or if he personally refuses to accept hearing or chanting about the glorious pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa or if the spiritual master, has become totally bewildered, listening to the false praises of ignorant persons and day by day is more materially contaminated and fallen than the spiritual master is to be abandoned.” (*Śrī Kṛṣṇa Bhajanāmṛta*, verse 64)

*katham eva gurus tyājya iti na
kṛṣṇa-bhāva-lobhāt kṛṣṇa-prāptaye
guror āśrayaṇaṁ kṛtaṁ tad-anantaram
yadi tasminn eva gurau asura-bhāvas tarhi
kim kartavyam
asura gurum tyaktvā śrī-kṛṣṇa-bhaktimantam
gurum anyam bhajet*

“Under those circumstances one should not doubt, ‘How can I give up my spiritual master?’ With a strong desire for achieving spontaneous devotional service and attaining the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a devotee accepts the shelter of a spiritual master as the *via media* to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. However, after accepting the responsibility of serving the spiritual master, if that spiritual master takes on *asuric* qualities or a demoniac mentality then it is one's duty to reject such a demon *asura-guru* and in his place accept a Kṛṣṇa conscious spiritual master and worship him.” (*Śrī Kṛṣṇa Bhajanāmṛta*, verse 65)

*tasya kṛṣṇa balād asārasya
guror balam mardnīyam iti*

*śrī śrī vaiṣṇavānām bhajana
vicārā ya eva tu dṛṣṭa bahavaḥ
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanyāvatāre
guru-nirūpaṇo siddhāntaḥ*

By taking shelter of the strength of a pure Kṛṣṇa conscious spiritual master's devotional service, the ill effects or contamination of the previous demoniac spiritual master is counteracted and destroyed. These activities are recommended by all Vaiṣṇava authorities as the authorised conclusion of the *śāstra*. During the pastimes of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu there have been many practical examples of the above.”
“This concludes the deliberation by *sādhu-śāstra-guru* on the spiritual master and related matters.” (*Śrī Kṛṣṇa Bhajanāmṛta*, verse 66)

With the kind permission of my Godbrothers and Godsisters, I would like to make this hearty appeal to the grand-disciples of our beloved spiritual master Śrīla Prabhupāda. By accepting the process of the gracious and compassionate Prema-Puruṣottama Śrīmān Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, there is no reason for the devotees to feel frustrated or hopeless seeing that their *guru* has deviated from *śāstric* injunctions of guruship and the minimum spiritual standard required of one who has entered the *sannyāsa-āśrama*.

Pray to the Supreme Lord

The disciples of such *gurus* should know for certain that if they pray very sincerely with devotion to the Supreme Lord, who is in their heart, He will certainly respond to the prayer of their hearts by helping them to take shelter of a genuine, bonafide and pure spiritual master (*sad-guru*), who can successfully lead them unto the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

*kṛṣṇa kṛpāte guru mile
guru kṛpāte kṛṣṇa mile*

“One gets a bona fide spiritual master by the grace of Kṛṣṇa and by the grace of *guru* or spiritual master one gets Kṛṣṇa.”

Appendix I

How to Find a Real *Sādhu*?

Questions and answers with Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami Mahārāja
May 1993 at a Home program in Vancouver, Canada.
(Little or no editing has been done)

Devotee: How does one recognise a *sādhu*?

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: Cry before Kṛṣṇa. Only He can help you to find a *sādhu*. You can't recognise a *sādhu*. You have no vision to see the *sādhu*. If you try by yourself to recognise *sādhu*, then you will be cheated. If you are serious, then cry before Him. "O Kṛṣṇa! I am Your servant!"

*ayi nanda-tanuja kiṅkaram
patitam mām viṣame bhavāmbudhau
kṛpayā tava pāda-paṅkaja-
sthita-dhūli-sadr̥ṣam vicintaya*

Mahāprabhu has taught us this. This is crying before Kṛṣṇa. "O *nanda-tanuja*, son of Nanda Mahārāja, I am Your *kiṅkarā*, Your servant. Somehow or other I am fallen here in this dreadful ocean of material existence and I have been drowning from time immemorial, but I want to serve You. How can I serve You? How can I become a speck of dust at Your lotus feet? Please help me." Just cry. Without the help of *sādhu* you cannot approach Kṛṣṇa. You can't utter Kṛṣṇa's name. When you cry like that, Kṛṣṇa is there in your heart as Paramātmā. He will say, "O, now he is crying for Me." Then He makes an arrangement.

This is the proper way. If by your own effort you try to recognise a *sādhu*, you will be cheated. You can't see a *sādhu*. You have no vision at all. You see only all outward, external things. You can't see the real thing. There are many persons who are only outwardly *sādhus*. You will be enchanted by their external activities: "O, he is a great *sādhu*! Yes, he is producing gold!" You will be cheated.

You can't get a real *sādhu* [in this way]. A real *sādhu* is one who is completely absorbed in Kṛṣṇa, day and night, twenty-four hours. He has obtained Kṛṣṇa. He is with Kṛṣṇa. He can give you Kṛṣṇa. You can't see him. You have no vision. Only you can cry for Kṛṣṇa from the core of your heart. This is not an external cry. It is internal. Then Kṛṣṇa, who is

in your heart, will see that you are crying and he will help you. He will make arrangement for you to meet such a *sādhu*. That is the arrangement of Kṛṣṇa. When you meet such a person you will feel some spontaneous attraction from the core of your heart. That attraction is the proof.

Devotee: To meet a *sādhu* is so rare. How can one get the opportunity?

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: It's a fact that it is rare, but if you are really crying for it then Kṛṣṇa can make an arrangement. It is impossible for you, but nothing is impossible for Kṛṣṇa.

Appendix II

One Who has Compassion Can Never Stop Preaching

Questions & Answers from “A Society without Envy”.

A lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.8.34 delivered by

His Divine Grace Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami on 21 February 1995 in Mayapur, India.
(Little or no editing has been done)

Devotee 1: I appreciate very much that you explained to us how Śrīla Prabhupāda’s purpose is to create a society without envy.

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: That I quoted from Śrīla Prabhupāda’s purports from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Devotee 1: We see that amongst devotees that are most advanced, the principle is *tṛṇād api sunīcena taror iva sahiṣṇunā*. It’s not an artificial thing to actually believe...

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: Not artificial, *bābā!* How many days can you act like that before your real *svarūpa* is revealed? How many days can it go on artificially? However for a Vaiṣṇava it is quite natural.

Devotee 1: My question is, Śrīla Prabhupāda has said that even if one does not have the practical vision that Kṛṣṇa is behind, in and connected to everything, understands this theoretically he is a devotee who is rightly situated.

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: Rightly situated? One who sees theoretically is rightly situated?

Devotee 1: But if one has theoretical understanding that he has gotten from the words of the spiritual master, then one is rightly situated. So in your class you said that only the topmost devotee can be compassionate.

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: Yes, only one who sees Kṛṣṇa.

Devotee 1: Does that mean no one else can be compassionate?

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: One may be compassionate to fulfill his own

selfish desires. He may be compassionate to some and not compassionate to others. He has *rāga* and *dveṣa*, liking and disliking. He is not equal to one and all. He cannot be. Unless one sees Kṛṣṇa, how can he be compassionate? He will see that this is Kṛṣṇa's *jīva* suffering. His heart bleeds. He cannot sit tight. He will go out and preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness. And who preaches? *Prāṇa āche yānra, se hetu pracāra* — one who has life preaches! What is life? *Jivanam sarva-bhūteṣu* — Kṛṣṇa says, “I am the life in all living entities.” [Bhagavad-gītā 7.9] One who sees Kṛṣṇa everywhere, who sees Kṛṣṇa's *jīva* suffering because of forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa, because of a lack of Kṛṣṇa consciousness — he has *prāṇa*, life. He goes out and preaches. He is completely surrendered to Kṛṣṇa. Therefore Kṛṣṇa came as Mahāprabhu, as a *bhakta*—a devotee, to teach devotion and how to surrender to Kṛṣṇa. *Śikhāya śaraṇāgati bhakatera prāna, śaraṇāgati* is the life of the devotee who is completely surrendered. By such surrender, Kṛṣṇa accepts him — *kṛṣṇa tāre kore ātmasāra. Prāṇa āche yāra sei hetu pracāra*—he has life, therefore he goes out and preaches. Otherwise, who can preach if there is no life? How can one preach unless one sees Kṛṣṇa, sees Kṛṣṇa's *jīva* suffering? He does not want anyone to suffer. Everyone should be Kṛṣṇa conscious. Therefore, here Nārada Muni says that everyone should act like this. This is the purpose of Śrīla Prabhupāda forming the society for Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Devotee 2: Mahārāja, a *madhyama-adhikārī* has strong faith in the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness but he does not have very extensive knowledge of the scriptures. How can he preach without that?

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: He should get such knowledge by associating with an *uttama-adhikārī*. The *madhyama-adhikārī* is very fortunate, *mahā-bhāgyavān*, because he has strong faith in the words of *sādhu-śāstra-guru* and in Kṛṣṇa. He puts faith in the words of Kṛṣṇa and *sādhus*, those who are *mahājanas*, speak what Kṛṣṇa has said. *Ādau śraddhā* — the first thing is one's faith. That is most important.

Devotee 3: If an *uttama-adhikārī* wants to preach, generally he comes down to the level of *madhyama* and acts like a *madhyama*.

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: Yes. Otherwise he cannot preach, because an *uttama-adhikārī* sees moving and nonmoving living entities, but he never sees the outward forms. He always sees Kṛṣṇa.

*sthāvara-jaṅgama dekhe, nā dekhe tāra mūrti
sarvatra haya nija iṣṭa-deva-sphūrti
(Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya-līlā 8.274)*

He sees only Kṛṣṇa. He says, “O, this living entity is Kṛṣṇa’s devotee, he is engaged in Kṛṣṇa’s service.” He never sees the outward form. His vision is completely different. Therefore he steps down to the *madhyama* platform, in order to speak. How can he see that the *jīva* is suffering from a lack of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, from forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa? Therefore, one who preaches, he steps down to *madhyama-adhikārī*, but he’s *uttama-adhikārī*, otherwise he cannot preach. Those who are *uttama-bhāgavatas*, cannot preach. He sees only Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, one who preaches steps down to the *madhyama-adhikārī*, but he is not a *madhyama* as described here, *śāstra-yukti nāhi jāne*—who doesn’t know *śāstra*. The *uttama-adhikārī* knows *śāstra*. Such an *uttama-adhikārī* who acts as a *madhyama-adhikārī* is not like the general type of *madhyama-adhikārī*, *madhyama-bhakta*. This *madhyama-adhikārī*, he is *uttama-adhikārī*, but he has stepped down. He knows *śāstra* and he is very expert in presenting and quoting *śāstric* evidences, because, *tasmāc chāstram pramāṇam te kāryākārya-vyavasthitau* [*Bhagavad-gītā* 16.24]. This is *śāstra-pramāṇa*. What is to be done, *kārya*, and what is not to be done, *akārya*—how can we decide? Unless he presents *śāstra-pramāṇa*, how can he decide what is to be done and what is not to be done? He is not a general, ordinary *madhyama-adhikārī*. He is *uttama* in *madhyama*.

Devotee 3: One who has *laukika-śraddhā* has to act under the guidance of one who has *śāstrīya-śraddhā*?

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: Yes. You should have a bona fide *vaiṣṇava guru*. You should do *bhajana* under his expert guidance. You should not act whimsically. Unless he has *guru*, how can he preach? *Śravaṇa kīrtana*. Preaching means *kīrtana*. Unless he has heard from a bona fide *guru*, what will he preach? He will say what he has heard. “I have heard this from authorities, from my *guru*.” Preaching is another name for *śravaṇa*, another name for hearing. “What I’ve heard I’m repeating.” Therefore, only one who has heard can preach and do *kīrtana*. Otherwise, who can do *kīrtana*? One who has not heard, what will he say? Who will care to hear all those nasty things?

Devotee 4: Guru Mahārāja, you explained that if you can't see Kṛṣṇa you should preach under the guidance of someone who can.

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: Yes.

Devotee 4: And just simply repeat what you have heard.

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: What you have heard. In that way this will develop.

Devotee 4: Because that is a form of *śravaṇam*.

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: Yes, one should hear, first *śravaṇa*. If you hear *premāñjana* will be smeared, and then you can see. *Śrutekṣita-pathaḥ, śruta* — hear, and then see.

Devotee 3: So much preaching is going on and Prabhupāda's books are there so I am hearing that and I am repeating.

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: Yes, repeat but don't repeat like a parrot. A parrot is also repeating, there is no effect. You should get life first, and then preach. Then it will be most effective.

Devotee 3: So Prabhupāda would say, "you judge a thing by it's result."

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: Yes, by the result

Devotee 3: So if we're repeating what we have heard that means that if somebody asks us a question while we are preaching and we can't answer it that is not ...

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: Then when you can't answer this question then they will never hear again from you, "He cannot answer my question".

Devotee 4: A day when we have no *bhāgavata-kathā* we are starving.

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: That is the food for the hungry soul. If you cannot give food, then how will you get life? *Prāṇa āche yānra, se hetu pracāra* he has *prāṇa*, he has life therefore he preaches. If you cannot get food, how can you get life? You will become skinny, weak, no life.

Devotee 3: Many disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda were preaching under the orders of Śrīla Prabhupāda and, seeing the miseries of the people, were spreading Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings. Now many have stopped

preaching.

Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami: One who has life and sees Kṛṣṇa can never stop preaching. He sees “Kṛṣṇa’s *jīva* is suffering.” He will preach in spite of all obstacles. When Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura became very old, he had to lift up his eyelids to see, but even at that age he would say, “I want to ride on a horse and go out and preach!” One whose heart bleeds, who has compassion, he says such a thing. It is a question of compassion. Are you preaching out of compassion? If one is not preaching out of compassion, he may preach for some days, but then he stops. “I lost all my enthusiasm.” “O, why did you lose it? You lost Kṛṣṇa?”

About the Author

His Divine Grace Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami appeared in this world on the 2nd of September 1929, in the village of Jagannātha Pura, in the state of Orissa, India. Both his mother's and father's families were Vaiṣṇavas for many hundreds of years dating back to the time before Śyāmānanda Prabhu. His divine appearance in this world is by no means the appearance of any ordinary being. He appeared in this world only to fulfill the order of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Tattva-vicāra

He spent his whole life preaching the “Absolute consideration”—*tattva-vicāra* and uncompromisingly spoke out against *apara-vicāra*—the apparent consideration. In his own (unedited) words His Divine Grace said: “...I am stressing on *tattva*, in all my lectures I stress on it—*tattva-vicāra*. Do you know the real *tattva*? You are all after this apparent consideration—not *tattva-vicāra*—that mistake is there. You do not know who you are, who Kṛṣṇa is, who is *guru*, who is a *sādhu*, what is the relationship, like this—*tattvas*—you do not know....”

By Kṛṣṇa's Arrangement

His Divine Grace Gour Govinda Swami is a disciple of the Founder Ācārya of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda (1896-1977). By Kṛṣṇa's arrangement, they met in the transcendental land of Vṛndāvana in 1974. This transcendental meeting has been so nicely described by Gunanarva prabhu in “Encountering The Kṛṣṇalingita-vigrahā” ‘Part One’ which can only be described as a meeting of two Divine Graces. His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda said of his disciple Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami, “...Kṛṣṇa has sent him...”. “...Gour Govinda Swami is a devotee from birth...” And that, “...O, Gour Govinda Swami he is so pure...”

Lord Jagannātha is in Bhubaneswar

Śrīla Prabhupāda had accepted many Western disciples and taught them the glories of Puruṣottama-kṣetra Jagannātha Purī dhāma where Mahāprabhu performed His pastimes. However, when his disciples went to visit Jagannātha Purī they were refused entrance to the famous Lord Jagannātha temple.

Śrīla Prabhupāda said to Gour Govinda Swami, “I will build a temple in Bhubaneswar similar to the Jagannātha temple in Jagannātha Purī because my Western disciples are not allowed there. Lord Jagannātha will come and stay in Bhubaneswar. So all my disciples can go there and have His *darśana*”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, who had been donated some land in Bhubaneswar, instructed Gour Govinda Swami to go there and build the temple.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda went to Bhubaneswar he stayed there for seventeen days and laid the foundation stone of the then temple-to-be on the auspicious occasion of Lord Nityānanda’s appearance day. This was Śrīla Prabhupāda’s last founded project.

In 1991, after sixteen years of determined endeavour under the most extreme austere circumstances, Śrīla Gour Govinda Swami fulfilled the instruction of his most beloved spiritual master with the opening of the magnificent Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Mandir. Lord Jagannātha came as Śrīla Prabhupāda prophesied. This temple now attracts thousands of people to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Ācārya-līlā

His Divine Grace Gour Govinda Swami spent many years travelling the world preaching (*ācārya-līlā*). His travels took him to Europe, America, Canada, Africa, Mauritius, Australia, Asia [Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Bali] and of course he preached vigorously in the sub-continent of India, especially in the state of Orissa, where he constructed the glorious temples of Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnātha and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopāl Jīu, to name but a few.

His Divine Grace Gour Govinda Swami left many audiences spellbound by his amazing presentation of the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in India and the west. He would speak up to four hours at a time on one

subject, leaving his audience mesmerised. Sometimes he would speak on one verse of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* for seven continuous mornings and evenings. There was no question that he could not answer, and listening to His Divine Grace on a regular basis would melt even the hardest heart. His Divine Grace Gour Govinda Swami was an expert in knowledge of the *śāstras* and he was able to dispell all the doubts of those who came to him for shelter, spiritual guidance and understanding. He would place great importance on chanting the holy name offencelessly, encouraging and inspiring all to achieve the pure state of the chanting of *prema-nāma*, *prema-nāma-saṅkīrtana*. He would always say, “chant without offence, chant the pure name, get *kṛṣṇa-prema* and get Kṛṣṇa in this very life!”

One of the main aspects of His Divine Grace’s preaching was to reveal the inner most secrets of the Purī-Bhubaneswar Dhāma, of Lord Jagannātha and the reason why Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu stayed in Purī. He gave the most subtle and lucid understanding of the Lord’s pastimes in Jagannātha Purī.

Storehouse of Knowledge

His Divine Grace Gour Govinda Swami left this world prematurely (of his own volition) on February 9th 1996, in Māyāpura Dhāma, on the holy appearance day of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhu-pāda. He left behind a veritable storehouse of knowledge of the absolute truth. Many of his lectures and talks were recorded on audio tape and video, and are now available on CD, DVD, MP3 and in book form.

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(Newsletter for the disciples and followers of His Divine Grace)

Mathura meets Vrindavan

My Revered Spiritual Master

Gopāl-Jiu
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