

Sri Sri Sarasvati Samlapa (A Discourse With Sarasvati Thakura)



(While Om Visnupada Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Prabhupada was residing in Lucknow at 19, Station Road on 7th November 1929, the retired District Sessions Judge of Una, Raya Bahadur Basu directly came to meet Srila Prabhupada. Seeing how Srila Prabhupada was exclusively devoted to Sri Gaurasundara, Raya Bahadur Mahodaya told that his friend Mr. R. (the superintendent engineer) was a fully dedicated devotee of Mahaprabhu. When Mr. R's only daughter became extremely ill, R. began to chant incessantly day and night, "Gaura! Gaura!" As his daughter's condition further deteriorated, his chanting also increased. R. Babu started to develop more affinity towards making more elaborate offerings and the frequency of his visits to his Gurudeva's house increased – so much so that everyone was astounded at his amazing guru-bhakti. Yet, in spite of performing such devotion his only daughter died. On the day that she died, from early in the morning till about nine o'clock at night, his daughter suffered acute breathing problems until she finally gave up her life. Some days later, Raya Bahadur Basu went to meet his friend R. Babu. Raya Bahadur Basu Mahasaya saw that R.'s love and steadfast devotion for Mahaprabhu and his faithful devotion had completely gone. Mr. R. told Raya Bahadur, "There is no 'Mahaprabhu'! If Bhagavan truly exists, he would never cause His devotee to suffer so much! If He was really antaryami and actually resided in the heart of His devotee, then He would surely know of their anguish and He would have saved my daughter! His greatness as Bhagavan would have been preached much more in this world! The faith and devotion of Bhagavan's devotees would have soared millions of times! The devotees of Bhagavan would have preached about His glories and brought others to worship Him! Faith and devotion to Mahaprabhu in all members of the family would have increased! And, regaining her life once more, the girl would have more love and attraction towards Bhagavan. Therefore due to their superstitious nature, people believe in the existence of God and recite the Name of Mahaprabhu. Thus it is much more practical and profitable to do any work pertaining to this world than simply chanting, "Gaura, Gaura!")

In answer to these words, Srila Prabhupada spoke thus –

"That Mahaprabhu that we have taken shelter of is not the Mahaprabhu of R. Babu, whom he considers to be like his hired gardener. We have taken shelter of the Mahaprabhu of Srivasa Pandita. That Mahaprabhu, who was so impressed with the love of Srivasa, said–

*putra-soka na janila ye mora preme
hena saba sanga muni cadiba kemane*

"How could I ever give up the association of one who did not lament for his son due to his love for Me?"
(*Caitanya-bhagavata, Madhya-khanda.25.52*)

We worship the Mahaprabhu of that Srivasa Pandita who said –

*kalarava suni' yadi prabhu bahya paya
tabe aji ganga pravesimu sarvathaya*

"If the Lord regains his external consciousness by hearing your commotion, I will drown myself in the Ganga." (*Caitanya-bhagavata, Madhya-khanda.25.36*)

We worship Sri Rupa's Mahaprabhu. It is Sri Rupa who says –

*viracaya mayi dandam dina-bandho dayam va
gatir iha na bhavattah kachid anya mamasti
nipatatu shata-kotir nirmalam va navambhas
tad api kila payodah stuyate catakena*

"O friend of the poor, do what You like with me, give me either mercy or punishment, but in this world I have none to look to except for You, just as the *cataka* bird always prays for the cloud, regardless of whether it brings rains or hurls a thunderbolt." (*Stavamala*)

We worship that Mahaprabhu who manifested the *lila* of being the *jagad-guru* in order to instruct us –

*aslisya va pada-ratam pinastu mam
adarsanan marma-hatam karotu va
yatha tatha va vidadhatu lampato
mat-prana-nathas tu sa eva naparah*

"Krsna may embrace me in love or trample me under His feet. He may break my heart by hiding Himself from me. Let that debauchee do whatever He likes, but He will always be the only Lord of my life."
(*Siksastakam 8*)

*na gani apana-duhkha, sabe vanchi tanra sukha
tanra sukha – amara tatparya
more yadi diya duhkha, tanra haila maha-sukha
sei duhkha – mora sukha-varya*

"I do not mind My personal distress. I only wish for the happiness of Krsna, for His happiness is the goal of My life. However, if He feels great happiness in giving Me distress, that distress is the best of My happiness." (*Caitanya-caritamrta, Antya-lila 20.52*)

In order to perform *bhajana* of this Mahaprabhu, if I need to reject the detrimental things of this world millions of times, I am ready to do that wholeheartedly with all my senses, I am prepared for that. Taking shelter of His feet I accept those misfortunes with the understanding that He is protecting me and dragging me towards His feet – He is supremely merciful to expose my duplicity. He is not allowing me to add more fuel to my material senses. He is making me understand this – that there is no eternal object in this world to take shelter of other than His feet. We are bearing the heavy burden of our karmic reactions upon our shoulders due to our own previous activities. If I am able to tolerate these with a little endeavour, taking shelter at the lotus feet of the eternal Lord, then only will I attain some real auspiciousness.

If we belong to the school of material enjoyment, then when some obstacle hinders our enjoyment, we become angry. The school of renunciation says we should give up material enjoyment. Sri Gauranga's devotees do not prescribe to any sort of enjoyment, nor do they prescribe to any sort of renunciation. They say, "It should be towards real objects – let the natural propensity of the *jivatma* be focused upon true

transcendental knowledge of the non-dual Absolute.” Even if one accepts the three types of sufferings that continuously immerse us, it is of no advantage, and if one desires to artificially renounce, he cannot. Only one who offers his *namaskara* to Bhagavan’s feet with his mind, body and words is the rightful heir to liberation. Whatever be the inconveniences one may have to face, he accepts them wholeheartedly as the Bhagavan’s *krpa-avatara* (the descent of His mercy). It is not possible to estimate all the auspiciousness that Sri Caitanyadeva has bestowed upon all of us. We are on the path of pleasure (*preya*), and in order to open our eyes He has meticulously arranged various problems amongst the objects of our material pleasure. He gave us poor health and, step-by-step, He also sent various dangers and gave a specific temporary nature to everything of this world in order that we would eventually tread the path of the highest benefit.

I remember one incident that happened many days before. Mr. Datta, a high court advocate, seeing his son lying on his deathbed, one day told to me, “You are a *sadhu*. Kindly restore my son's life!” I told him, “I am not the master of bestowing life. But I can try to change the way that you think.” This person was a staunch follower of Comte. He said, “If your God really exists, then you should make Him cure my son.” I told him frankly, “I will not make a campaign against the desire of Bhagavan. I cannot support the philosophy of the *Saktas*. Sri Gaurasundara is most merciful, and this is shown by His decorating this world with hundred and hundreds of problems – that is His mercy!”

*sri caitanya-handrera daya karaha vicara
vicara karila cinte pare camatkara*

"If you consider the mercy of Sri Caitanya-candra, by meditating on such deliberations you will find it most amazing." (*Caitanya-caritamrta, Adi-lila, 8.15*)

It is not the duty of the *jiva* to live in this world in forgetfulness of Bhagavan. This place is not our eternal residence. In order to remind us of this, at every moment, He creates problems in our pursuit of material happiness. Sri Kulashekhara says –

*nastha dharme na vasu-nichaye naiva kamopabhoge
yad bhavyam tad bhavatu bhagavan purva-karmanurupam
etat prarthyam mama bahu matam janma-janmantare 'pi
tvat-padambhoruha-yuga-gata niscalā bhaktir astu*

"O my Lord! I have no attachment for religiosity, or for accumulating wealth, or for enjoying sense gratification. Let these come as they inevitably must, in accordance with my past deeds. But I do pray for this most cherished boon: birth after birth, let me render unflinching devotional service unto your two lotus feet." (*Mukunda-Mala Stotram 5*)

*naham vande pada-kamalayor dvandvam advandva-hetoh
kumbhi-pakam gurum api hare narakam napanetum
ramya-rama-mrdu-tanu-lata-nandane nabhirantum
bhava bhava hrdaya-bhavane bhavayeyam bhavantam*

"O Lord Hari, it is not to be saved from the dualities of material existence or the grim tribulations of the Kumbhipaka hell that I pray to your lotus feet. Nor is my purpose to enjoy the soft-skinned beautiful women who reside in the gardens of heaven. I pray to Your lotus feet only so that I may remember You alone in the core of my heart, birth after birth." (*Mukunda-Mala Stotram 4*)

A similar *sloka* has been recited by Sri Gaurasundara –

*na dhanam na janam na sundarim kavitam va jagadisa kamaye
mama janmani janmanisvare bhavatad bhaktir ahaituki tvayi*

"O Lord, I have no desires to accumulate wealth, followers, beautiful women, or salvation. My only prayer is for Your causeless devotional service, birth after birth." (*Siksastakam 4*)

I will not fall into deception. Birth after birth I have sank into duplicity, I will not do so again. I will not involve you in the karmic reactions of my previous birth; that is because I have heard the instructions of the *Srimad Bhagavata* at the lotus feet of Sri Guru –

*dharmah projjhita-kaitavo 'tra paramo nirmatsaranam satam
vedyam vastavam atra vastu sivadam tapa-trayonmulanam
srimad-bhagavate maha-muni-krte kim va parair isvarah
sadyo hrady avarudhyate 'tra krtibhih susrusubhis tat-ksanat*

"In this *Bhagavata Purana*, where fraudulent religiosity and all other mundane goals of humankind have been utterly forsaken, the supreme spiritual duty (*parama-dharma*) has been expounded. That *parama-dharma* is pure *bhakti-yoga*, exemplified by those saints who are absolutely free from envy and full of compassion for all living beings. The Supreme Truth within uproots the three forms of misery and grants the highest form of bliss. When those with ample spiritual merit desire to listen to the message of this beautiful *Bhagavatam*, which was authored by Maha-muni Sri Narayana Himself, then the Supreme Lord Sri Hari is immediately and permanently captured within their hearts. What is the need of any other message?" (*Bhag. 1.1.2*)

My Sri Gurudeva never accepted service from other people. When someone came to serve him he would curse that fourteen generations of that person's family would be destroyed. He would tell them, "You want me to become your servant in your next life. You will make me your servant to repay your debt. But I will only become the servant of those who are devotees of Krsna and no one else. Birth after birth I do not wish to be the servant of anyone apart from Sri Radha Thakurani, because She does the maximum service to Krsna." He used to tell us, "Aspire only for things that are spiritual. You do not need to do anything else." He could not write anything and was not a scholar of *anusvara* or *visarga*. Tears would pour from both his eyes and he would cry out loudly, "By taking the Names of Gaura-Nityananda I pray that we should not bring disgrace to their Names. Let us not desire such useless trash as *dharma*, *artha*, *kama* and *moksha* from Gaura-Nitai. Many times he would ask us, "Please tell me what is written in *Sri Caitanya-caritamrita* and *Srimad Bhagavata*. I do not understand Sanskrit. I do not even know how to write." We would reply, "What can we say? In your very character we are directly able to see whatever is written in *Sri Caitanya-caritamrita* and *Srimad Bhagavata*?"

R. Babu took 'shelter' of Mahaprabhu as if to enrich Mahaprabhu. It is as if Mahaprabhu would be delivered by *his* mercy. He had complete attachment to matter, but not to Sri Caitanya. Mahaprabhu revealed his duplicity. He did not examine the matter from the very beginning and could not come to the right conclusion anywhere. Not even for a moment did he deliberate upon the true form of Mahaprabhu. He considered the lotus feet of Sri Gauranga as nature's product, or as some type of special medicine. To him, the material object which is medicine that will cure his daughter's disease, is 'Mahaprabhu'. The divine lotus feet of Gaura-Nitai remove all *anarthas* and award *krsna-prema*. They can give us Sri Radha-Krsna and They are non-different from Their Names. That Gaura-Nitai are not like some *pir-fakir* (magicians) or some good luck charm of this world. If he had actually received instructions from the lotus feet of a guru who was a genuine devotee of Gaura, then the Holy Name Himself would have shown mercy to him and his heart would have been elevated.

vaikuntha-nama-grahanam asesagha haram vidhuh

"One who chants the Name of the Lord is liberated from unlimited sins." (*Bhag. 6.2.14*)

However, taking the Name with a mood of materialism produces unlimited sins. He was committing *namaparadha*, and due to this he faced misfortune. The result of committing *namaparadha* is attaining *dharma*, *artha* and *kama* or it may also be *adharma*, *anartha* and the non-attainment of *kama*. He faced the result of non-attainment of his desire. When he genuinely and sincerely accepts shelter at the lotus feet of Sri Gauranga, then only will his *namaparadha* be nullified. Then *gaura-nama* will melt his heart and tears will pour from his eyes, then he will understand the words of *jagad-guru* Sridhara Svamipada –
pra-sabdena mokshabhisandhirapi nirantarah

"The word *pra* refers to the immediate rejection of the desire for liberation."

Jnani means a salvationist, or *cinmatravadi*, and *karmi* means elevationist, or *jadavadi*. Both are misguided. The *Srimad Bhagavata* has uprooted all types of deception. If one takes shelter of that Mahaprabhu, who continuously stated that the *Srimad Bhagavata* was the crest-jewel of *pramanas*, then no kind of cheating or detrimental desire can remain.

Sreyah (the highest benefit) tastes bitter like *haritaki*, and *preya* (temporary pleasure) tastes sweet. If a patient requests the doctor to make arrangements for him to consume lots of jaggery instead of *haritaki*, then the patient's taking shelter of the doctor is simply a show. Similarly, it is the road to inauspiciousness if, in the name of taking shelter of Bhagavan, we endeavor to increase our disease by using Bhagavan.

If we remain apathetic to the teachings of Sri Caitanya, then we will enthrone a Satan as a devotee of Caitanya or even as Caitanya Himself. When we do endeavor for material benefits, then our false *gaura-bhajana* will also retire! We worship that Mahaprabhu who was propitiated by Sri Rupa in the following mood –

namo maha-vadanyaya krsna-prema-pradayate
krsnaya krsna-caitanya namne gaura-tvise namah

"O most munificent incarnation! You are Krsna Himself appearing as Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu. You have assumed the golden color of Srimati Radharani, and You are widely distributing pure love of Krsna. We offer our respectful obeisances unto You." (*Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya-lila* 19.53)

We worship that Mahaprabhu who was prayed to by Srila Svarupa-damodara Goswami –

heloddhunita-khedaya visadaya pronmilad-amodaya
samyac-castra-vivadaya rasa-daya cittarpitonmadaya
sasvad-bhakti-vinodaya sa-madaya madhurya-maryadaya
sri-caitanya daya-nidhe tava daya bhuyad-amandodaya

"O ocean of mercy, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu! Let there be an awakening of Your auspicious mercy, which easily drives away all kinds of material lamentation. By Your mercy, everything is made pure and blissful. It awakens transcendental bliss and covers all gross material pleasures. By Your auspicious mercy, quarrels and disagreements arising among different scriptures are vanquished. Your auspicious mercy causes the heart to jubilate by pouring forth transcendental mellows. Your mercy always stimulates devotional service, which is full of joy. You are always glorifying the conjugal love of God. May transcendental bliss be awakened within my heart by Your causeless mercy." (*Caitanya-candrodaya-nataka* 8.10)

That Mahaprabhu that was prayed to by Srila Prabodhananda Sarasvati Prabhu –

kaivalyam narakayate tridasa-purakasa-puspayate
durdantendriya-kala-sarpa-patali protkhata-damstrayate
visvam purna-sukhayate vidhi-mahendradis ca kitayate
yat karunya kataksa vaibhavavatam tam gauram eva stumah

"For those who have attained the merciful sidelong glance of Lord Caitanya, impersonal liberation becomes as palatable as going to hell, the heavenly cities of the demigods become as enticing as flowers imagined to be floating in the sky, the poisonous fangs of the untameable black snakes of the senses are broken, the whole world becomes full of joy, and Brahma, Indra, and all the other great demigods become as insignificant as tiny insects. Let us glorify that golden-complexioned Lord Caitanya." (*Caitanya-candramrta* 5)

*stri-putradi-katham jahur vivasayinah sastra-pravadam budha
yogindra vijahur marun-niyama-ja-klesam tapas tapasah
jnanabhaya-vidhim jahus ca yatayas caitanya-candre param
aviskurvati bhakti-yoga-padavim naivanya asid rasah*

"Now that the moon of Sri Caitanya-candra has revealed the path of pure devotional service, the materialists have given up talking about their wives, children, and material affairs, the scholars have given up debating the scriptures, the *yogis* have given up the trouble to control the breath, the ascetics have given up their austerity, and the impersonalists have given up impersonalism. Now there is only the sweetness of pure devotional service. Now nothing else is sweet. (*Caitanya-candramrta* 113)

Even after the teachings of Sri Caitanya are preached, those that still do not delineate on those teachings are most unfortunate. Sri Gaurasundara is not the object of our enjoyment. In spite of remaining amongst millions and millions of dangers and disasters, one must hear the words pertaining to Sri Gaurasundara, perform *kirtana* about Him, and preach about Him. All thoughts existing in this world, which existed in the past and will exist in the future, are all blind and bankrupt. We will be able to realize it only when we take shelter of the lotus feet of Sri Gaurasundara without any deceit.

Mr.R. could not understand that Gaurasundara is fundamentally spiritual in nature, and only exhibited false *bhakti* through lip-service – he took shelter of Satan.

*anarpita-carim cirat karunayavatirnah kalau
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasam sva-bhakti-sriyam
harih purata-sundara-dyuti-kadamba-sandipitah
sada hrdaya-kandare sphuratu vah saci-nandanah*

"May that Lord who is known as the son of Srimati Saci-devi be transcendently situated in the innermost chambers of your heart. Resplendent with the radiance of molten gold, He has appeared in the Age of Kali by His causeless mercy to bestow what no incarnation ever offered before: the most sublime and radiant spiritual knowledge of the mellow taste of His service." (*Caitanya-caritamrta, Adi-lila* 1.4)

Gaurasundara came to the world to propagate *unnata-ujjvala-rasa*, the highest thing that has never been given before – and I will pray for stool, urine, bones, flesh, blood and pus! Those that consider Mahaprabhu to be Satan will pray to him for all these things.

*radha krsna-pranaya-vikrtir hladini saktir asmad
ekatmanav api bhuvu pura deha-bhedam gatau tau
caitanyakhyam prakatam adhuna tad-dvayam caikyam aptam
radha-bhava-dyuti-sualitam naumi krsna-svarupam*

"The loving affairs of Sri Radha and Krsna are transcendental manifestations of the Lord's internal pleasure-giving potency. Although Radha and Krsna are one in Their identity, They separated Themselves eternally. Now these two transcendental identities have again united, in the form of Sri Krsna Caitanya. I bow down to Him, who has manifested Himself with the sentiment and complexion of Srimati Radharani although He is Krsna Himself." (*Caitanya-caritamrta, Adi-lila* 1.5)

Srimati Vrsabhanu-nandini is Krsna's counter-whole, not His counter-part. Srimati Radhika's external bodily effulgence has completely surrounded the beauty of Syama; it has also covered His mind. Such is the intensity of Their embrace. They Both become inseparable. Sri Gaurasundara is not simply Radhika, nor is He simply Krsna – He is the intense embrace of Sri Radha and Sri Krsna,

*prasarita-maha-prema piyusa-rasa-sagare
caitanya-candre prakate yo dino dina eva sah*

"Now that Sri Caitanya-candra – the unlimitedly expansive ocean of the joy of divine love supreme – has made His gracious advent, anyone who remains destitute is surely a genuine pauper." (*Caitanya-candramrta* 36)

Ray Bahadur Basu: Please give me one or two practical suggestions. There are many theoretical statements. How can one be protected from *namaparadha*?

Prabhupada: Kindly study *Harinama-cintamani*.

Ray Bahadur: But Mahaprabhu said that one should give the Holy Name even to a *candala*.

Prabhupada: Only one who is a *namacarya* can give the Name. Only a person who is free from *namaparadha* and *namabhasa*, by the mercy of Mahaprabhu, can give the Holy Name to others.

Ray Bahadur: Then what is the significance of the words, *helaya sraddhaya va* (the Holy Name may be chanted with faith or inattention)?

Prabhupada: It does not say that *namaparadha* should be chanted. Will *namaparadha* bestow auspiciousness on us?

Ray Bahadur: Mahaprabhu does not say that there is something called '*namaparadha*'.

Prabhupada: You should study the *Sri Caitanya-caritamrta* and the *Sandarbhas* – the topic of *namaparadha* is mentioned throughout. *Niraparadhe nama laile paya prema-dhana* ('by chanting the Holy Name without any offence, one attains the treasure of *prema*'). One cannot receive the Holy Name from a pseudo-guru who is a *nama-aparadhi*. He must accept the shelter of a pure *namacarya*. Such a guru will bestow auspiciousness on the disciple. He will not think that he has achieved success by lording over his disciple. He will not be able to actually chant the Names of Gaura-Nityananda while simultaneously taking shelter of the path of material sense pleasure. Those sections that are enjoyers of Gaura or inimical towards Gaura, are offenders to the Holy Name, thus we should be cautious in dealing with them.

Ray Bahadur: If we just follow all these strict rules, will that be enough to properly chant the Holy Name?

Prabhupada: Imitation chanting will not produce the Holy Name. The true Name will manifest Himself. He Himself will grant His mercy. Those that do not consider such things will commit *aparadha*. Chanting the Holy Name even once can produce auspiciousness.

Ray Bahadur: How can I purely chant that Name at least once?

Prabhupada: *Adau guru-padasraya* ('first take shelter at the feet of a genuine guru').

Ray Bahadur: The guru in human shape is very much limited. Even if I am able to accept someone as guru, what about those who are residing in Africa, America or from New Zealand or *adhivasis* (aborigines) – how will they be able to get such a *namacharya*?

Prabhupada: They will also receive a guru according to their *adhikara*, just as they received Christ. When their good fortune arises, and they sincerely search for a genuine guru (*sad-guru*), then after some births they will eventually receive one.

For the time being, stop and lend your submissive and regardful ear. I say to everyone in this world – leaving aside all your talks, kindly listen a little to the words descending from above. I always favour transcendental sound, I am not in favour of *aparadha*. I am not prepared to commit *aparadha*, neither am I prepared to make others commit *aparadha*. If I continue to carry in my head all the rubbish things that I have collected from here, then I cannot progress even an inch on the path towards Vraja. Those who are famous as the 'giant-intellecets' of this world should refrain from speaking anything for some time and submit to the aural reception of transcendental sound. Empiricism must never be the medium. *Bhakti* is not a suggestive thing. It is not guesswork. It is a positive and clear understanding of reality. *Bhakti* is understood as submission to the Personal Godhead.

*vismrtih krsna-padaravindayoh
ksinoty abhadrani ca sam tanoti
sattvasya-suddhim paramatma-bhaktim
jnanam ca vijnana-viraga-yuktam*

"For one who remembers the lotus feet of Krsna, all inauspiciousness soon disappears, and one's good fortune expands. In other words, one becomes free from all material contamination, one attains liberation from repeated birth and death, and one's real spiritual life begins. As one's heart becomes gradually purified, one's devotion for the Lord within the heart awakens, and one realizes the *Paramatma*. Thus one gradually develops knowledge, realization and renunciation." (*Bhag.* 12.12.55)

Thakura Bilvamangala has said –

*bhaktis tvayi sthiratara bhagavan yadi syad
daivena nah phalati divya kisora murtih
muktih svayam mukulitanjali sevate'sman
dharmartha-kama-gatayah samaya-pratikhsah*

"O my Lord, if one engages in Your pure devotional service with determination, You become visible in Your original transcendental youthful form as the Supreme Lord. As far as liberation is concerned, she stands before the devotee with folded hands waiting to render service. Religion, economic development and sense gratification are all automatically attained without separate endeavor." (*Krsna-karnamrta* 107)

At the beginning there was no need for us to form our mission. Only because people have gone the wrong way are we using the mission to render service to Bhagavan – to deliver human society from the wrong direction. In this manner even if we attain supremacy over this world crores of times, still we would discard it like stool and urine. May the human race be delivered from their wrong direction and be established at the lotus feet of Gaurasundara, who is the root of all auspiciousness. Our little endeavour is only for this purpose. If anyone deviates even minutely from the teachings of Sri Caitanya-deva, whether he be Brahma, Siva, Vayu, Varuna, a great religious preacher or a religious leader, he will encounter great difficulties.

First there is *sraddha* (faith), then *rati* (attachment) Then after that comes *bhakti*. When *sadhana* has not begun, then *sraddha* is required. When *sadhana* ends, then comes the stage of *rati*. When one is established in *sadhya* (the goal of one's practice) then comes *bhakti*, or *prema*. Thakura Bhaktivinoda has said:

*krpa kara vaisnava thakura
sambandha janiya bhajite bhajite
abhimana hau dura*

"Oh Vaisnava Thakura, kindly bestow your mercy. Then only my false ego will be eradicated and I will be able to constantly worship the Lord, being aware of my relationship with Him." (*Kalyana-kalpataru* 3.2.1)

There is no way to gain auspiciousness other than serving one who performs real service to Visnu. At this present time, we are engaged in a tie of love between finite things. We feel a necessity for things that actually have no real necessity for us.

*yasyatma-buddhih kunape tri-dhatuke
sva-dhih kalatradisu bhauma ijya-dhih
yat-tirtha-buddhih salile na karhicij
janeshv abhijnesu sa eva go-kharah*

"One who identifies his self as the inert body composed of mucus, bile and air, who assumes his wife and family are permanently his own, who thinks an earthen image or the land of his birth is worshipable, or who sees a place of pilgrimage as merely the water there, but who never identifies himself with, feels kinship with, worships or even visits those who are wise in spiritual truth — such a person is no better than a cow or an ass." (*Bhag.* 10.84.13)

Those that pull on their beads in the same way that one pulls on the reigns of an animal, who make a noise, yet do not see Krsna and Gaurasundara directly in every utterance they make, are not fit to be associated by us. The acme of all scholarship is *krsna-sambandha* (establishing a relationship with Sri Krsna).

*varam huta-vaha-jvala panjarantar-vyavasthitih
na sauri-cinta-vimukhajana-samvasa-vaisamam*

"It is preferable to live in an iron cage in the midst of a blazing fire, than to associate with those who are averse to meditating upon Sauri (Krsna), for such association is a great calamity." (*Katyayana-samhita*)

If my real intention is to serve Bhagavan, then I will look at the entire world as ingredients for His service. Then a painting by Raphael will not be able to captivate me. I will understand that the songs of Candidasa and Vidyapati should not be heard when one still has *anarthas*. If you go to Navadvipa, you will see that — just like the tales of the heroes and heroines of Vidya-sundara (a romantic poet of medieval Bengal), there are those who endeavour to enjoy the songs and poetry of Candidasa and Vidyapati. Although Srinivasa Acarya Prabhu started a musical tradition, it was not meant for nourishing and filling the burning hunger of people's bellies, nor was it meant for the sense-enjoyment of people inflicted with *anarthas*. Those who do not understand this are struck down by the arrows of lust, like a deer who becomes charmed by the song of a hunter. As a result of this, such people become degraded to the level of animals and ghouls and sink into hell. They will reside in the garden of hell — with such intelligence they are madly engrossed in sense-enjoyment and do not listen to *sadhus*. Srinivasa Acarya Prabhu and Sri Vakresvara Pandita have created this method in order to deceive all those animals in human form.

I cannot understand how learned people have so much belief in such bogus things nowadays. Once, Ram Chandra Dutta's father, Nrsingha Prasad Dutta, took Srimad Bhaktivinoda Thakura to Madhu Ray Lane. Nrsingha Prasad Datta came to Srimad Bhaktivinoda Thakura and said, "Please understand, we only know Mahaprabhu. But my son, Ram Chandra, has changed after associating with a Mayavadi! They are declaring Ramakrsna, an ordinary human being, as a new *avatara*, a new Mahaprabhu! Kindly come to my house once and examine my son's guru? Is he a *sadhu* or a sham? Whatever you say I will believe."

Sri Bhaktivinoda Thakura was a very intimate friend of Nrsingha Prasad Datta. The day when Ramakrsna was supposed to come to his house, Nrsingha Prasad Datta brought Srimad Bhaktivinoda Thakura to his house with great care and hospitality. Nrsingha Prasad Datta said to Ramakrsna, "One of my friends, who is a great Vaisnava has come. Mahaprabhu is his very life." At that time the Visva-Vaisnava Sabha had been established. In that assembly, Srimad Bhaktivinoda Thakura had been very elaborately reading and explaining the *Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu*. Seeing Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Ramakrsna started singing, *Ya're dekhile nayana jhure, ta'ra du bhai eseche re* ("The two brothers have come, seeing whom the eyes become

fully satisfied') and fell unconscious. Srimad Bhaktivinoda Thakura was in another room. Ramakrsna was in that condition, lying on the verandah in front of that very room. After a while, some *rasagullas* were brought in front of Ramakrsna who ate them and other people ate his remnants. No one had the courage to offer any to Srimad Bhaktivinoda Thakura. A little later, some impure foodstuffs were brought. At first Ramakrsna protested, but after a while he accepted it. All these activities were observed by Srimad Bhaktivinoda Thakura. After returning from there, he scrupulously compared all these symptoms with the proper standards authorised in *Srimad Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu*. Referring to the words of *Sri Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu* he pointed out the deception and cheating of the impersonalist section, and the section that advocates non-discrimination and equality between spirit and matter.

The reflection (*pratibimba*) and the shadow of real *rati* (*caya-ratyabhasa*) are not the symptoms of *prema*. For those who have taken impersonalism as their highest ideal, their imitation of devotional practices is a mere deception. Those schools of thought that encourage material desires promote the position of such insignificant men in the minds of the general populace. This is known as 'apotheosis' (ascribing divinity to a mortal). The devotees of Gaura are not inclined to apotheosis. They do not worship human beings nor are they *Kartabhajas* (one of the 13 *apa-sampradayas* that worship their guru as Krsna). They are the eternal servitors of the *visaya-vigraha* (Krsna) who is embraced by the *asraya-vigraha* (Radharani). This is the specialty of the teachings of *gaura-bhajana*.