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**Devotee:** Guru Mahārāja. In every activity there's a science, so I wanted to understand the science of faith.

**Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja:** What is the science of faith?

**Devotee:** Yes.

**Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja:** The underlying principle of faith is this.

*'śraddhā' - sabde - viśvāsa kahe sudṛḍha niścaya  
kṛṣṇe bhakti kaile sarva-karma kṛta haya*

["By rendering transcendental loving service to Kṛṣṇa, one automatically performs all subsidiary activities. This confident, firm faith, favourable to the discharge of devotional service, is called *śraddhā*."] ]

[*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, 22.62*]

If I do my duty to the centre, everything is done, that is faith.

*yasmin vijñāte sarvam evam vijñātam bhavati  
yasmin prāpte sarvam idam prāptam bhavati*

["Enquire into that upon knowing which, nothing further remains to be known. Try to achieve that upon gaining which, nothing further remains to be gained."] [*Upaniṣads*]

Faith covers the whole by accepting one. Apparently by accepting a part, he can cover the whole; that is peculiar there. If I can capture one the whole can be captured. If I love one the whole is loved. If I know one the whole is known. If anyone has got such sort of conception then that is the seed of faith and he approaches on that path of faith. By approaching the centre, all the branches all that sprung from Him approached. Pouring water into the root the whole tree is fed. Putting food into the stomach the whole body can be fed. Something like that. If one gets the key he gets the almirah, the iron chest, something like that. Such sort of faith, confidence, start, that is *śraddhā*, that is faith. And he approaches in that way, otherwise how being a part I can claim the whole? Our inner necessity to have the whole, but how it is possible? But it is possible only through the heart.

Once in Bombay our Guru Mahārāja gave an example to this. That a poor girl she's got nothing, but if she's married to a prince who has got enough, then through that tie of affection she may think that all the properties of the prince belong to her. Something like that. Kṛṣṇa has everything under His control. We have nothing. But if we can establish a connection with Kṛṣṇa through affection, affectionate connection we can establish with Him, then we can have everything thereby through Him.

This is the idea, to get whole. By getting one is to get whole. By capturing the fort we capture the country. So capturing the controller we capture the whole that He controls. So how can one control? *Bhakti* is such an astounding thing that *śraddhā, bhakti*, that the small can control the big, an atom can control the centre. It is the speciality of devotion, *śaraṇāgati*, surrender. Surrender is

the most wonderful thing in the world which makes possible for the small to control the great, the smallest to control the greatest, only this means, through love, through surrender. The smallest part, the particle can control the whole only through faith, through surrender. He's so kind, kindness in His heart. By humility, by our incapacity.

"I am the most wretched, most fallen so attraction should come to me. I'm the most negative, I represent the most negative aspect so the positive has got His, should have His greatest attention for this negative."

So, so much praise is shown about *bhakti* in scripture. *Bhakti* can do what is impossible; can control the high to the lower. This is affection, this is devotion proper; devotion proper is such in characteristic, that the high is controlled.

Suppose a General after conquering a country has come home and his young child is taking him by his finger and drawing and he's going. A powerful General controlled by a child, a child is drawing and he's following, why? Through affection. So affection, or love, or faith, it is wonderful thing which can control the big for the low.

So no such wonderful thing can ever be, not only discovered but not even thought out, none can think also of such things. But this is the real nature of faith, or devotion, or affection, what we call it. Where it is present, the big is controlled by the small, there *bhakti* is present there, *bhakti* is there, to be traced there. Where it is not seen no *bhakti*. *Bhakti* means this that the big is controlled by the small, and the inner thread is that of devotion, affection, surrender, and love. That is the real characteristic of *bhakti*. Hare Kṛṣṇa. Gaura Hari. Gaura Hari. How wonderful thing it is, and how powerful thing it is, strange, strange, strange.

*aham bhakta-parārdhīno, hy asvatantra iva dvija  
sādhubhir grasta-hṛdayo, bhaktair bhakta-jana-priyaḥ*

[The Lord tells Durvāsā: "I am the slave of My devotees; I have no freedom apart from their will. Because they are completely pure and devoted to Me, My heart is controlled by them, and I reside always in their hearts. I am dependent not only on My devotees, but even on the servants of My devotees. Even the servants of My devotees are dear to Me."] [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 9.4.63]

The Lord Himself says: "What I say Durvāsā," Durvāsā was a big *yogī*, "What I say Durvāsā, I am already surrendered and committed to My devotee. I have no independence of My own. I'm already committed to My devotees and I can't back out from that claim. So you'll have to go to that Ambarīṣa, as your appeal to Me is futile, useless, won't work anything, won't fetch anything for you. I'm already committed there to My devotee, You will have to go back to My devotee and beg forgiveness there."

He says, Nārāyaṇa. And this is not hyperbole, it is wholesale truth, not merely a show or poetry, it is truth cent per cent.

*aham bhakta-parārdhīno, hy asvatantra iva dvija  
sādhubhir grasta-hṛdayo, bhaktair bhakta-jana-priyaḥ*

"This is My nature. My very nature is such Durvāsā. I'm committed to My devotees. I have no independence. *Iva*, and this is My voluntary contribution, or acceptance, or commitment. This

commitment is voluntary, so though I'm the Absolute still My voluntary commitment is such by nature. What to do?"

That is *bhakti*, that is *bhakti*. Gaura Hari. So we are out to find out the most secret wealth the world has ever conceived, secret power, or whatever you see which can control, the smallest can control the highest, greatest. That sort of learning, or tact, or whatever you may say, it is possible.

Mahāprabhu came with that most valuable thing. What do you do? You make yourself busy for nothing, or busy for rubbish? Try to acquire this most valuable thread. The stand of the witch, magic stand, magic wand - try to find out, get this magical wand. Nothing so valuable ever discovered in the world. Take to this subtle most power, by which the smallest can control the highest, the greatest. This is love, this is love, this is faith, this is affection. So cultivate, give up everything and cultivate about this. Search for this, search for Kṛṣṇa, search for love, search for devotion. Die to live. This is self determination to the highest degree. Self determination, self realisation to the highest degree is to acquire such position. By humility we may be master.

*trṇād api sunīcena, taror api sahiṣṇunā [amāninā mānadena, kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ]*

["One who is humbler than a blade of grass, more forbearing than a tree, who gives due honour to others without desiring it for himself is qualified to always chant the Holy Name of Kṛṣṇa."] [*Śikṣāṣṭakam*, 3]

And we'll be able to conquer the whole by that sort of qualification, and not by jumping and capturing and carrying and looting and fighting, not that.

Gaura Hari, Gaura Hari, Gaura Hari. Nitāi Gaura Hari bol.

**Devotee:** Mahārāja, in the life of Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura, he had devotion to Kṛṣṇa, yet attachment. At what point in his life did he leave that attachment, and the grace of Kṛṣṇa come down, what was that single point?

**Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja:** He was, he lived when he was in the process of acquiring, when acquired then he challenged Kṛṣṇa: "You're going, You're slipping Your hand from my hand, but I challenge You to go from my heart if You can do it." That was a final state, but the fall, that is in the stage of *sādhana*, in the way of realisation, not realised it, the slip came.

**Devotee:** Was it that he poked out his eyes, is that what brought the grace of Kṛṣṇa down to him?

**Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja:** At that time he had not attained *siddhi*. Before attaining the stage of *siddhi*, in the way of *sādhana* and in the course of realisation some fall here, there. But after he had attained the position of a *siddha*, *svarūpa-siddha*, even from *svarūpa-siddhi* the chance of fall is there. But after *vastu-siddhi* no fall is possible, very little, but very rarely. From *svarūpa-siddhi* stage also one may fall. But even when he has placed in *vastu-siddhi*, acquired such place, no fall is possible any longer.

**Devotee:** So is it by the power of his *sādhana* or the sacrifice of his vision that the grace came down?

**Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja:** That sacrifice of the vision in that character it is shown that he has not finished, he has not attained finally, he's on the path of attainment. And as long as one is on the path of attainment he may fall, but very rarely maybe one may fall. Slip is possible when climbing, but when already climbed in a particular level then no possibility of any fall.

From the beginning Bilvamaṅgala is not accepted as *siddha*. He was going to the prostitute regularly and so intensely he was habituated to that, all these things. Then gradually he got that intimation leaving everything to go to Kṛṣṇa. First he went to the *māyāvādī sannyāsī*, leaving this life of a debauch went to a *māyāvādī sannyāsī*. But anyhow he was not satisfied, he got his dream about Kṛṣṇa, His grace, Kṛṣṇa's special grace he received, and then he left *māyāvādī* and went towards Vṛṇḍāvana. And when going to Vṛṇḍāvana then also some break in his journey. That is he was captured by the beauty of a lady, perhaps near Maharastra or so. Then when the gentleman sent the lady for his service at night, in the meantime his conscience came back. And he begged for two pins and took them and pierced his eyes with those pins, and paid his *daṇḍavats* and went towards Vṛṇḍāvana, finished.

That does not mean that when one has begun his journey the journey will be safe and finished in one stride. He may have some check according to his previous *karma*, some sort of obstacles may come in the way naturally. And after passing through the *sādhana* stage when he climbs up to the *bhāva-bhakti* then he'll be safe more. To begin is not to finish, there is a process between the two, to begin and to finish there is an interval. Gaura Hari.

**Devotee:** Guru Mahārāja, what is the significance of Mahāprabhu saving Gopīnātha Panayaka. Rāmānanda Rāya's brother, the son of Bhavānanda Rāya?

**Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja:** I can't follow the pronunciation of the words, what is this?

Gopīnātha Paṭṭanāyaka, Bhavānanda, Rāmānanda, they are all Paṭṭanāyaka, their caste family. Vāṇīnātha was the youngest brother who used to serve Mahāprabhu. And the Gopīnātha he was a money collector under Pratāparudra, and he collected more money but did not give it to the royal treasury. So he had a loan and the king's eldest son he wanted to get back all those monies by making some arrangement of his punishment. Showing him the fear of capital punishment, he took him on some platform and from there so many swords were arranged in the lower position and he will be pushed to fall on the so many swords and he will be cut into pieces. And that sort of capital punishment was arranged by the crown prince of Pratāparudra.

And so many persons ran to Mahāprabhu: "The Rāmānanda's brother, Rāmānanda is a great devotee and his brother is in such danger. The crown prince is imparting capital punishment to him, he will be thrown over the swords and he will be cut to pieces. If You intervene kindly then that man may be saved."

Mahāprabhu told: "What is this? It is all worldly affairs. What connection I have got to do in this matter? He has looted the cash of the king and the king is imparting punishment. And it is not My jurisdiction to go and ask the king give Me so many *lākhs* of rupees to a beggar. And I'm worth one *paisa*. I'm a *brāhmaṇa*, a poor *sannyāsī*. Society has allowed Me to beg for My belly and not for *lākhs* of rupees I shall beg from him and he will give. Why he will give Me? I won't stay with you, I shall go to Allanatha, I can't tolerate all these troubles."

Then anyhow that went to the king, Pratāparudra, that Mahāprabhu is leaving Purī, going to Allanatha."

"Why He's doing so?"

"This is the matter."

"No, no. Why? I want the money and not the man to be killed. I want the money, why should you do this? So send some intimation to the crown prince that his capital punishment should be stopped. I want money."

Then the whole thing was otherwise. This is the story of Gopīnātha Paṭṭanāyaka.

Then when the king Pratāparudra excused him, and also the money, the loan was also excused. And he was also given some reward. "That your previous service satisfied me very much. I do not care for only these few *lākhs* of rupees. You go, and I'm giving you a more higher, important engagement in my kingdom."

Then that Gopīnātha and Bhavānanda, the whole family came to Mahāprabhu to show their thankfulness to Mahāprabhu. "It is whether You told or not, but because You went to leave Purī and went to go to Allanatha, this king Pratāparudra could not tolerate and he intervened into the matter and now we've been very much glorified. Instead of being killed we're glorified and You are the only cause." They all came and fell flat under the feet of Mahāprabhu. That is the story.

And what do you say? The Gopīnātha Paṭṭanāyaka what did he do? I don't understand the word, what you say, Gopīnātha Paṭṭanāyaka, his name?

**Devotee:** Yes, it's just his name.

**Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja:** He's a brother of Rāmānanda Rāya. Now what do you want to ask about him?

I fail to understand.

**Devotee:** I just wanted to know the spiritual significance of that story.

**Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja:** Spiritual significance it may be that if anyone is connected in the service of the Lord, then in His connection many may get that holy connection, many things may be got.

Rāmānanda was favourite to Mahāprabhu. Though apparently Mahāprabhu did not want to participate into this worldly matter, but still it was done, slight connection of Mahāprabhu. But this achievement is not very laudable. What Gopīnātha got, that is not very laudable. Not only Gopīnātha but his family was also treated that way.

Mahāprabhu asked: "What is Vāṇīnātha doing?" Who was an attendant to Mahāprabhu: "What he's doing?"

Vāṇīnātha is taking the Name of the Lord and when some number is finished and he's cutting one line in his body and taking the Name, waiting the death next moment. Vāṇīnātha, who was a devotee, who was a constant attendant of Mahāprabhu, this youngest brother, he, on the apprehension of his immediate death, he's taking Kṛṣṇa *Nāma* without caring for the future, or any result whatever may come.

He's not come to Mahāprabhu, "Please save me. I'm Your whole time servant. I'm only in connection with my brother for his fault I'm taken prisoner and I'm also being dealt with capital punishment, save me."

No. But whatever the will of Kṛṣṇa it may take place. He's taking the Name of Kṛṣṇa before the immediate possible death, he's doing.

Mahāprabhu felt extra satisfaction for his satisfaction: "Yes, Vāṇinātha is a real devotee. Without caring for any future adversities he's taking the Name of Kṛṣṇa."

That should be the attitude of a pure devotee. Whatever circumstance he faces, he does not care for that. He will take more intensely in the service of Kṛṣṇa, the Name of Kṛṣṇa, engage himself more intensely in the face of any danger. He won't shirk. He will face bravely any circumstances and will take the Name of the Lord. That should be our idea.

And there was one instance in this Pakistan affair. When after a few years, 1971 or so, the Pakistan two sides, East Pakistan and West Pakistan, there was a war, and this East Pakistan became independent in that war. There was one devotee of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura living in East Pakistan, And the West Pakistanis they thought that the Hindus are at the bottom of this revolt, so they were killing Hindus right and left. So one devotee of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura named Kumud Babu, he was there.

And one soldier came: "Here is a Bengali *sādhu*. I want to kill him" and asked him to come out.

He came: "What do you say?"

"I shall shoot you."

"Oh, wait a little, wait a little my friend, I'm coming." So he went to the room and took this *Hari-Nāma mālīkā* and with his *Hari-Nāma mālīkā* in hand counting he sat on the chair and asked: "Now you shoot me."

Anyhow, that soldier he could not do so. "No, no, no, you are, you cannot have any political impetus, so I don't like to kill you." He went back.

He came with *mālīkā* in hand and sitting on the chair: "Now you may shoot me." And began counting.

And that soldier, that murderer, he went back. "No. We have no apprehension, or any fear from you. You're a real spiritual man. No apprehension of any political conspiracy from a man like you. I won't like to kill you." He went back.

His name was Kumud Babu, he was a devotee, a disciple of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

Hare Kṛṣṇa. Hare Kṛṣṇa. 1971 or so perhaps. Hare Kṛṣṇa. Nitāi Gaura Hari bol.

**Devotee:** So Guru Mahārāja, in the story of Gajendra, he prayed for protection from the Lord, so is that not as high?

**Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja:** Not always. It is sometimes as he's inspired by the Lord he does so. In the case of pure devotees as subtle inspiration he receives from higher, he does that way.

He may think that, "If by appealing a little I can live long, I shall be able to serve my Lord, so what is bad there. I'm innocent, why have you come to kill me?" He may say, and his life may be saved. He may do that, no harm. This human life is valuable and I'm really not partaking in the politics and if he appeals: "Oh, why do you kill me my friend? I'm not a party to any political campaign. I'm going on with my religious life. Please give me up." That sort of appeal or expression of any desire, that is not to be blamed because the human life is valuable. If I live I can serve.

So much disease has come and we take the medicine, we call for the doctor, why? Because this chance I have got in human body to do some service to my Lord. Why I should go to give up this life if possibility of continuing is there? So we take the medicine, we call for the doctor to continue this life because this valuable life may fetch some valuable property for me. And the next life

uncertain, I don't know where I shall be born. So that is not bad. What will underlie the prayer; that will determine good or bad. For the service one can do anything and everything, for the service. For Kṛṣṇa and *karṣṇa*, for the service of Kṛṣṇa and His devotees, to pray for that is no prayer for selfish purpose.

Rather, Sanātana Goswāmī was very eager to give his body up under the wheel of Jagannātha's chariot.

Mahāprabhu depreciated that. "What do you do? Your body given to Me already, surrendered to Me, and I want to utilise your body in a very important way. And you want to give up your body by committing almost suicide under the wheel of the chariot of Jagannātha? What does it? This sort of body giving is not a very highly valuable devotion. If it were to be so I can die in a moment *crores* of times. What is the value of this body? This is only a cage of flesh and blood. Only by giving this body we can capture Kṛṣṇa? It is foolish. What value this body has got? Only as long as we think that this is very important we have got this body consciousness. Only service of Kṛṣṇa that is being the object of our eternal aspiration, service of Kṛṣṇa. Whatever necessary, if to die for Kṛṣṇa is necessary through service I shall die. If to live for His satisfaction is necessary I shall live. It will be determined by the serving attitude and that must be sincere not a diplomatic thought."

To accept death, that is physical courage, that is not a very laudable thing. To face death there are so many animals they fight together until one dies they continue fight. Physical courage is there, do not fly away, until one is dead they both fight, these cocks, the bulls, there are so many. If any fighting will begin then as long as one is not dead the fight won't be over. Physical courage that is not a very laudable thing. But only to utilise everything for the service of Kṛṣṇa, that tendency is the most valuable. To die for Him, to live for Him, whatever is necessary we shall be prepared for that. That is valuable.

**Devotee:** Mahārāja, I wanted to ask a question about *gr̥hastha* life. If one partner...

**Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja:** *Gr̥hastha* life of two sections. One because one cannot live a life of celibacy, he cannot but have to get a householders life. Another, the *paramahansa*, they're master of their senses, but still by the will of God they come here and live as a *gr̥hastha*. In Mahāprabhu's time, in Kṛṣṇa's time we find so many *gr̥hastha*, and child are also coming from them. But still they're supposed to be situated in the highest position above this lust, anger, all these things. *Paramahansa*, above any calculation of devotion, they're established there. Their *gr̥hastha* life should not be neglected as if they're unable to control their senses, not that. There is a possibility of a life when husband wife living and child is also coming, still they're cent per cent above sensual pleasure, sensual play, it is possible. And at the same time one when in the path of realisation cannot control his senses he will have to take some help in a very gentle way to go ahead on the path of devotion, that is also. So two classes of household life we see.

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