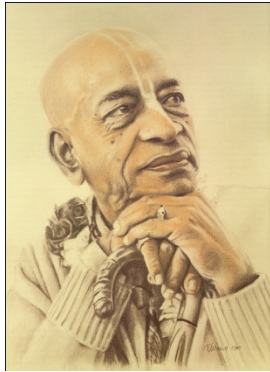


International Society for Kåñëa Consciousness
Founder-Acarya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



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1. Relationships: Our ultimate hankering (Part 1)

Hare Krishna. Thank you all for coming to the seminar. It was quite suddenly that we decided to have a seminar for today and tomorrow. Last week I was discussing with mother Krishna Priya and mother Golokananda Priya. And then we developed this idea that it would be nice to have a seminar and then we were discussing what should be actually the topic of the seminar and then we kind of resolved or we decided that we should have a seminar on relationship; and what is the need for relationship? Why do we need relationship? And that's how we came to this concept of 'Relationship - Our Ultimate Hankering'. Everyone is actually hankering for relationship. Why? And how? Why are we hankering for relationship? And then it leads to the next stage. If we need relationships, then how are we going to develop relationships? Is it going to happen just like that or do we need to make a conscious effort to develop relationship? These are the two main aspects that we are going to discuss about and then we will see how it develops. Time of course is short just two days and that also just one and a half hour each day. So practically three hours of time we have dedicated to this two days seminar. Anyway, at least we are beginning somewhere. Let us see how far we can go. Now I will ask you all. I will need four volunteers who are not afraid to speak. Okay, Brandon is one, Guru Gauranga, Cintamani. Okay... So, we have four. Good! The first participant, maybe for the speaker we can get a chair so that everybody can see the speaker also. Most probably many of you do not know Brandon. Brandon just happened to come here yesterday for the first time. Was it the first time yesterday? Brandon is a student in the university of North-Carolina in Greensburg. He is from Winston Solemn. He liked it so much just being here yesterday that he decided to stay. He is going to stay here for three days. Today is the second day. How do you like it?

Brandon: Everything.

BCS: Everything. Wonderful. Here is the microphone. Is it switched on?

Brandon: Hare Krishna. I do not need the microphone. Can you all hear me?

BCS: Well, if that is your volume then you don't need a microphone [laughter] So, I will request Brandon to

relate to us a memorable relationship in your life that you would like to share with others.

Brandon: Well, last summer I met a girl, actually it was in high school, right before I graduated. Her name was Katy. And I was attracted to her and we talked throughout the whole summer and discussed and played and attempted to love but it was very difficult for me because... There was something inside me that could not love her. I had no idea what it was. And I tried and tried and I kept trying to add up a physical relationship of it but it did not work, it made me feel even more.... And I saw a few things in her as the summer progressed, the way I looked at her got worse and worse. And it was very saddening for me because I really did enjoy her company. And it just wasn't fulfilling, that makes sense. I guess we shared intimate physical relationship but it wasn't fulfilling like Krishna's love. And eventually I was kind of, I [unclear] ... because I was going to college she was going to high school. So I knew that a goodbye was coming. But I was not quite sure how to do that. It was like my first real relationship with anyone. I never had any kind of girlfriend or anything like that until that time in my life for whatever reason. And it was very difficult for me to let her go. I kept digging in myself getting drawn back to her over and over. Even though I knew it was not working. There was nothing left of the relationship that could be salvaged. But I kept kind of wanting her, desiring her. I guess eventually, it kind of culminated and I had to forget her completely. I went off to college. And I just stopped thinking of her and got caught up in college and this whole new world. That's how it kind of ended. But since then it has actually been wonderful. Because I kind of re-discovered a friendship with her. It's just a marvelous friendship that we developed. I told her about the Krishna conscious movement and my desire to come here and she supported me a hundred percent. She is more of a Christian God-believer, I think she truly believes with her heart she supported me in [unclear].

BCS: Thank you, Brandon. Thank you very much. So now we will request Guru Gauranga, the second speaker to come forward. So I would like you to analyze why that relationship did not work at first but then it developed into a nice and wholesome relationship.

Guru-Gauranga Dasa: Okay, in the beginning of Brandon's presentation he mentioned that, he said that he was very attracted to her. So the initial relationship was spurred on by a bodily attraction which most relationships are based upon anyhow between men and women. And then he got to know her and he felt that certain things about her he felt was incompatible. He said that he didn't think that there were parts of her he could love but then as their relationship developed he was faced with the decision that this is not going to last for a long time. And being an honest man he decided that he has to break it up with her. But then the real relationship seemed to have kicked in that seemed to be based on more of her as a person and her personality rather than the physical attraction. So he had grown to love her in a certain sense, rather than the

physical attraction in the hope that things would work out. So that was my perception.

BCS: Thank you, thank you Guru Gauranga.

Now I call the third speaker, Cintamani. So do you agree with Guru Gauranga Prabhus' analysis?

Cintamani: Yes

BCS: Yes? Okay. So what will be your perception of this analysis? Why do you agree with his analysis?

Cintamani devi dasi: I think that ultimately because we are not the body, if we base the relationships on body to body, then it won't last and it will be frustrated. So if we try to find a connection with someone on a deeper level, besides just the physical body, that will find a deeper base of happiness, that will actually enable you to connect more to that person and a stronger, more internal love, specially spiritual...

BCS: Can you elaborate on that? What is the difference? What is actually bodily relationship? What is spiritual relationship?

Cintamani devi dasi: Bodily relationship is selfish. Basically what can I get out of the relationship from someone? And a spiritual relationship is selfless and it wants me to give what we have to the other person and not thinking what we can get.

BCS: Very good, very good. Now in the case of Brandon, did he develop a spiritual relationship with Katy?

Cintamani Devi dasi: No

BCS: But still their relationship developed. Why do you think or how do you think it happened? Okay, I can give you a cue. There is an expression: "Distance makes the heart grow fonder. Right? [laughter] Why is that? It was not quite spiritual, it was on a bodily platform the relationship, but still the distance made them more, you know, the relationship became deeper because of that physical distance."

Cintamani Devi dasi : I am not very sure I can answer that.

BCS: Would anybody else like to answer to that? Or maybe we can ask Brandon to answer the question himself. Because he has it from the horses' mouth. I mean, I hope you don't mind that expression.

Brandon: Ah, no, no, no... The thing is, it was not entirely physical. It was not entirely a physical relationship. At first it was a very friendly and happy relationship, playing games together. [unclear] I mean there was a lot of joy. But the bodily relationship did eventually kind of take over [unclear]. We were very happy by being together. [unclear]

BCS: Did it have something to do with "heart" I mean hurt? This relationship that developed when you left Solemn and you went to Greensburg.

Brandon: The thing what happened was her body, her physical body [unclear]. What I was remembering was the joy that we actually did share and the fun and that kind of [unclear].

BCS: Okay, good, good. Anyone else who likes to elaborate? Mother Krishna Priya?

Krishna Priya devi dasi: When they were interacting, contact the relationship first, like he said, it was very playful and very joyful. It is almost like the experience we have when we were children. We are not thinking about our body. We are just appreciating what we are doing together, everything seems so magical and so wonderful. And then when one gets involved with what we call the lower chakras, the energy is going down. And then because there is no satiation of the desires, it is explained in the Bhagavad-Gita that you start pouring more and more ghee on a fire and you it gets bigger so as a last resort. So as the lust increases the desires will increase. When there is frustration [unclear]. It is like going through the modes of nature. And then you feel like "I cannot be satisfied" like that song of the Rolling Stones: "I can get no satisfaction." Then when you were separated there was that cool down side Then you were able again begin to use your intelligence and to remember [unclear]. Then you were able to advance. So you kind of went through the different modes of nature also. It is like going through some goodness, then there was passion, then ignorance... Then there was separation and there was time for reflection.

BCS: Thank you, thank you mother Krishna Priya. Mother Lilasuka also wanted to say something, you wanted to comment.

Lilasuka devi dasi: The comment is that perhaps the latter relationship that developed was able to be one that had more respect and appreciation than the initial relationship.

BCS: Yes, very good. Now again, maybe Lilasuka you can elaborate on that point, the one that I asked to Cintamani? She spoke about two kinds of relationship, physical and spiritual. And she mentioned that physical relationships do not work. It's only when the relationships are based on the spiritual foundation then only the relationships get its actual dimension, right? Here we see that with Brandon. There were two aspects of their relationship. First he felt it did not work, like it is not going to work. That means he did not feel that this relationship is going to last forever. Then when he left and went away, he went to the university and they were separated, then this relationship took a more mature or more developed shape, where they developed friendship which gave it a more beautiful dimension to that. Now, how will you define this relationship?

Lilasuka devi dasi : How I will define it? In terms of spiritual [unclear]?

BCS: Well, yes, if you are taking it into these two considerations, bodily relationship and spiritual relationship, like how will you categorize this relationship?

Lilasuka devi dasi : Well I would say it is more related to the subtle body, like it is more from the mind and a mental platform.

BCS: Very good, go on. Elaborate that. Mind you, there are many... I believe there are some guests, newcomers here. For their sake maybe you can

elaborate on that by what you mean by subtle body relationship.

Lilasuka devi dasi : The subtle body consists of subtle mind, intelligence and ego. And it seems to mean that in bodily relationships there is less friction with the mind and ego. And more on a platform of enjoying each other on a bodily aspect, more on a platform of respecting aspect, that you appreciate one another which is more on the subtle bodily platform.

BCS: Well, okay, very good. Anyway, I will also add a few points here.

Lilasuka devi dasi : Please! [Laughter]

BCS: You see, we have two different types of bodies, we have two different types of material bodies. One is a gross material body and the other is the subtle material body. The gross material body is this body, made of earth, water, fire, air and ether. And beyond that there is the subtle material body which is composed of as you said mind, intelligence and false ego. These are the three subtle material elements. The gross body actually has a network of senses. The fulfillment of the gross bodily relationships is in the gratification of the senses. By deriving some gratification, meaning the senses desire something. When those desires are fulfilled then our senses are gratified and we derive some pleasure. The gross bodily relationships are based on sense gratification. Say for example, the senses are craving something, the senses want something. When those desires are fulfilled there is some sort of joy, there is some sort of happiness. And so, as it came out that the first aspect of the relationship was on the gross bodily platform. Then you pointed out that the next aspect of the relationship, when it developed due to the separation, was actually the relationship based on the subtle bodily platform, like on the mental platform, on the intellectual platform. Like memories, mental means the memories, the recollections are there in the mind. Plus, at that time, Brandon started to see Katy in a different light, not just for the sake of his sense gratification, whether he will admit it or not. This is our kind of analysis on the basis of our knowledge and understanding. At that point because this sense gratification was in the background, he started to see her in a different light. The memories of those days as mother Krishna Priya pointed out, going out in the park and appreciating the beauty of nature together. Things like that, all those memories started to come back. Then he started to see her from a different perspective all together. And in that subtle bodily platform a relationship developed which culminated into deep friendship. So this is the difference.

BCS: Now I will request Cintamani to elaborate on 'what do you mean by spiritual relationship?'

Cintamani Devi dasi: By the spiritual relationship I meant one that was connecting the soul with the soul, instead of the body, the mind, intelligence anything that covers, the material energy, the rather than the actual, internal spiritual soul. The relationship with all the other internal spiritual souls and Krishna. Because our ultimate...

BCS: Okay, I will ask you a question here, it is not a cross examination. [Laughter] You say spiritual relationship is between soul to soul. When living entities are oblivious of their spiritual identity as a soul can they possibly develop that relationship? [Laughter] Can they?

Cintamani : I would say, only if they get the knowledge first.

BCS: Yes, they become situated on the spiritual plane first, yes? So, okay. Now, how can one become situated on the spiritual identity to begin with?

Cintamani : With spiritual knowledge, which we get from scriptures and we realize that we are not the body and then we start understanding that we are a spirit soul.

BCS: Okay, here I will again make another point. Say, you are there in a dark room and there is an incense stick burning, right?. Some light is there from the incense stick burning. With that light can you see your face in the mirror?

Cintamani : No

BCS: Now, our consciousness is minute. Even more minute than that light which is coming from the burning of incense. It is just like a ray of light. Now with that ray of light, can you possibly see yourself? Can you with your own consciousness see your spiritual identity? Then how can you possibly see yourself?

Cintamani : Through a spiritual process that removes that covering.

BCS: Okay, again I will just go a little further on that. Okay, in a dark room with the incense stick burning you cannot possibly see yourself in the mirror. You cannot see yourself. But when the sun comes up? Then do you have any difficulty seeing yourself? Do you have any difficulty seeing the sun? Do you have any difficulty seeing all those who are around you? Okay, if your consciousness is like a speck of burning incense then who is the sun here?

Cintamani devi dasi: The spiritual master.

BCS: Krishna. When we become Krishna conscious, in that light of Krishna, with that light, with that consciousness we can see Krishna and we can see ourselves and everyone around. The point is the spiritual relationship means the relationships which are based on Krishna consciousness.

BCS: Yes, Lilasuka?

Lilasuka devi dasi: I have a question on that point because [unclear] spiritually if they don't know who they are. [unclear] I am just wondering because a lot of people don't necessarily have access to such highly advanced understanding of God consciousness, if a relationship is based on loving God, even if these people don't really know who they are, that they are eternal spiritual beings and they don't have a great wealth of knowledge about God, would you say that that is a spiritual relationship?

BCS: Well, there is some aspect of spiritualism in it because the acceptance of God is there, loving God is there but still it is not pure spiritual relationship, still this relationship is based on the bodies. And the problem with that relationship is that no matter how intense, how

genuine, how profound that relationship is, when one person dies that relationship comes to an end. Because, it is based on the bodily consciousness. With the disappearance of the body the relationship terminates. Thank you Cintamani. So, do you agree with me?

Cintamani devi dasi: Yes.

BCS: Thank you very much for enlightening us, Cintamani. Give her a hand. Wasn't it profound, Cintamani's presentation? Didn't we learn something wonderful? And aren't we thankful to Cintamani for that? Thank you. Okay, next speaker? Your name? [unclear]

So mother Govinda Lilamrita, I would like you to enlighten us on the topic: "Why do we need relationship?"

Govinda Lilamrita devi dasi : [unclear] if we are alone and we don't have relationship. In this material world even if someone is rich, beautiful but if he is alone he is not happy and he is hankering for some kind of relationship. [unclear] They want to feel useful and they want to do something good for the others. And they actually are a feeling which can make us more happy...

BCS : Very good point. So we need relationship in order to become happy. Now, does every relationship lead to happiness?

Govinda Lilamrita devi dasi : Not at all!

BCS: Okay. Maybe you can define what kind of relationships lead to happiness.

Govinda-Lilamrita devi dasi: I will try. Relationships lead to happiness only if they help us to make progress in our spiritual life. That is what real love means in my understanding. Real love means in my understanding..

BCS: Okay, so you actually made the point here, that we need relationship for love. Out of relationship, the relationships that are loving relationships, from those relationships we derive happiness or joy. Maybe you can elaborate on that... Loving relationships.

Govinda-Lilamrita devi dasi: Yes, it happens between devotees but also amongst non-devotees. It is not that karmis [unclear]. In my country there is a very nice thing: "Deep Love Cannot Be Destroyed."

BCS: By the way, which is your country? [Laughter]

Govinda-Lilamrita devi dasi: So deep love cannot be destroyed. [unclear] And sometimes we think that we are so much in love each other so much [unclear] Therefore deep love is that love which cannot be destroyed. And real love is love which helps you to make progress in spiritual life. Therefore we can see that not only between non devotees but also among devotees. If Krishna is in the center as I mentioned before, then there is really no problem and if Krishna is not exactly in the center and we are skipping our rounds, don't read together. [unclear] But if we really are doing our sadhana good, then no fight , no problem. [unclear] I mean Krishna should always be there in the center. Of course I am not on that level to [unclear] to Krishna [unclear] Krishna should always be in the

center, I don't know how to say [unclear] but that's the point.

BCS: Very good, very good. Thank you Govinda Lilamrita.

Now I will just ask: "How many of you are coming here for the first time? Please identify yourselves. Okay. Now, how are you all relating yourselves? Is it all right what is going on? Or is it something that the discussions that are going on, does it make sense to you all? Or, okay, I just wanted to make sure that these discussions are not just something very strange and flying over your heads. Yes, okay, good. Thank you. Now I need someone to define some factors that came up in the course of these discussions. The first thing I would like to ask somebody to define, like one point came up quite prominently, that became quite obvious through this discussion, that we need relationships because we need love.

↓ Relationships mean loving relationships

Relationships mean loving relationships. Relationships that are based on love, those relationships are desirable. There can be relationships based on hatred. Those relationships are obviously undesirable. Now I want some wise and bold personality to describe or define what love is. Any volunteers?

BCS: Guru Gauranga? Yes, please. Come, come here.

Guru Gauranga Das: My experience of love is not very great but I don't have that much experience but from trying to understand Prabhupada's books, what I gathered is that love wants to selflessly see the happiness of the beloved at any cost, even to one's own personal happiness, that's my understanding. Just like in the Sikshastakam there is one verse '*ayi nanda tanuja kinkaram...*' Radharani gives a nice explanation of love and I ask Maharaja to further elaborate on that [unclear]

BCS: Today I am here to listen. [Laughter]

Guru Gauranga Das: Maybe someone else?

BCS: Yes, very good point, yes.

Guru-Gauranga Das: Wanting the happiness of the beloved even at the cost of great sacrifice of oneself. We see that in human society sometimes the parents may sacrifice their lives. Even in childbirth, sometimes mothers they sacrifice, they rather have a child and die themselves, so this is unalloyed love. I feel that love is just that aspect where somebody is just absorbed in the happiness of the beloved. I think in order for that to happen one has to be selfless and spiritually motivated. Unless one is spiritually motivated one cannot be selfless, that is my understanding.

And another thing I want to mention is that in the pursuit of relationships of love and happiness I find the Nectar of Instruction is very good because it encourages *utsaham*, enthusiasm, in other words always being very positive. It encourages us with the enthusiasm to be positive. Always being positive is a helpful instruction.

BCS: Thank you Guru Gauranga. Yes, Chandrasekhara, yes, come sit here. Sit here

Chandrasekhara Das: Something came to my mind, it is the definition that Krishna Kaviraj das Goswami gives of love in the Caitanya Caritamrita. If there are all causes, all reasons for a relationship to break up and yet the relationship does not break up, that is love.

BCS: In spite of all reasons the relationships do not break up. Good. And that's all you wanted to say? Anyone else? Yes, Arcana, come.

Arcana devi dasi: I just remember. [unclear] Love is actually a force. In the same way we see that love can be blind. It is like a force we can [unclear] or not, depending on our understanding. When we [unclear] of Krishna, naturally the force is directed towards Krishna, but due to our misconception of who we are we are directing this force, this love to other entities. But actually this force of love naturally wants to go towards Krishna.

BCS: Thank you, thank you. Yes, Natabara, you wanted to say something.

Natabara das: I was just thinking that we should take love beyond the bodily platform. There is the story, in Krishna story of Sudhamavipra. Also we see Bilvamangala Thakur, the story of going to see Cintamani. If you go beyond the bodily platform, love is giving. When you give it is so beautiful, there are the story of Sabri in Ramayana and Bilvamangala Thakur and the story of Prabhupada. And the story of devotees who are travelling and giving their true love and who are constantly engaged in giving that love.

BCS: Very good, thank you. Anyone else? Okay, yes, yes, Brandon?

Brandon: Yes, as I was sitting and listening to all this I kind of had a realization of love and what Krishna [unclear]. To be loved means that we will never have to be alone because Krishna will always be in your heart. The one who loves you is always giving. Or the one who loves you will always be in your heart. And so to love, to give that thing to one eternally, so they will not actually be alone as well.

BCS: Thank you, thank you Brandon. Yes, Batu Gopala Prabhu?

Batu Gopala Prabhu: Question. You have already established that our sensual self is false, we don't understand who we are, the example of being in a dark room not even being able to see our face. The description of the body in two parts, the gross body and the subtle body. If we call everybody in the world and ask: "Who are you?" In the overwhelming majority of responses, we won't find truth, we will find misconception and illusion. And yet if we call everyone in the world and ask them "What is love? Surprisingly, I suspect we get a lot of truth. That strikes me as curious. How is it that people understand something intuitively or inherently about the nature of love even when they don't have the slightest idea of who they really are?

BCS: So who did you actually direct the question to? [Laughter]

Batu Gopala Prabhu: To you or to anyone, in other words I don't have any idea about my spiritual identity, I don't even have the slightest accurate understanding of how conditioned I am or how little I know about who I am. I am thinking that I am a man of this particular age born in this particular country with these numbers of associates and these political associations and this kind of economic situation. All of this is not myself. I am entirely in illusion about who I am. So I am entirely in illusion of who I am. And yet if you ask me about who I am, I am convinced that I understand something about love.

BCS: Okay, since you ask me to answer the question, my first response will be, I beg to differ. You said that most of the people when asked what love is, they will give a correct understanding.

Batu Gopala Prabhu: Yes, let me qualify that. Obviously the object of love, we presume that is going to be a misunderstanding. The nature of the loving sentiment itself. In other words, the energy, the enthusiasm, the fundamental nature of that loving expression and the desire to be loved.

BCS: Yes, right, right... Of course, although you are asking the question, everybody knows that you know the answer. But still, just to make the point clear, I was just responding in that way. If we go back to the Caitanya Caritamrita as Candrasekhara mentioned, Krishnadas Kaviraja Goswami is defining two things: love and lust. And he is saying that the desire to gratify our senses is lust.

↓ The desire to gratify Krishna's senses or give pleasure to Krishna is love

The desire to gratify Krishna's senses or give pleasure to Krishna is love. From that we can see that in this material nature what actually goes on in the name of love, in the most cases it is actually lust. It is stemming from the desire to gratify our senses. When we are oblivious of Krishna then we do not actually know where to repose our love, where to offer that love and therefore we find that love ultimately culminating in frustration, disappointment and separation. The point I am trying to make is that, as you said, the first point of your statement was that if we ask people who they are, they will not be able to give a correct answer. They do not know. It is not that they will admit that they do not know. They will rather everybody will say that 'Yes, I know who I am'. And the response will be their bodily identity. They identify themselves and give the identification according to the body. You ask somebody of who they are and what will be his immediate answer. How many people will say: "I do not know". Rather everybody will say: "I am so and so, and so forth."

↓ They do not know their actual identity

As you correctly pointed out, they do not know their actual identity. They are identifying themselves with the bodily designation. And similarly just as they are saying: "I know who I am, similarly they will say: "I know what

love is". But in most cases the answer and their definition of their love is not the actual definition. In most cases we will find that what they are actually describing as love is actually lust. And as Cintamani pointed out, the spiritual relationship or the relationship based on the spiritual platform is the relationship that is centered around Krishna. And the relationship that is beginning with Krishna. Understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the beginning of understanding of what love actually is. Yes, Guru Gauranga?

Guru Gauranga Das: Guru Maharaja, just in response to the question, another observation I had that the question about what is love is a higher [unclear] of the question. It is not asking: "What is your belief in love?" It is just: "What is love?" And people will tend to use their higher cognition which is using their higher intelligence basically. It is not a..... Well, I am a white male who lives in America etc. It is not the exact answer. And then, because of the society we live in, everybody reads poetry and they tend to come up with some quasi spiritual idea of love. But do they actually...

BCS : Not spiritual, rather sentimental.

Guru-Gauranga das: Sentimental, yes. But how many acts on their understanding of what is love. Their belief in love, [unclear] in the way that they actually act in their loving relationships. But an idea that they may have retrieved from television or some poetry or whatever. Because if you ask me what is love and I don't know anything about the Veda's, then I will just start thinking about poetry and you know what the poet said [unclear]. Because I am not going to admit that my belief or my activities in love are so grounded in the mundane. That's why people may try to apparently appear that they are more advanced than they generally are.

↓ They are giving certain understanding of love which actually is not the real thing

BCS: Right, right... Yes. Good point, very good point. Like, they are giving certain understanding of love which actually is not the real thing. It is some concept that they have derived. But the important factor is that everybody has a craving for it, deep down themselves. There is a craving, everybody wants love. Deep down their feeling, I need it, I need to love somebody and I want to be loved by somebody. As Brandon just pointed out, love does not want to be alone. I want to love, I want somebody to be with whom I can love and whom I can derive love from. That reminds me of Hemmingway's 'Old man and the sea'. The first sentence of that book is: "No man is an island." Anyway, to sum it up, I will just make a little elaboration on that. What Arcana just said I will just elaborate on that point. She actually made a very, very important point in that respect, in defining what love is. She described that love is a force. She described that love is a force. Love actually is an energy that is existing with the soul. The soul has a few factors, a few qualities, a few

phenomena's inherently related to it for him. One is consciousness. Wherever there is a soul there is consciousness. Wherever there is consciousness there is desire. Along with the soul comes consciousness, comes desire and comes love. The desire to love somebody.

↓ Love is actually a force, love is an energy, which unites us

So love is actually a force, love is an energy, which unites us. We can see. Love brings us together, hatred separates us. From this we can see that love is actually an energy that unites us. Love is actually an energy that unites the soul, actually this energy is meant to unite or connect the soul to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. A living entity, a spirit soul is a part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Now the factor, the energy that connects the soul with the Lord is love. Now, by establishing that relationship, when the love becomes fulfilled then automatically, spontaneously it gives rise to joy. Now we can see: why we want love? It is from love we want to derive joy but when the love is not offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When we are oblivious of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, when we do not know where to offer this love actually, then we try to offer this love to different other objects or individuals. And by offering that we try to derive joy but we do not get that. That is not what our heart is hankering for. Our real craving is to become connected to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And that is the only purpose of that energy called love. And you know who that Supreme reservoir of that energy is? Who is that supreme reservoir of that energy.

Devotees: Krishna.

BCS: Srimati Radharani. And Krishna is the object of love. And the source of that love, the reservoir of that love is Srimati Radharani. And this love is called bhakti. When this love, our hearts' inherent craving to become connected to Krishna, when it finds its ultimate object of love, Krishna, then the heart automatically becomes satisfied. And then this love is expressed through some action. And that action is called service, we want to do something. When you love somebody we want to express our love by doing something for that object of our love. When we love Krishna or when we rather offer our love to Krishna and when this energy is properly directed towards the ultimate object of that love, then our heart not only becomes satisfied, it becomes full of joy. And that is the ultimate goal of everyone's life.

↓ The ultimate object of our love, the ultimate object of all our relationships is actually Krishna

What everyone is hankering for ultimately is joy. In Sanskrit it is called *ananda*, bliss. Everyone is hankering for that *ananda*, joy. The joy is derived when our love is offered to Krishna. The ultimate object of our love, the ultimate object of all our relationships is actually Krishna. It is through Krishna that all other

relationships develop because everyone else is part and parcel of Krishna. The Supreme Personality of Godhead, everyone else is a part and parcel; everyone else is connected to Him. When we develop our relationships with Him then automatically our relationships with others are also established. **The others are not actually the objects of our love.** Rather our love for Krishna is reflected on different objects, different personalities, and different individuals in the form of friendship, in the form of affection and in the form of disregard. **Those who are connected with Krishna, those who are in love with Krishna, towards them we develop friendship. Those who are innocent about Krishna, those who are ignorant about Krishna but when they are properly exposed to Krishna they also will become related to Krishna, they also will fall in love with Krishna, towards them we have compassion, affection. O, they do not know about Krishna, oh let me go and give them Krishna. So our love for Krishna is being reflected on them in that way in the form of compassion. And those who are averse to Krishna, those who are opposed to Krishna, those who do not want to even get to know Krishna or hear about Krishna, that same love for Krishna is reflected on them in the form of disregard. Fine, you don't want to know about Krishna, I don't have anything to do with you.** So in this way this love for Krishna is reflected on three types of individuals in **three different ways: friendship, compassion and disregard.** The bottom line is that it is the energy that is there in everyone's heart, with every spirit soul. And therefore every spirit soul is searching for the right object, where to offer that love. And by offering that love they are searching for the supreme joy, bliss, ecstasy. **But only when it is offered to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Who is actually the real recipient of that love, our heart becomes completely content and full of joy.** Thank you very much. All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

2. Questions and answers

BCS: Now I will ask you a question. How many of you have offered your love to Krishna? Please raise your hands. By doing that how many of you feel that now your heart has become content? Your craving for love has found the ultimate object. By doing that is there anyone of you who still feels that your heart is not content in spite of doing that? Is there anyone who feels that way?

Devotee: It makes the heart content when doing that, but it makes the heart even more content to engage others to do that. [unclear]

BCS: Okay, but now maybe you want to describe why. By offering your love to Krishna you have felt

contentment but by engaging others you feel even more contentment.

Devotee: When I try to engage others to offer their love to Krishna.

BCS: Okay, that is actually the same. Thank you. Keep doing that. Again I will make a small comment. That is actually an expression of your love to Krishna. Because you love Him, therefore you want that everybody should love Him. And that's why you are trying to bring everyone to Him.

Okay, yes, Sudhayananda prabhu.

Sudhayananda Das: In the last chapter of the Bhagavad Gita Krishna says, after He says: '*sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja*'. Abandon everything and surrender to Me. Then afterwards He says those who appreciate this conversation between Me and Arjuna, worship Me with their intelligence. And if you give this to others, if you give this information to other people, He says there is no people more dear to Me than those people who give it to others, nor will there anyone ever be more dear. There is no person more dear to me than those who give this love to others, nor will there be any person more dear to Me. Why does this process make one feel so happy? It is why Krishna has explained. This is what makes Me happy. Krishna is happy when we are giving this to everyone else. Prabhupada used to say: self-realization is not selfish realization. It is selfless. When you are ready to give everything to others. And Prabhupada demonstrated that himself in such a perfect way, that he came over to this continent and he was giving all of himself, all of his time and energy to people he did not even know. They were not even his countrymen, right? He basically had never been out of India and came just to give Krishna. Of course he pleased Krishna so nicely. So we also have to love Krishna like that. That's why you feel so good when you give it to others.

BCS: Very good, thank you Sudhayananda Prabhu, Hare Krishna.

Any other question or comment? Yes, Sita?

Sita Devi dasi: You mentioned [unclear] that disregard [unclear].

BCS: Okay, yes, I pointed out that it was actually a reflection of our love to Krishna. Those who are averse to Krishna, if we go and try to... When you love somebody what do you want to do? We want to speak about that person all the time? Now to the other devotees who are in love with Krishna, why do we develop friendship? Because we love to, we get an opportunity to discuss with them about Krishna. We speak to them about Krishna and we hear about Krishna from them. That's why it is developing into friendship. Those who are innocent averse to Krishna, if

we go and try to... If we love somebody, we want to speak about that person all the time? Those who are innocent we go to them and speak about Krishna because we love Him. And because they do not know about Krishna, they get to know about Krishna and get attracted to Him. But those who are averse to Krishna, when you go to them and speak about Krishna to them, what will happen? They will become even more averse, that's why we avoid them. That's why it is better we avoid them. We stay away from them for the time being so that they become mature enough and also come to hear about Krishna. At the same time we pray for them that some day they become mature enough. Okay, maybe we can another question, a last question. Maybe we can have another question, last question.

BCS: Batu Gopala Prabhu, do you have any comment?

Batu Gopala Das: No, I thought it was great.

BCS: Locana Prabhu, do you have any comment?

Locana Das: Prabhupada made it very simple, when he says that we are servants. He said that our constitutional position is to be a servant.

BCS: That's a very good point that Locana Prabhu brought up. Love and service are synonymous, they are interlinked. Love is expressed in the form of service. When we do not become engaged in the service of Krishna, then this service propensity remains. And we continue to serve different other individuals. The thing is that what we are actually hankering for in that service, we do not get that in return. That's a very good point, Locana Prabhu, thank you.

Batu Gopal Das: Back to that idea, that question of disregard, avoiding people who are opposed to Krishna. You said that that does not mean that we are averse to them or that we dislike them or we do not wish them well and so on. But it is also recognition that I am not the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I am limited in my potency. But I also know that Krishna does not ever disregard anyone. So who am I? [unclear] I may not be able to help someone. Krishna never, never abandons anyone. [unclear]

BCS: Exactly, right. That's very true. And also it brings up another point. Devotion has three levels. There are three kinds of devotees; One is the neophyte devotee, second class devotee and the first class devotee. The neophyte devotee, the one who is new in Krishna consciousness, his attitude is: "Yes, Krishna is God and I am His only devotee." He recognizes Krishna but he does not recognize other devotees. That is *kanistha-adhikari* or neophyte devotee. The second class devotee is the one who is in love with Krishna, who friendship with the first class devotee, compassion for the innocent devotee and disregard for the offenders. And the first class devotee is he who feels that everyone else has become a devotee, only I could not become a devotee. So it is just the reverse, you see.

The neophyte devotee thinks that he is the only devotee and the first class devotee thinks that everyone else is a devotee but I could not become devotee. And it is natural. It is not just some poetic expression but it is real. That's why a first class devotee cannot preach because he cannot discriminate. When you think that everyone else has become a devotee and only you are not a devotee, how can you go them and preach to them about Krishna? Therefore Prabhupada said that the *uttama* devotee comes down to the *madyama-adhikari* platform of the second class devotee. Prabhupada himself is an example. He is a first class devotee from the spiritual sky who came down from the spiritual sky in order to preach. Because in order to preach you have to discriminate who is a devotee and who is innocent and so forth. Whereas an *uttama adhikari* devotee cannot do that. Thank you. Yes, Rukmini?

Rukmini devi dasi: [unclear]

BCS: One looks up to the spiritual master... Again this is a combination of respect and love. Not direct love but this love is actually again. Our energy that is there in our heart is only meant to be offered to Krishna. He is the only recipient. What the spiritual master does, he teaches others how to offer that love to Krishna. He is a via-medium. He is training them to offer it to Krishna. And a disciple looks up to the spiritual master with respect. Like a teacher, like a father and like a friend. That is the relationship. The spiritual master is the embodiment of these three relationships. With Prabhupada, generally we had the relationship like that of a teacher and student, relationship like that of a father and a child and only very few had a relationship like a friend. Very few actually. We never, at least I never... My attitude towards Srila Prabhupada was complete awe and reverence. It will depend on the individuals. Like the spiritual master, the disciple develops that intimacy and the spiritual master may treat him like this. But a disciple does not go out of his way and start dealing with him as if he is his friend. Yes, Sudhayananda Prabhu.

Sudhayananda Das: *tad viddhi praṇipātena paripraśnena sevayā upadeśyanti te jñānam jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ*. Just try to approach a spiritual master, inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized soul can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth. So he is not like one of us in the dark room. Krishna explains that if you want to know Me then you have to go approach a pure devotee.

BCS: That's why the relationship is like one of the teacher and the student.

Sudhayananda Das: Then Krishna also says that one who thinks he is my devotee, he is not my devotee. And one who thinks he is the devotee of my devotee, he is my devotee.

2. Srila Prabhupada appreciation

Prabhupada himself is an example. He is a first class devotee from the spiritual sky who came down from the spiritual sky in order to preach.

With Prabhupada, generally we had the relationship like that of a teacher and student, relationship like that of a father and a child and only very few had a relationship like a friend. Very few actually. We never, at least I never... My attitude towards Srila Prabhupada was complete awe and reverence. It will depend on the individuals.

3. Guru Maharaja's Instructions

- ⇓ Understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the beginning of understanding of what love actually is;
- ⇓ Our real craving is to become connected to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And that is the only purpose of that energy called love;
- ⇓ Krishna is the object of love. And the source of that love, the reservoir of that love is Srimati Radharani. And this love is called bhakti;
- ⇓ When you love somebody we want to express our love by doing something for that object of our love. When we love Krishna or when we rather offer our love to Krishna and when this energy is properly directed towards the ultimate object of that love, then our heart not only becomes satisfied, it becomes full of joy. And that is the ultimate goal of everyone's life;
- ⇓ Like the spiritual master, the disciple develops that intimacy and the spiritual master may treat him like this. But a disciple does not go out of his way and start dealing with him as if he is his friend; and
- ⇓

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(Compilation & editing by Hemavati Radhika dasi)