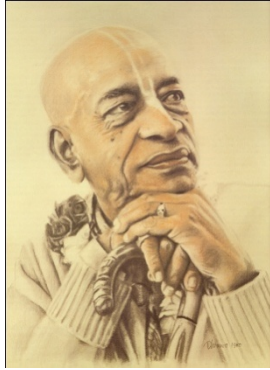


International Society for Krishna Consciousness
Founder-Acarya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



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1. “SRILA PRABHUPADA’S POSITION AS THE FOUNDER ĀCĀRYA OF ISKCON”

Hare Kāñēa. I was thinking that this temple room is already too small. Anyway, that is a very good indication, thank you very much for your wonderful response. I was supposed to come here for the weekend then but I found out that Saturday was Giriraj Maharaja’s Vyāsa-pūjā then I thought that I would rather be in Durban for that because there I knew that the celebration will be very gorgeously celebrated and we did have a very wonderful Vyāsa-pūjā celebration of Giriraj Maharaja. Today I was supposed to give a class in Phoenix temple, New Jaganatha Puri temple and their programme is from 11am to 1pm but I thought to take a flight to Johannesburg and come here for the evening. I must thank British Airways, their flight arrived 10 minutes before time so everything was perfectly organised. We came here on time and I could freshen up a little before giving the class and I am very happy to be with all of you. Thank you very much.

I thought we would have a seminar on the topic, “Srila Prabhupada, the founder Ācārya of ISKCON” but the idea was to have the seminar over two days comprising of three classes, unfortunately it did not happen. I wanted to take this opportunity to give one class to briefly speak about that topic. So do you think it’s a good idea to discuss Prabhupāda’s position as the founder Ācārya or should I tell you stories? Today let us speak about Srila Prabhupada’s position in ISKCON as the founder Ācārya. Before that let me ask you, how many of you have committed yourselves to ISKCON? Oh wonderful it’s difficult to figure out who all has not done that. Okay, who has not committed yourself to ISKCON? Okay, it won’t take very long. How many of you want that ISKCON should spread its mission all over the world? Wonderful! How many of you are convinced that Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu predicted that this Kāñēa Consciousness Movement would spread all over the world in every town and village? Wonderful, what happened to your hand? How many of you think that Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu is the Supreme Personality of Godhead? Okay very well now how many of you think that the words of the Supreme Personality of Godhead can never go in vane? Wonderful! What did Caitanya Mahāprabhu predict? In every town and village Kāñēa Consciousness movement will spread. Is it going to happen? When the Supreme Personality of Godhead says something it’s bound to happen, it will happen. Now the question actually is not whether it will

happen or not the question is whether we will take an active part in that wonderful happening. How many of you want to take an active part in that happening? Very good I have a wonderful audience. Let’s go through the history, the history goes back to Kāñēa. Kāñēa although He mentioned that He comes *sambhavāmi yuge yuge*,

paritrāēāya sādḥūnāā

vināçāya ca duñkātām

dharma-saāsthāpanārthāya

sambhavāmi yuge yuge

(BG 4.8)

Although Kāñēa says I come in every *yuga*, not only as one incarnation but as many incarnations, I come in every *yuga*; but Kāñēa does not actually come in every *yuga*. When does Kāñēa come? Kāñēa comes once in a day of Brahma. Kāñēa the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, He comes only once in the day of Brahma and what is the duration of a day of Brahma? One thousand *catur yugas*. On one hand He said *yuge yuge* but now consider four *yugas* make one *divya-yuga* and one thousand *divya-yugas* make a day of Brahma and in a day of Brahma Kāñēa comes once. So that means not *yuge yuge* but in four thousand *yugas*, He comes only once. The Vedas are describing when Kāñēa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, comes. When does He come? In a day of Brahma there are fourteen Manus, the seventh Manu is Vaivaswata Manu.

In Bhagavad Gita do you remember Kāñēa is saying?

imaā vivasvate yogaā

proktavān aham avyayam

vivasvān manave prāha

manur ikñvākave 'bravēt

(BG 4.1)

He said that He gave this knowledge first to Vivasvān, the sun-god, and then the sun-god gave it to his son Manu. Sun-god is Vivasvān and his son is known as Vaivaswata Manu, Manu the son of Vivasvān. He is the seventh Manu and one Manu’s duration of reign is seventy one *catur yugas*. One thousand divided by fourteen equals? (we are all mathematically very astute), it is almost seventy one plus something. Roughly, let us say that one Manu’s reign is approximately seventy one *catur yugas*. During the reign of Manu the twenty eighth *catur yuga* at the end of Dwapara, Kāñēa, The Supreme Personality of Godhead comes. Now which Manu’s reign is this? Vaivaswata Manu’s reign. Which *catur yuga* is going on? Twenty

eighth catur yuga. Dwapara yuga ended and Kali yuga began and during the end of the Dwapara yuga, Kāñëa, the Supreme Personality came. The original Supreme Personality of Godhead came.

Who is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead?

Kāñëa but again Kāñëa has three aspects:

Kāñëa in Dwarika;

Kāñëa in Mathura; and

Kāñëa in Vrindavan.

Out of these which is THE Supreme Personality of Godhead? Kāñëa of Vrindavan. The confusing factor is Kāñëa of Vrindavan doesn't act like the Supreme Personality of Godhead although He is THE Supreme Personality of Godhead; He acts like a cowherd boy. Isn't it difficult to accept that the cowherd boy is the Supreme Personality of Godhead? His majestic, grandeur is not there, He is just an ordinary cowherd boy. Why He does that is another thing, we don't want to get into that now. Kāñëa the original Supreme Personality of Godhead came and revealed His Vrindavan pastimes. Now when God acts like a cowherd boy wouldn't it be difficult to recognise Him as the Supreme Personality of Godhead?

Just consider the King, if the King one day finds that He is playing in the field as a cowherd boy will you be able to recognise that he is the King? You will think that he is just an ordinary cowherd boy. I was hesitating to use the expression cowherd boy because most of you will not even know what a cowherd boy is because nowadays nobody is herding the cows here. So that is a problem to recognise God in His Vrindavan pastimes is very difficult. The Supreme Personality of Godhead considered during His Vrindavan pastimes "How would anyone understand and recognise Me?" Therefore, He came as a devotee and who is that devotee, Supreme Personality of Godhead? Sri

Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu

Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu is teaching that Kāñëa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. God came but He is not saying I am God. Kāñëa did that in Bhagavad Gita, Kāñëa said that I am God whether you accept it or not it's up to you, but irrespective of what you think I am what I am. Not only that, Kāñëa in order to dispel our doubts Kāñëa even revealed His universal form. He showed His extremely grand aspect, the source, origin, shelter and cause of everything. So, that is how He displayed His universal form. Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu came as a devotee, although He is God, He is playing the role of a devotee so much so that when someone told Him, "You are God", what did Caitanya Mahāprabhu do? He covered His ears and said

"Vishnu, Vishnu" as if "I heard something terrible." What did He do? He said Kāñëa is God and I am His devotee. In this way Caitanya Mahāprabhu taught us how to become a devotee and Caitanya Mahāprabhu spread His Kāñëa Conscious movement, sankirtan yajña all throughout India. Mahāprabhu remained on this planet for forty eight years and out of these forty eight years, for twenty four years, He was in Navadwip living as a householder then He took sanyas and He left home. For six years He travelled around India and during His travel during these six years He inundated India with Kāñëa Consciousness.

After His disappearance, the mission continued, Nityānanda Prabhu carried on the mission, then the six Goswamis of Vrindavan carried on the mission and then three very exemplary devotees Narotama dāsa Ōhākura, Çrēnivas Ācārya and Syamananda Prabhu, the three of them were spreading Kāñëa Consciousness very effectively at that time and then gradually His sankirtan movement became eclipsed by the deviant propagation of the unscrupulous people called sahayiyās. In the name of Caitanya Mahāprabhu they started to introduce all kinds of nonsensical things and as a result of that Caitanya Mahāprabhu's teachings got eclipsed. These people were taking the glorious recognition of Caitanya Mahāprabhu but what they were presenting was an extremely deviant thing not at all in line of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In simple terms if somebody comes and tells you that breaking the four regulative principles are the teachings of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, how will you feel? In a way that is what was going on; not all of them but they thought that Caitanya Mahāprabhu was so famous and if they presented their ideas in the name of Caitanya Mahāprabhu then people will accept it because most people are ignorant. Even the Buddhists were presenting their philosophy in the name of Caitanya Mahāprabhu. *Lera* means shaved head, so the Buddhists shave their heads and they said, "we are followers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, He shaves His head and we also shave our heads; we are both shaven headed so we belong to the same clan" Their teachings are impersonalism, voidism or atheism. In this way all kinds of deviant practises eclipsed Caitanya Mahāprabhu's very profound, sublime and wonderfully uplifting teachings.

At that time when Mahāprabhu's teachings were practically lost, Çrēla Bhaktivinod Ōhākura came and he revived Caitanya Mahāprabhu's teachings. When Bhaktivinod Ōhākura was about to revive the teachings of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, he was looking for Caitanya-caritāmāta and can you imagine in the entire Bengal, he could not find a single copy of Caitanya-caritāmāta. Eventually, in Orissa he found one copy and he took that handwritten copy and with his own commentary meaning the nectarian flow of Mahāprabhu's wonderful teachings. With that commentary Bhaktivinod Ōhākura

started to present Caitanya Mahāprabhu's teachings, he printed books and was preaching but he was a very high ranking government officer so he did not have enough time therefore he prayed to Lord Jaganatha to send a qualified assistant who could further his mission. As a result of his prayer, Lord Jaganatha sent him a very wonderful personality and who is that personality? Çréla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Öhäkura and Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Öhäkura again inundated the whole of India with Kåñëa Consciousness.

In those days, almost one hundred years ago, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Öhäkura established sixty three temples in India. Can you imagine when transport and communication was so primitive? He established sixty three temples! When he came across one twenty six year old man in 1922, what did he tell him? He told him to take this mission outside of India and spread it all over the world in the English language. Who is that personality? Srila Prabhupada and did he do it? Srila Prabhupada fulfilling the desire of his spiritual master took Kåñëa Consciousness out of India and spread it all over the world. What is Caitanya Mahāprabhu's prediction? Is it just all over the world or was there a definitive connotation to that and what was that? Every town and village.

Let us consider at what age Srila Prabhupada started to preach Kåñëa Consciousness in the west, it was at the age of seventy, so when you are seventy years old and you are not in Maya then for how many years will you be here? At least you know for not for very long, seventy years have gone by. Prabhupāda knew that to continue this mission he would not be able fulfil it to the ultimate extent. Now when you know that you will not be able to do it yourself completely then what would you do? One thing you do is find an appropriate successor but Prabhupāda already saw that in Kali-yuga, to get an appropriate successor is very difficult because he saw what had happened to his Guru Maharaja's institution. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Öhäkura also established an institution called Gaudiya mission and he instructed his disciples to continue the institution collectively through a governing body but his disciples did not understand that instruction. They considered how can a spiritual organisation run by a group of managers? For a spiritual organisation we need a spiritual head and they appointed a spiritual head although Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Öhäkura did not want that. He did not mention anything about someone becoming a successor; disregarding his instruction they appointed a successor, Ācārya and then that Ācārya had spiritual difficulty. When he had spiritual difficulty and fell down what was the natural consequence? If the structure is resting on one person and if that person fails and falls down then what would naturally happen to that structure? It collapsed.

Prabhupāda saw himself what had happened to his Guru Maharaja's institution therefore Prabhupāda emphatically told us "Don't make the same mistake my god-brothers made after Guru Maharaja's disappearance." Actually that instruction was twofold:

one aspect is that manage the institution collectively through the GBC body; and the other aspect is that Prabhupāda himself pointed out but did not so emphatically establish this and that is his position as THE founder Ācārya. To revert to the point that if something is not going to happen in one's lifetime what would be the natural thing that he would like to do? Like as I have mentioned earlier, find a successor but we saw the problem in getting a successor therefore what is the solution? To continue an institution, the institution will go on generation after generation if it is properly structured. That is why Prabhupāda as soon as he started to preach in the west, the first thing he did was to establish an institution and that institution is the International Society for Kåñëa Consciousness. Imagine, Prabhupāda started in a small little storefront, a rundown area of New York City, Lower East side, 26 Second Avenue. This place was infested with hobos and there Prabhupāda established in a small, little place, about one fourth or one third the size of this room. Prabhupāda named this institution as, mind you, the "International" and many times people name their institution in so many ways like we see people establishing their companies, like the international cardboard manufacturing company. There is no harm in making their name sound big but that was not the case with Srila Prabhupada because we can see Prabhupāda's seriousness. Prabhupāda called it the International Society for Kåñëa Consciousness. The lawyer who was forming the company told Prabhupāda that it would be better to call the institution the International Society for God Consciousness because Kåñëa people would not understand. What was Prabhupāda's response? No, International Society for Kåñëa Consciousness because I have come here to make everyone understand that Kåñëa is God! People speak of God but they do not know who He is, they do not have any idea who God is. So Prabhupāda was so emphatic, "I came here to make everyone understand that Kåñëa is God. Kåñëa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

This is how we could see the foresight of Srila Prabhupada, so Prabhupāda knew to continue the mission we need an institution and that institution must be collectively managed. That institution should not have successors as head because one, two and three generations may go on with the succession, somebody may have come and been very loyal, great, efficient, committed and pure and the next generation the same scenario but in the generation thereafter and somebody does not fit the bill then what would happen? The structure would collapse. This is the advantage of

collective management if one person has spiritual difficulty and there are twenty five other members then they will absorb the shock. They will protect and maintain the institution and that is what we saw in ISKCON.

If we look at the history of ISKCON we will see those very prominent leaders, most of them had spiritual difficulty. Although there has been massive damage, the institution continued. I am sure many of you who have been connected to ISKCON for many years know that in South Africa, two such prominent leaders had spiritual difficulty which caused great damage to South Africa but still the institution is carrying on. Why? Because of this concept of collective management. Now the question arises that a spiritual institution needs a spiritual head. The institution needs two things just like for the body to function properly it needs very efficient powerful arms so these arms are the managing aspect but will just the arms of the body be enough? What is the most important part of the body? The head. So in this body of ISKCON the arms have been very effective in performing their roles but what is also needed is the head. Who is the head and will continue to be the head? Srila Prabhupada and that is what this book is trying to establish.

This book "Srila Prabhupada' The Founder Ācārya of ISKCON" is about one hundred and twenty pages and the main theme is only four and half pages and the remaining one hundred pages are an elaboration of the findings, of the research dwelling on the history and presenting the purpose. In 2006, the GBC formed a sub-committee called, "Prabhupāda's position committee" and they met twice every year and extensively discussed about this objective, Prabhupāda's position. Three years ago the GBC decided to write a book on this topic based on the discussion we had and the conclusion derived. We got Ravindra Svarupa prabhu one of the most brilliant writers of ISKCON and he took three years to write this book. Why three years? Because he did very extensive research and then this book was given to all the GBC members and senior devotees of our movement to peruse through it and give their input, criticism and feedback and then finally this book was published. This book is the GBC paper; GBC is establishing this position the Srila Prabhupada is THE founder Ācārya of ISKCON.

What does it mean? Srila Prabhupada is THE spiritual head of ISKCON for all time. Srila Prabhupada is the founder no one will ever contest that point! Who founded ISKCON? Srila Prabhupada. Who is the founder of ISKCON? Srila Prabhupada so that is no problem. The issue was the Ācārya aspect. What is the meaning of the word Ācārya? Ācārya means the spiritual head. Who is the spiritual head of ISKCON? Srila Prabhupada. Even though Srila Prabhupada is not

present today Srila Prabhupada is THE spiritual head of ISKCON. This shows even when Srila Prabhupada will not be here, Prabhupāda will remain THE spiritual head of ISKCON. As long as ISKCON will be there who will be the spiritual head? Srila Prabhupada. So that is the basic understanding and the purpose.

Now the question arises then, what about the present gurus or spiritual leaders, both diksha and siksha gurus? The answer to that is they will function as subservient to Srila Prabhupada and idealistically they will function under the authority of the GBC body because the GBC is the ultimate managing authority of ISKCON. To clarify this point we can say that Srila Prabhupada is THE siksha guru of ALL devotees of ISKCON, can anybody contest that? On whose teachings is ISKCON established? Srila Prabhupada. Incidentally, we have to also take note that in this ISKCON, Gaudiya Vaishnava line diksha is not so important. Our line is not a diksha parampara; our line is a siksha parampara. An example to illustrate this point is that Baladeva Vidyābhūñāēa is not a diksha disciple of Visvanātha Cakravāti Ōhakūr; Baladeva Vidyābhūñāēa is not the diksha guru of Jaganatha das Bābājē Mahārāja; Bhaktivinode Ōhākura is not a diksha disciple of Jaganatha das Bābājē Mahārāja; Gour Kishore das Bābājē Mahārāja is not a diksha disciple of Bhaktivinode Ōhākura; then what is this line? This line is siksha. In that respect we have to understand the difference between diksha and siksha. In simple words we can say diksha is the admission and siksha is the education. You got admitted to Oxford University but if you do not attend the classes what will happen? Will you get any benefit out of that? Diksha is important, admission is important but admission is not everything, education, siksha is the important aspect. Now in ISKCON whose siksha prevails? Srila Prabhupada's siksha. Every morning we give Çrémad-Bhāgavatam class based on whose books and purports? Srila Prabhupada and in the class if I say anything which is not mentioned in Srila Prabhupada's books then what will happen to me? All the devotees will pounce on me and ask me Maharaja where did you get it from? Isn't it? So Srila Prabhupada's books are actually the guideline and the basis.

Another way of looking at it is when you are functioning as diksha or siksha guru are you functioning on your own right or as a part of ISKCON? The difference is that if I had my own ashram then I could be the guru but ISKCON is not my ashram, I am part of ISKCON, a member of ISKCON so I am functioning as a part of ISKCON. An example to illustrate this point is when ISKCON authorises somebody he becomes a guru. Incidentally I want to mention that the other day Bhakti Caitanya Maharaja told me that the National Council of South Africa is proposing Nanda Kumar Prabhu to become a guru. The institute is actually giving us the responsibility or authorisation. Now tomorrow if the

GBC tells me, "Maharaja you have to stop giving initiation." Then what do I have to do? Don't I have to accept it? If I want to stay in ISKCON I have to accept it. That shows that a guru's role in ISKCON is relative not absolute, who is the absolute guru, who is THE guru of ISKCON? Srila Prabhupada.

This is how we are securing the institution of ISKCON. The GBC has taken up the natural responsibility. On one hand ISKCON has been secured very wonderfully due to this formation and functioning of the GBC. ISKCON faces many difficulties but all those difficulties have been effectively overcome by the concept and arrangement of the GBC. Everybody knows that Çréla Prabhupada is THE founder Ācārya but we felt that there is a need to emphatically let everybody know what founder Ācārya means. Have I been able to clarify it to some extent what founder Ācārya means, what Srila Prabhupada's role in ISKCON is? In this respect one question came up when I was in London. I was speaking about the same topic and one person asked, "What if some very prominent, brilliantly spiritual and an exalted personality appeared in ISKCON, what will happen? His question was, "Will he then become THE Ācārya of ISKCON?" No. I gave the example like in Christianity there had been many brilliant, spiritual and exalted personalities like Saint Francis of Assisi; who contributed incredibly to Christianity but did they eclipse Jesus' position? No they functioned as subservient to Jesus and glorified Jesus enhanced the glory of Jesus, similarly, many great personalities in ISKCON will come but what will they do? They will simply enhance the glory of Srila Prabhupada. So I have a few copies of this book which I have brought with me, how many of you want to have a copy? Okay very good. One thing Prabhupada told us, "Don't give the books for free." If one gets the book for free he would not give any value to it. He will say I got it for free so it doesn't have any value, so should I name a price or leave it up to you? Okay, I say minimum 50 Rands and if you want to give more you can because after all, this book is priceless, all Srila Prabhupada's books are priceless. What you give will go to the temple? Somebody can take the responsibility of the books and give them out. Thank you very much. All glories to Srila Prabhupada! Does anyone have any question?

2. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

↓ Is it possible to become a devotee when I, as the mother of the family is committed to become a devotee and the rest of the family is so against it, that is my husband and three children?

Yes, you can become a devotee in any situation. May I ask whose question is this? If you feel shy do not worry about it. Okay I told you that you would become a devotee and now I can see that you are a devotee. Do

you know the story of Prahlad Maharaja? No. Prahlad Maharaja was the son of the King of the demons and his father's business was to kill Kāñëa, his whole life's mission was to kill Kāñëa. When he found out that his son became a devotee of Kāñëa, he wanted to kill him. He tried to kill him in so many ways. First he ordered his body guards to kill him and they used their weapons to kill him but couldn't do that. They put him in a pit of venomous snakes, nothing happened. They tried to burn him and lit a fire with logs piled up like a mountain but nothing happened. Despite of all these difficulties, Prahlad Maharaja did not give up his love and attachment to Kāñëa. Now my question is will you give it up because some people are against your becoming a devotee? No, wonderful don't give up. Thank you so much and don't give up, Kāñëa is there whether they believe or not. Kāñëa is not only in your heart but Kāñëa is in their hearts also and Kāñëa can do anything. Maybe Kāñëa is putting you through this difficulty to make you a better devotee because that is what happens in devotion. Devotion is love; love for the Lord is called devotion. Don't we see when love is obstructed can the obstruction stop the love or does it intensify the love? So let that be with Kāñëa also. Let your love for Kāñëa increase more and more when somebody tries to obstruct it.

↓ Can you clarify the reason for the change of the yugas; Dvapara-yuga and Treta-yuga?

Good point, whose question is this? Okay very good. Generally the progression is like Satya-yuga, Dvapara-yuga then Treta-yuga and then Kali-yuga. Dvapara means the second and Treta means the third. So first, second, third and fourth but here it has become; first, third, second and fourth. The reason is Kāñëa is meant to come at the end of Dvapara-yuga and then in Kali-yuga, He would come as Caitanya Mahāprabhu to let everybody know who Kāñëa is. If the sequence was like that Dvapara-yuga then Treta-yuga and then Kali-yuga then during this whole length of Treta-yuga everybody would have forgotten; who Kāñëa is that He came, etc, etc. By this divine arrangement what happened there was a switch, Treta-yuga came before and Dvapara-yuga came after so that as the Dvapara-yuga ends and the Kali-yuga begins, Kāñëa will come as Caitanya Mahāprabhu and tell everybody who Kāñëa is because the memory of Kāñëa will be so fresh in their minds.

↓ Can you please explain the significance of Navaratri?

I am a bit surprised, I spoke about the founder Ācārya and your mind is stuck in Navaratri. I would not ask who wrote the question because I do not want to embarrass you. Please when you are sitting in a class listen to it carefully. Don't let your mind hover around Navaratri or Shivaratri. Navaratri is the time when Mother Durga comes to this planet. This earth planet is her father's

house because she is the daughter of Himalayas and her *sasurbari*, her in-laws house is Mount Kailash. From the above of Lord Shiva she comes to the earth planet to visit her parents and other relatives like us so that is called Navaratri.

↓ Your Grace confirms that this movement will spread in every town and village but in recent times we find so many devotees leaving, how can we keep the devotees in ISKCON?

Don't worry they will come back. It is said in Sanskrit the "ri" aspect of Kāññā is like a hook so once you have chanted the holy name, once you have swallowed the hook, you are hooked. So those who are going out, it's a good thing to do as they can see what kind of juice there is outside and when they see that it is all so dry, Kāññā Consciousness is so full of Nectar then they will automatically come back. As you are saying so many devotees have left so what should you do? Please try to bring them back. If you are concerned about their welfare, then, please try to bring them back. Besides that, ISKCON's door is ALWAYS open. Anybody can come back to ISKCON anytime. I have seen those who have even turned against ISKCON, they even went to the press and video shows speaking bad about ISKCON, even they when they came back ISKCON said welcome home because that is what Prabhupāda wants. Prabhupāda wants to include everybody we do not want to exclude anybody, we want to include everybody. At the same time Srila Prabhupada also said, "ISKCON is not a place for lazies and crazies."

↓ Comment: Thank you very much for your association.

Okay, thank you very much, whose comment was that? Anyway I know that you are feeling shy. Thank you very much, okay, I think that was the prelude.

↓ Will all the negative history on diksha gurus that have fallen down I find it difficult to trust existing gurus to go back to Lord Kāññā. Can I not just take Prabhupāda as my guru without formal initiation?

Okay, good question, now I know why you didn't raise your hand. You see difficulties had been there in ISKCON but ISKCON is establishing the perfect process for spiritual advancement. One way to look at it is ISKCON diksha gurus had so many difficulties, but if you look at it properly in ISKCON, they you will say some had difficulties but so many others did not have difficulties. Why judge the whole movement based on this negative perception? Rather look at the positive way and see the benefit of it, why do we need to take diksha? Why do we need to take diksha? Because the spiritual process is a process of surrender. You have to surrender. Actually our problem is, in the material

nature, we don't want to surrender rather we want that everybody else should surrender to me. I am not going to surrender to anybody. Isn't that a typical materialistic mentality? Spiritual life is diametrically opposed to material attitude. In the material nature nobody wants to surrender and in the spiritual nature everybody is surrendered. Surrender to Kāññā and Kāññā's devotees, representatives. Now it's difficult to surrender therefore we need to find at least one person to whom I can say okay I will surrender to him and you look for that person and then eventually you surrender to him. In ISKCON who are you surrendering too ultimately? You are surrendering to Srila Prabhupada, as you have said I will surrender to Srila Prabhupada. How will you know when you are surrendering to Srila Prabhupada? How will you know if Srila Prabhupada is accepting you or not? Therefore you need someone to officially surrender to and ultimately you are surrendering to the institution. The gurus in ISKCON, what are they telling the disciples? I am a transparent via medium. Guru is not the end, guru is the medium and he is transparent, transparent nothing stops, everything passes through. So you come to him and he offers you to Srila Prabhupada. So that is why you need to take diksha to officially surrender to somebody and when you surrender to him because he is Kāññā's representative, Kāññā will accept you. If you don't want to go that far, because he is representing ISKCON, then ISKCON is accepting you. Because ISKCON is accepting you then Srila Prabhupada is accepting you and because Srila Prabhupada is accepting you, Kāññā is accepting you for sure. For now I suggest, look around, shop around but do surrender.

↓ With ISKCON growing so much and a lot of new ideas to spread Kāññā Consciousness how can we stay true to Srila Prabhupada?

Yes, line up to those ideas that are meant to spread Kāññā Consciousness that is how you remain true to Srila Prabhupada. Do you want ISKCON to grow then if some effort is made to expand ISKCON what should you do? Stand aside and watch the fun? No, line up, commit yourself because your contribution and involvement.

3.SRILA PRABHUPADA APPRECIATION

Srila Prabhupada is THE spiritual head of ISKCON for all time. Srila Prabhupada is the founder no one will ever contest that point! Who founded ISKCON? Srila Prabhupada. Who is the founder of ISKCON? Srila Prabhupada so that is no problem. The issue was the Ācārya aspect. What is the meaning of the word Ācārya? Ācārya means the spiritual head. Who is the spiritual head of ISKCON? Srila Prabhupada. Even though Srila Prabhupada is not present today Srila Prabhupada is THE spiritual head of ISKCON. This shows even when Srila Prabhupada will not be here,

Prabhupāda will remain THE spiritual head of ISKCON. As long as ISKCON will be there who will be the spiritual head? Srila Prabhupada.



4.GURU MAHARAJA'S INSTRUCTIONS

- ⇓ One thing Prabhupāda told us, “Don’t give the books for free.” If one gets the book for free he would not give any value to it. He will say I got it for free so it doesn’t have any value;
- ⇓ Srila Prabhupada is THE spiritual head of ISKCON for all time. Srila Prabhupada is the founder no one will ever contest that point! Who founded ISKCON? Srila Prabhupada. Who is the founder of ISKCON? Srila Prabhupada so that is no problem; and
- ⇓ Even though Srila Prabhupada is not present today Srila Prabhupada is THE spiritual head of ISKCON. This shows even when Srila Prabhupada will not be here, Prabhupāda will remain THE spiritual head of ISKCON. As long as ISKCON will be there who will be the spiritual head? Srila Prabhupada. So that is the basic understanding and the purpose.

The content of this E-magazine is based on a lecture entitled, “SRILA PRABHUPADA’S POSITION AS THE FOUNDER ĀCĀRYA OF ISKCON” given by HH Bhakti Charu Swami Maharaja at ISKCON Midrand in 2015)
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