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## THE JOURNEY TO PREMA

~ A Course in the Science of Bhakti-Yoga ~

Lesson 11

**Please Chant:**

**Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa - Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare**  
**Hare Rāma Hare Rāma - Rāma Rāma Hare Hare**

### IN THIS LESSON:

- Acintya - Śaktī + The Four Defects
- The Boat of Knowledge + Logic and Understanding
- Gaining Understandings + The Spiritual Worlds
- Lord Balarāma + The Pañca-tattva's Special Importance
- Lord Caitanya's Special Qualities
- No Sinner to Fallen + Review & Closing
- Pocket Aide / Study Guide

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His Divine Grace

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja  
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## THE JOURNEY TO PREMA – LESSON 11

Dear servant of God,

Please accept our sincere respects as we bow to humbly offer them to you. All glories to Śrīla Gurudeva!

Welcome to Lesson 10. It's so nice to be with you again. Thank you so much for staying the course with us and for allowing us to share the glories of bhakti-yoga and the Lord's mercies with you.

We have a great lesson for you this month. We're going to start it out by talking about the fact that many spiritual truths are difficult for our tiny minds to comprehend. Then we'll discuss some of the reasons this is true.

As part of that discussion we will tell you about the boat of knowledge and how we can cross the material ocean by safely situating ourselves in that boat.

We're also going to discuss some of these difficult to understand subjects, starting with a section on the spiritual worlds. This will be a fairly lengthy section that covers many different and interesting tattvas.

After that we'll revisit the various members of the Pañca-tattva, this time in light of some of the other teachings we'll share. At the end of these sections we'll focus on the special significance of Lord Caitanya.

Just before we close out this month's journey we'll walk you through a section on the importance of taking shelter of the Pañca-tattva. Then we'll close out with some real nectar, a story of one of Lord Caitanya's pastimes.

We hope you're ready to expand your current understandings, and put your faith and effort into gaining some new ones as well, as you take a few more steps on your journey to prema.

**Going Beyond the Mind:****Understanding the Inconceivable**

When it comes to understanding tattvas, the mind can be a very limited tool. This fact can be made quite clear to us if we look into the meaning of a certain Sanskrit word that is often used when referring to the types of spiritual realities that most of us find hard to grasp. This word is **acintya + uh-chin-tyuh**.

Acintya is usually translated as "**inconceivable**." If we explore the English definitions of this word we will find that in this case the English term does an excellent job of conveying the Sanskrit meaning.

If we look up the word "conceive" we will find a variety of meanings, two of which are relevant here. The first is, "to create in the mind"; the second, "to believe." Therefore, something is **inconceivable** if we are **unable to create it in the mind or unable to believe it**.

It is important to note that these definitions do not say that the subject presented to the mind is impossible. "Inconceivable" only refers to the fact that something is **beyond the mind's limited range of abilities**.

When it comes to going beyond the mind's limitations in order to understand tattvas, we need to always be aware of the fact that the Lord's mind has zero limitations. The Lord's mind is able to create an unlimited number of things that we are unable to create, and the Lord is able to do an unlimited number of things that we are unable to do.

In Lesson 5 we discussed the term śaktī. Śaktī refers to the energies, the powers, the potencies of the Lord. As jīvas we can possess a limited number of śaktīs, to a limited degree, but the Lord possesses an unlimited number of śaktīs to unlimited levels of strength.

It is because of His unlimited nature that He possesses acintya-śaktī, the power to create and do things that are often beyond the mind's ability to grasp or understand.

It is important to note this underlined word, "often." We point this out to you because there are those who have the ability to understand many tattvas that most of us find to be inconceivable. This group of enlightened individuals includes exalted personalities like Śrīla Gurudeva, and other sādhus as well.

It is through understanding this fact that we can expand the capabilities of the mind, so that we too can begin to grasp some

of these otherwise inconceivable realities.

Later in this lesson we will be returning to this discussion of the expanded abilities of advanced devotees. We want to share with you both the reason they possess expanded minds, and the ways in which we can work to expand our own abilities to understand the inconceivable.

Before we do that, let's look at some of the things that create limitations of the mind. Becoming aware of these factors can also help us to understand the mind, thereby allowing us to better analyze things, before we let the mind reject something, simply because it is not yet able to understand it.

**The Four Defects**

Our ability to understand tattvas is hindered in many different ways. Our first difficulty arises the moment our consciousness enters into the realm of māyā's influence. Immediately upon our arrival here, the subtle body attaches itself to us and covers us over with the false ego, the intelligence, and the mind.

Our problems only become worse as our coverings become denser in the form of the material body, which includes the knowledge acquiring senses.

If all of our senses, which include the mind, were perfectly functioning tools, then they would only act on our behalf. Unfortunately, they are far from perfect. In fact, the Vedas tell us that our senses are always subject to four types of defects.

These defects affect our ability to understand both material and spiritual realities. Let's take a look at these defects and the various difficulties they create.

**The four defects of the senses are: they are imperfect; they are subject to illusion; they cause us to have a tendency to cheat; and they make mistakes.**

**The first defect, the imperfect nature of the senses**, affects both the knowledge acquiring senses and the mind. This defect can easily be depicted with just a couple of examples.

Do you hear anything when someone blows a dog whistle? Of course you don't, but dogs do. This is an excellent example because it shows two important truths. First, it shows that our sense of hearing is imperfect. It is limited to a certain range of frequencies. When the whistle was blown there was a sound, it was just made in a frequency range that was too high for a human ear to detect.

This example also shows that just because we cannot detect something with our limited, imperfect senses, which does not mean it does not exist. The fact that a dog can hear these high pitched sounds proves this point.

Of course these imperfections extend to our other senses as well. Dogs can also smell things we cannot smell, and many animals, from whales to dolphins, can understand sounds and signals that make absolutely no sense to our imperfect minds.

If this is true of material things, then it is also true of spiritual things as well. Just because we cannot detect the soul with our imperfect senses does not mean it does not exist. If we are wise we will always keep this defect in mind before we dismiss a spiritual truth, simply because it is beyond the ability of our limited senses to detect.

The second example of our imperfect senses deals with the mind. Its ability to sort out all of the information it receives, and to use it to make decisions that will benefit our lives, is obviously imperfect. If the mind were perfect, would there be a need for prisons? Knowing that the mind is imperfect will cause a wise man to never fully trust its decisions.

**The second defect of the senses is that they are subject to illusion.** Seeing "water" in the dessert, where none exists, perfectly illustrates this defect. Food manufacturers rely heavily on the imperfect tongue when they create mixtures of chemicals to use as artificial flavors. And clearly, the mind is deeply in illusion when it accepts the belief that we "are" the material body or that we can become happy by satisfying the demands of the pleasure seeking senses.

**The third defect, the cheating propensity**, shows its face on the material level when we lie to ourselves or to others in order to gain some material "advantage." On the spiritual level we cheat

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ourselves when we allow the mind to reject things simply because they are inconceivable to it. We are also cheaters if we fail to pass-on spiritual truths to others, or if we pass-on false teachings, claiming they are true.

When we detect the mind trying to cheat us in this way we should stop to consider the fact that the mind is used to analyzing things based upon highly limited material considerations, such as time and physical space, whereas spiritual realities are never limited by these factors.

**The final defect, the tendency of the senses to make mistakes,** can cause us great difficulties, even when we are able to avoid the other three. There may be times where the senses provide us with valid information, where there is no illusion involved in the information or in the way we processed it, where we do not change or reject the information due to our tendency to cheat, and yet still, because of our tendency to make mistakes, we simply misinterpret or miscalculate the information, and thus we end up coming to the wrong conclusion.

When this defect creeps in it can cause us great troubles, often because we are convinced that the conclusion we reached is correct. For example, if we told someone we would meet them at 9 A.M., but we wrote down 10 A.M. on our calendar, we might very well show up, and, not finding them there, become angry with them, when the mistake was actually ours.

When we come to realize the huge impact these defects can have on our lives it becomes easy to understand why so many of us become lost, why we wander around blindly, trapped inside of a mysterious maze that we are unable to find our way out of.

It's no wonder why most of us stay so confused. The imperfect mind relies on the imperfect senses to make its imperfect decisions. There has to be a better deal with the minds as we go through our lives.

### **The Boat of Knowledge – All Aboard**

Now that you have some knowledge of the Lord's acintya-śaktī, and now that we've shared the four defects of the senses with you, if you put those topics together, how difficult do you think it will be to go beyond the limits of the mind and senses and to gain an understanding of spiritual realities?

The answer might surprise you. **If** we can learn to have full faith in the Vedas, and **if** we can learn to rely **only** on knowledge that we receive from the Vedas, Śrī guru, and the sādhus, then we have an excellent chance at gaining these understandings.

We will start out with several great advantages, **if** we can do these two things. Our first advantage will be that these sources will never provide us with inaccurate or unreliable information like the senses will. These sources provide perfect knowledge.

Our second advantage will come from the fact that these sources are totally beyond the influences of māyā. By following their instruction we will not be led into illusion, in fact, we will be led in just the opposite direction. They will not lead us outward, toward temporary pleasures and suffering, they will lead us inward, toward the permanent treasure of prema. This will clear up the mysteries of the maze, and eliminate our blindness. With the torch of true knowledge, they will expose the illusions that māyā keeps in her bag of tricks.

By learning to rely on these sources we will be able to overcome our past mistakes and misunderstandings, and we will be able to avoid future one's as well. In the Gītā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa assures us of this fact. He tells us that **those who rely on spiritual knowledge will never be deluded again. (BG 4.35)**

Unless, and until, we reach an advanced and pure state of consciousness, we will still have a tendency to cheat and make mistakes. However, if we can stay firmly situated on the path of bhakti, Śrī Kṛṣṇa will both forgive us for our sins and mistakes, and help us avoid making them in the future.

He gives us this assurance in the very next verse of the Gītā when He tells Arjuna that **even if we are great sinners (persons who have made many mistakes) we can cross over both our sins and the ocean of material miseries by situating ourselves in the boat of spiritual knowledge. (BG 4.36)**

If you are deeply studying this lesson, and if your purpose in

taking this course is to gain as much spiritual knowledge as you can, then now would be a good time to ask a couple of questions. "How can I get myself in to that boat?" and, "Will being in that boat help me to understand the inconceivable?"

Actually, we've tied these two topics together on purpose, because they go so well together, and because both of these questions can be answered by examining another quote from the Gītā, that was given just before the last two quotes above.

Just before Lord Kṛṣṇa told us about the benefits of situating ourselves in the boat of spiritual knowledge, He shared one of His most important teachings. This teaching should not be new to you by now, but that's okay. You know how we just **love** to repeat these types of critical truths.

With a short list of instructions, Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells us where the boat is, how to get in it, how to find out how it works, how to provide fuel for it, and another one of the reasons we should all want to go aboard.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa tells us that **the way to acquire spiritual knowledge is to humbly bow down to those who possess this knowledge, to ask them questions about spiritual truths, and to serve them as well. (BG 4.34)**

With these instructions He has told us that the boat of spiritual knowledge is located at the lotus feet of the sādhus, He tells us that we can get into the boat by humbly offering our respects to them, that we can learn to operate the boat by asking them spiritual questions, and that we can provide fuel to the boat by offering our service to them.

If we can just follow these simple instructions we can cross over the ocean of material sufferings and avoid being deluded. If we can whole heartedly follow this instruction, with total, single minded purpose, we can be assured that we will not be situated in a leaky little rowboat; we will instead be riding in a fine, unsinkable, quick sailing ship.

In the same verse, while giving us a great reason to get aboard, He also tells us why being in that boat (or on that ship) will help us understand the inconceivable.

He tells us that we should approach these sādhus because they can "impart" spiritual knowledge to us because they themselves fully possess this knowledge.

The use of the word "impart" in this verse has a great deal of significance. The definition of this word is "to grant or bestow."

Śrī guru and the sādhus possess most of the śaktīs that the Lord possesses, although, in most cases, to a lesser degree. However, there is one śaktī that the Lord gladly allows His pure devotees full possession of. This potency is called **Kṛpā + Kri-puh śaktī**, which is, **the power to give the Lord's mercy to others.**

It is because they possess this śaktī that the sādhus can "impart" spiritual knowledge and understandings to us. By this we mean to say that they can literally reveal these understandings to us. Teachers of material science do not have this ability. They can tell you something, but they cannot reach into your heart or consciousness and simply reveal things like Śrī guru and the sādhus can.

An interesting truth regarding this ability is this: you, the real you, the perfectly pure spiritual consciousness, already knows these spiritual truths. They are simply covered over by various aspects of the Lord's māyā-śaktī. Since Śrī guru and the sādhus have overcome this external śaktī, and since they are fully in touch with the Lord's Kṛpā-śaktī, which is one of His more powerful, internal potencies, they can use this superior potency to remove māyā's influence. When they do this, they "impart" us with spiritual understandings. They do not actually "give" us this knowledge; instead they remove our obstacles, which then allow us to remember what our pure consciousness knew all along.

In fact, the Vedas tell us this: **We cannot regain our spiritual understandings without the assistance of Śrī guru or the sādhus. When we humbly bow down to them, ask them questions, and serve them, they will use their Kṛpā-śaktī to ensure that we become properly, fully, and safely situated on the ship of spiritual knowledge. There is no other way to get on board this ship.**

Although this teaching is quite clear and easy to grasp, many of us are still unwilling to follow it.

We put this teaching in bold face type because we want you to accept and to never forget this truth. This teaching is critical. Almost all of us will come across teachings that we find to be inconceivable, ones that the mind wants to reject. When that happens, if we want to go beyond the mind, we will need to follow this teaching.

Before we move on and begin to share some teachings that many of us find inconceivable (at least at first) let's take a look at a couple of other things that affect the mind's ability to accept the things it cannot grasp.

### Logic and Evidence

Since most inmates have had some experience with the workings of evidence, let's start there.

Many criminal cases are won or lost, not upon the evidence that was gathered or presented at trial, but upon the reliability of the evidence. If a witness is shown to be a dishonest person, with a history of telling lies, his testimony will often be rejected as unreliable. And even seemingly reliable testimony, given by two witnesses who appear to be 100% honest, becomes suspect when their two versions of a story don't match.

Lord Caitanya was very aware of the importance of the reliability of evidence, and left us a teaching on this subject. He tells us that **we should draw all of our knowledge, and make all of our decisions, based upon the only truly trustworthy, fully accurate, never contradictory evidence that exists; the Vedas, as they are explained by Śrī guru and the sādhus.**

You may ask why we had to add the qualification of, "As they are explained by Śrī guru and the sādhu." Why couldn't we just say to rely on the Vedas themselves?

If you were to go back to Lesson 2 you might find that your questions were answered. To be a true guru or sādhu one must be practicing bhakti-yoga. In the Gītā, Lord Kṛṣṇa has explained that only those who practice pure bhakti-yoga can truly understand Him. This is why we must receive the knowledge of the Vedas from these sources.

Many non-devotees write books about the Vedas, or give classes or lectures about them. Since they themselves are not qualified to understand the Lord, their explanations are sure to be faulty.

On top of this problem comes the fact that non-devotees do not possess the Lord's Kṛpā-śaktī, so they are further unqualified to uncover our spiritual understandings.

As we have discussed in the past, to an unqualified person, the map of the Vedas can be tricky. Certain sections seem to extol a variety of paths and practices, and some sections may even appear to be contradictory, this is why we need the assistance of those who fully understand the Vedas, in order to understand them ourselves.

We do not need to know and understand all of the teachings of the Vedas in order to complete our journey to prema. In the Gītā the Lord tells us that **all of the teachings of the Vedas are fulfilled and all of their benefits are received by one who understands the real purpose of their teachings. (BG 2.46)**

As we've told you before, understanding requires action. So if someone is not practicing bhakti, he clearly does not understand it, for bhakti is the only means to attain prema, and attaining prema is the real purpose of the Vedic teachings. **Lord Caitanya has stated that we must practice what we preach. He tells us that if someone is not practicing bhakti, he cannot properly teach it.**

All spiritual knowledge can be revealed to us by the Lord and His pure devotees, but we cannot uncover our spiritual understandings through our own independent study or efforts.

The only evidence we should trust and rely on is that which we receive from those, whose every act clearly proves that they themselves understand the only source of truly reliable evidence.

That is what this course is built upon, and why the path to prema is paved with the evidence we receive from Śrī guru and the sādhus, for only they possess both a true understanding of the

Vedas and the Lord's Kṛpā-śaktī.

Now that we've taken a look at the type of evidence that we must rely on, if we ever hope to grasp teachings that go beyond the mind, let's look at logic to see if it has value, as a tool to help us uncover our spiritual understandings. Before we tell you what the sādhus say we want you to take a guess. Do you think logic is a tool we can rely on?

Before we look at the answer to that question, let's look at some of the general principles involved.

Logic, which contains and involves the use of arguments, is a tool that the mind has a strong tendency to rely on. Before it makes a decision it will often argue a case from a variety of angles. Although it may want to believe that it is weighing the evidence in a fair and unbiased way, there will be many times when this is not true.

The mind's viewpoint is usually skewed by factors and motives that it may not even be aware of. These include such things as saṁskāras, the demands of the senses (including its own demands), and the four defects.

With these things in mind, has your opinion on the value of logic changed?

Now we're going to begin to tell you what the sādhus teach us about the use of logic, but don't jump to any conclusions. You may have to read these points several times before you come to a clear understanding about the value of logic when it comes to spiritual truths.

**1)** Reasoning that is based only on logic is always crippled when evaluating inconceivable subjects, since logic and argument have no access to the realm of spiritual realities.

**2)** One cannot understand bhakti-tattva by dry logic alone, because logic has no secure basis, and arguments can go on endlessly. However, if one has gained even a little taste, for the scriptures that establish the spiritual truths related to the science of bhakti, then he can comprehend these teachings.

**3)** Arguments based on logic can only be applied to material subjects. Because they are not on the same level as spiritual truths, tattvas are beyond material restrictions, so we cannot use material considerations to help us grasp them. When dealing with acintya subjects using arguments based on logic is undesirable and useless.

**4)** You should never allow logic to destroy any faith that you have, or understandings you have come to, in regards to spiritual truths.

**5)** If you are interested in logic and argument, then you should apply it to the unlimited (and therefore inconceivable) mercy of Lord Caitanya.

**6)** Those who are interested in understanding the philosophy of Śrī Caitanya, are welcome to do so through logic and argument.

**7)** Some people worship objects of the material world, such as the sun, as God. When trying to determine if this is a valuable practice, one should examine the situation using logic.

Do those seven statements make the value of logic clear? Do you think there are contradictions in these statements? Let's look at them closely, to see if we can sort this out, of course to do so we'll have to use logic! (How's that for a paradox).

Statements 1, 2, and 3 do not completely rule out the use of logic, although, at first glance, they may seem to. Statements 1 and 2 only rule out logic that is based entirely on reasoning and logic. In other words, we can't rely on arguments that are created by the mind, to try to understand things that the mind is unable to create. That's a perfectly fair and reasonable conclusion.

If however, we allow ourselves to use tattvas as the basis for our arguments, then we are on solid ground. For instance, it may be inconceivable to us that the soul is eternal, but if we rely on this truth to argue that Arjuna could not "kill" anyone in the upcoming war, then our argument has basis and value.

This logic applies to statement 3 as well, but here we find another consideration worth noting. When it comes to material subjects, logic is fully approved. Therefore, if we are using material objects, to create analogies that describe tattvas, we can use logic within those analogies to help us understand the

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inconceivable. For example, the perfect workings of the law of karma are inconceivable to most of us. To fully understand how it is possible for every single thing that happens to us to be a result of a former action makes for a very complex system. And yet, from a material stand point, scientists accept this principle. They consider it to be an absolute fact that for every action there is an equal reaction. So, if we use this material fact, to argue in support of an inconceivable spiritual one, then we also stay within the boundaries of these statements.

Let's skip over Statement 4 for a moment and look at statements 5, 6, and 7 which all welcome the use of logic, even when examining spiritual subjects. Upon close analysis we will find that the same considerations we just went over are applicable here as well, but we'll add one more for you to be aware of.

As we grow in spiritual strength, subjects that we at one time found to be inconceivable, may very well lose their mystery, and become fully understood. On this same point, comes the fact that the sādhus also possess many understandings we do not. Together, this illustrates why we can use spiritual truths and material examples to help us broaden our vision, for sometimes, in looking at things from a variety of angles, we will find the perspective that finally allows us to bring into focus a picture that had always been hazy before.

Now let's look at statement 4, for this statement really holds the key to the entire question of the value of logic in our quest for spiritual understandings. To restate one of our favorite teachings, **faith is the foundation of bhakti**, not blind faith, but faith based on both a strong trust in the Vedas, and upon whatever spiritual understandings we have developed.

If we come to a teaching, whether it be new to us, or one we have already accepted, we must keep the watchful eye of the intelligence trained on the trick-filled workings of the mind.

Out of its natural tendency, the mind will argue, both for and against, the acceptance of those things that it has trouble grasping. When we find it trying to damage our faith through logic, or when we find it doing battle with things we've already begun to understand or accept, we have to be wise enough to stop its ramblings, and to reject its rejection of spiritual truths. On the other hand, if the mind is doing its best to argue in support of a spiritual reality, if it is fighting to expand its horizons and to accept even those things that "don't seem logical", then we can allow it to work in our behalf.

So that's really the answer to the logic dilemma. Logic is a tool of the tool of the mind. Both logic and the mind can be used to fill pot holes and build bridges for our journey to prema, or they can cause us to question, doubt, and even abandon the path of bhakti. Questions are always fine, but when logic and the mind become tools of destruction, we need to be able to shut them down before they create havoc in our spiritual lives.

Whenever the mind wants to "have its say in the matter", it's okay to listen, as long as we do so with caution, as we always need to be aware of the fact that it may be doing its thinking under the influence of many things, such as samskāras, attachments, or the demands of the senses. We also must watch out for the fact that, as one of our senses, it is always subject to mistakes, illusions, and our tendency to cheat.

Ultimately, if we are wise, we will always accept only that logic which fully supports the only perfect evidence, the Vedic teachings as revealed by Śrī guru and the sādhus.

Remember, the Lord is unlimited, He can easily create or do anything we could ever imagine, and the things we can't, as well.

### **Faith and the Inconceivable**

So far in this course we've given you various definitions of the word faith. Two of them are worth examining here as they apply to the Lord's acintya-śakti.

Let's look at faith in the Vedas first. If we can become true possessors of this type of faith, then it will be much easier to deal with acintya teachings. Through true faith we will be able to accept even those things that are beyond the grasp of our limited minds. Once we have accepted something to be true, it will be fairly easy for us to move that teaching from a level of

acceptance to a level of understanding. Whereas, if we were still fighting the original acceptance of a truth: How will we be able to understand it?

This brings us to another definition we gave you for faith – "belief." By belief, in this sense, we refer to a much shakier view of a teaching, one that we have not fully rejected, but we have not yet fully accepted either. The mind's desire to debate is much more likely to do battle against these "beliefs". And through debate, we open ourselves up to the four defects.

For those who possess full faith in the Vedas the journey to prema will be a well-lighted one. The flame of the mind will stay steady. They will be able to stay focused on their bhakti practices, and the goal they seek.

For those who lack this faith, and feel a need to "believe" something before they will they accept it, understandings may be harder to come by. Moving from a shaky, up for debate belief, to an understanding can be a very tough move.

Their journey will also be a more perilous one. The flame of their mind will flicker, as it pauses to decide whether or not to "believe" a spiritual reality. These debates can even cause them to fall from the path, if the mind decides to reject a teaching simply because they don't "believe" it, in other words, simply because their limited minds can't grasp its truth.

Fortunately, due to the unlimited mercy of the Lord and His devotees, and thanks to the kṛpā-śakti they possess, there is still a great deal of hope, even for these struggling individuals.

### **Understandings through Association**

Every one of us has a chance to understand otherwise inconceivable truths through association with the sādhus. Many people, who are now devotees, have had direct personal experiences of the shift in consciousness that took place when they began associating with a sādhu. Whether they relied on shaky beliefs, or were entirely faithless, they began to receive insight into these truths when they associated with these possessors of kṛpā-śakti.

Through this association our hearts become purified, and when the heart is pure, the mind will follow. It will begin to accept truths it formerly rejected, and its flame will begin to burn steady.

We openly and honestly admit to you that the teachings of the Vedas can be confusing at times, and that some teachings may even seem to be contradictory. Some may strike you as important, right from the start, while others may seem trivial and insignificant. There will even be those that are easy to understand amongst those you find impossible to grasp.

The teaching, that we must associate with the sādhus and take shelter of a guru, may fall into one of these categories. But, no matter your current view, we beg you to take it to heart.

The Vedas make it very clear that we will not reach our goal without the mercy of a pure devotee. They also make it clear that such devotees are very rare.

When Lord Caitanya was here, He revealed advanced teachings that were unknown prior to His visit. In order to rise to a level where we can enter into the moods that these teachings require, we must have the guidance of someone who understands and practices these advanced levels of bhakti.

These are some of the reasons that we put such emphasis on our request for you to take shelter of Śrīla Gurudeva. He freely distributed teachings on these high levels of bhakti, even when others opposed his doing so. He personally translated books by our great gurus, including the direct associates of Lord Caitanya, in order to preserve these truths, and to make them more widely available, and he spoke about these truths in the lectures he gave.

Śrīla Gurudeva is a pure devotee whose mercy knows no bounds. Many of the advanced teachings he shared remain inconceivable, even to devotees who practice the more basic levels of bhakti. This is often because they lack the desire, or the willingness, to take shelter of a highly advanced devotee like Śrīla Gurudeva, who can guide them to these understandings. By taking his shelter, these teachings and understandings will be made available to you.

In due time, in the proper course of your advancement along

the bhakti path, as you become more serious in your practices, you will most likely want to connect with a guru who is still in a body that is physically present. We will be discussing this step in upcoming lessons. However, until you reach that point, and even after, you can still take shelter of Śrīla Gurudeva and receive his mercy and guidance.

We do our best to make our course understandable to all levels of students, and we try to present it in a logical (there's that word again) and progressive way. But we also want you to realize that our goal is to lead you to these higher levels of bhakti.

As you progress you will need to shift your focus from understanding things with the mind, to doing things from the heart. This can be a difficult shift for some. Restrained by the mind, and its tendency to want to put things to the test of logic, many people will shy away from something that doesn't appeal to the mind's sense of reasoning. Others can be restrained, even if the mind accepts a truth, because they are unable to arouse the pure emotions that reside in their hearts.

If we reach these points of restraint, our only hope will be the mercy of a pure devotee, whose heart is fully immersed in these moods. Śrīla Gurudeva was just such a guru, and that is why it is impossible for us to exaggerate the benefits you will receive if you focus the practices we shared with you in lessons 2 and 8 on Śrīla Gurudeva.

Remember, the heart is where your prema lies. If something remains inconceivable to the heart, or restrains it from opening up to the full range of emotions that lie hidden there, it will also prevent you from reaching the end of your journey to the highest levels of prema.

We hope our discussion about going beyond the mind to understand the inconceivable, and getting beyond the restraints of the heart to experience the inconceivable bliss of prema has been of benefit to you. We now ask you to watch out for the four defects, to board the boat of knowledge, to rely on the best evidence available, to carefully and properly use your logic, and to take shelter of Śrīla Gurudeva as you get ready to explore the realm of inconceivable realities.

10, 9, 8... Get ready for a journey to another dimension..., 7, 6, 5, 4... Prepare yourself for an adventure... 3, 2, 1... we're going to take you to... **ZERO! LIFTOFF!**

### **The Spiritual Worlds**

Although this course has already used the terms, "spiritual worlds", and "heavenly planets", we've yet to give you any real idea of what goes on in these realms.

We did mention a little bit about the heavenly planets. We told you that this term does not apply to places where we can spend eternity. On these planets the jīvas do have extremely long lifetimes, but still, all is temporary there. Therefore, when weighed against eternity, even the stays on these planets only occupy tiny flashes of time.

The residents of these planets do experience much greater opportunities to enjoy their material senses, and there is much less material misery there. Yet still, reaching these temporary abodes is definitely not our goal. In the Gītā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa gives us two teachings about these heavenly planets. Both of these truths should help us understand why we do not want to make an effort to go there.

In verses **9.21** and **9.22** He tells us that **those who attain the heavenly planets can only stay there until they exhaust the credits they had earned to get them there, after which they will return to this world. Thus, all they have really achieved is repeated birth and death in material bodies.**

And in verse **8.16** He informs us that **every material planet, from the most hellish planets to the heavenly ones, are places where the residents must suffer the miseries that accompany repeated birth and death.**

These pieces of evidence should convince us not to devote any time or energy into going to these planets.

Now that we've done our best to steer our ship clear of these crash sites, let's fly far beyond them, and perhaps far beyond the mind, to the realm of the inconceivable spiritual worlds.

Have you ever looked into a clear night sky, seen the vast number of stars there, and decided that the size of the universe must be unlimited? If you did, you were wrong. Each universe has a limited size, even though that size may be inconceivable to us.

That is why another meaning of the word **māyā** is **"that which can be measured."**

Of course, since there is no māyā in the realm of the spiritual worlds, at least no material māyā, there are many things there that cannot be measured. For example there are an unlimited number of spiritual "planets" and the size of the spiritual realm is unlimited as well.

The Sanskrit word for this realm has been translated as "the spiritual sky." Each and every "planet" is called a **Vaikuṅṭhalokas + Vie-koont-huh-lo-kuh** (lo like go). The meaning of this word is, **"a planet where no anxiety exists."** This term comes from a combination of three words. **"vai"** means **"without,"** **"kuṅṭha"** means **"anxiety,"** and **"loka"** means **"planet."** They are given this name because no anxiety exists in the spiritual sky. (You should also notice that there is no "th" sound, as in the English word "the." In Sanskrit these two letters are pronounced separately, as in **"not hard."**

There are also no separate solar systems, galaxies, or universes there. Everything is part of the unlimited whole.

Before we go on to explore this realm, let's pause for just a moment. We want to share a few more comments about inconceivable realities.

As we share these teachings, please be fully aware that the Vedas themselves recognize that many of the Lord's creations and activities are inconceivable. If you find yourself unable to grasp something, try not to feel like you are at a loss, or that you are "wrong" in any way. As we've explained, our limited minds are not always ready or able to accept these things. If you find the mind can't grasp these truths, relax, it's perfectly understandable.

For now, we ask that you simply do your best to learn these teachings. As you place them into your memory you should ask Śrīla Gurudeva and the Lord to help you understand them. You may be surprised to find out just how quickly the mind can expand, and how much it will be able to accept and understand when you receive the mercy of the Lord or His pure devotee.

Kṛpā-śaktī can make the unlimited size of acintya-śaktī seem small. Of course that's sort of inconceivable too, isn't it?

We now return the microphone to your flight attendant.

Amongst the unlimited number of Vaikuṅṭhalokas, one reigns supreme. This planet goes by several names. For the purposes of this course we've chosen to use the one that we think will be easiest for you to identify with and remember. We've chosen the name **Kṛṣṇaloka - the planet of Kṛṣṇa.**

We chose this name because you are already slightly familiar with Kṛṣṇa, and because this is the planet where Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa live, and engage in Their eternal pastimes. These two factors should help you remember both its name, and what takes place there.

Kṛṣṇaloka is unlike any other planet, even the other Vaikuṅṭhalokas. As we describe the spiritual realm, these differences will come out.

Let's hear about a description of the spiritual sky that is given in the Vedas. Then we'll tell you some of the ways the sādhus have interpreted this description, in their attempts to help us grasp these inconceivable realities.

The Vedas tell us that the spiritual sky is shaped like a fully bloomed lotus flower. Many of you may not know what a lotus flower looks like, but as you can see on the next page, it shares some characteristics with sunflowers, which you are likely familiar with.

Both have a large center area which is surrounded by a great number of petals. All of the petals are separate from the other petals, but they are all connected to the center. The petals of these flowers also overlap each other to varying degrees. The shape of the petals of these two flowers is somewhat different however. The lotus flower has petals that are shaped like a long ellipse,

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with points on the end. Picture a footballs shape, only slightly more elongated, and with pointed end.

The sādhus have described the areas/parts of this flower in various ways, with terms such as levels, compartments, petals, planets, and even dimensions. As we continue to describe this amazing realm you will be able to see why each of these terms applies in its own way.

The entire center area of this flower makes up the “planet” of Kṛṣṇaloka. An unlimited number of Vaikuṅṭhalokas are situated on the petals of this flower.

This description becomes even more complex when we find out that the “planet” of Kṛṣṇaloka is also described as resembling a lotus flower.

Following through with that description, we find that the center portion of the Kṛṣṇaloka flower/planet/



dimension is occupied by a rural village. This village is called **Vṛndavāna + Vrīn-da-vun** (da like dot). The inhabitants of this village are mostly engaged in the raising and milking of dairy cows. Lord Kṛṣṇa lives in this village in His original form, that of a blooming youth. This gives Him an “age” of about 13 to 16 years old.

His form is of medium size and He always wears golden yellow garments. His complexion is like the color of a dark rain cloud that is made effulgent by a flash of lightning within. He always wear a peacock feather on His headgear, be it a jeweled crown or a cloth turban. His hair is long, curly, and black. His large eyes are shaped like the petals of a lotus flower. He always carries a flute, and His beauty is completely unmatched. He charms and astonishes every being. In future lessons we will discuss more about His form, but this will suffice for now.

Of course any reference to an “age” or a number of “years old” are not based on considerations of material time. There is no past or future in the spiritual sky, nor is there any such thing as birth or “beginnings”, so there can be no “ages” or “years.” These terms are just used to represent the look, as well as the mood, of the various forms that He and His associates exist in, in order to enjoy various pastimes.

There are things in the spiritual sky that may seem to come and go in cycles, which we normally accept as depending on a passage of “time,” things such as “daytime” and “nighttime”, or the various seasons, like spring and summer. But these differences are not dependent on any material causes, such as the location of a “sun”, or the movement of a planet. These are all just variations, created by the Lord, to enhance His pastimes.

One petal/area/dimension may be situated in spring, another in the fall. In one compartment/petal He may be tending cows in the daytime, and in another He may be wandering in the forest at night. And all of these may be occurring simultaneously, as well.

Everything that exists in the Vaikuṅṭhalokas is eternal & ageless. The calves that are taken to pasture by the young boys will always be calves. The older cows that give milk will always remain at whatever “age” they eternally exist at. The baby deer will not “grow up” to become adults, nor will any children. More on this later.

All forms, from grass, to birds, to cows, to people, and even to mountains and rivers, are fully conscious spiritual entities that exist, not “in” spiritual bodies, as in the way our souls ride in a material body, but instead, in the spiritual sky, all forms exist “as” spiritual bodies. The form and the entity are non-different.

All of the inhabitants in Vṛndavāna have an overwhelming

love for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Each resident has their own special relationship with the Divine Couple. Some have more love for Rādhā, some for Kṛṣṇa, and some love Them both equally.

On the petals/in the dimensions that extend outward from this area, Śrī Kṛṣṇa exists in essentially the same form; however, He appears to be of a slightly older age. These outlying areas are sometimes described as other “towns.”

In one of these petals/towns/compartments He lives as an unwed prince of about 16 to 20 years old, and in another “town” He lives as a king with thousands of wives, a palace for each wife, and many children. Here He may appear to be about 25 years old.

Within the village of Vṛndavāna there are also a variety of areas/dimensions. In each of these realms He exists in 3 distinct “ages,” and He has pastimes with His associates according to the activities carried out in those forms.

In some places He appears as a very small child of about 2 to 5 years old. In this form He carries out many pastimes with His “parents” and other elders. Of course He has no birth, so these roles of “parents” and elders are simply manifestations He creates in order to expand the emotional variety of His pastimes.

There are jīvas who develop a desire to engage in a mood of being the Lord’s protector, provider, or guardian and He also enjoys exchanges based upon those moods. Thus, He creates the original form of those moods.

Although no jīvas can become His “parents” in Vṛndavāna, it is possible to obtain a spiritual body where one “appears to be” an elder of Kṛṣṇa, so that they can eternally engage in these moods and pastimes. All of His various pastimes can be entered into, based upon our mood and level of advancement.

In other pastimes He appears as a boy of 6 to 10 years old. These pastimes are mostly related to playing, and having adventures with His male friends of similar ages. They take the calves out to pasture and enjoy a wide variety of sporting pleasures from racing, to wrestling, to swimming, to many other types of games.

As a blooming youth of about 11 to 16 years old He focuses His pastimes on His female admirers.

Many of these associates are eternal inhabitants of Kṛṣṇaloka. They were never under the spell of māyā. Some of them are not jīvas. They are expansions of the Lord. Others are jīvas who chose to look toward the spiritual worlds when they were situated on the dividing line, thus they never entered māyā’s prison house.

When the Lord descends to the material worlds as an avatār, or in His original forms, these associates often accompany Him, but even when they do, they remain pure, and they are never subject to the illusions of māyā.

These eternal associates can simultaneously exist in more than one form and in more than one dimension, just as the Lord can. For instance, one of His male friends can be playing with Him in one area/dimension as a 9 year old boy, and, at the same time, he can be carrying a message to one of Kṛṣṇa’s female admirers as a 13 year old boy. Another example is His parents. They exist in each of these dimensions, no matter what age He appears to be, because He always lives at home under their “protection.”

When He descends to this world, He carries out His pastimes in a way that seems to involve the passage of time. He appears to “grow up”, and He appears to leave Vṛndavāna, in order to travel to His other places of residence. However, on Kṛṣṇaloka, this does not take place. In each of the unlimited areas, He remains at whatever age is appropriate for the pastimes that place there.

In every compartment/petal, whether He is eternally a boy or a married king, He is the center of attention. Since He is the center of attention in all these areas, He exists in every division of Kṛṣṇaloka. His associates expand and exist in as many forms and areas as is appropriate. On Kṛṣṇaloka, He does not age, nor does He travel from one area to another.

As we continue to describe the Lord, and His unlimited forms, qualities, associates, and pastimes, we will go much deeper into each of these subjects. By hearing about these things we can develop greed to partake in the various services performed by His

Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa - Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare - Hare Rāma Hare Rāma - Rāma Rāma Hare Hare

associates. This greed will open the door for us to begin to practice the type of bhakti that Lord Caitanya came to give us. By practicing this type of bhakti we can become qualified to enter into these eternal pastimes.

Before we move away from Kṛṣṇaloka, to describe a bit about the other Vaikuṅṭhalokas, we also want to tell you about another dimension that exists there. Lord Caitanya also has an eternal realm on Kṛṣṇaloka. His associates there are expansions of His associates in Vṛndavāna and from some of His other realms as well.

Jīvas who attain perfection can join in Lord Caitanya's eternal pastimes as well.

On all of the other Vaikuṅṭhalokas, the forms of the inhabitants, and their moods and methods of serving the Lord, are extremely different than they are on Kṛṣṇaloka.

On these lokas/planets/petals/dimensions all of the male residents have forms that exactly resemble the Lord's four handed Nārāyaṇa form, His "thunder" form that we discussed in Lesson 5. All of the female residents have forms that exactly resemble the form of **Lord Nārāyaṇa's wife, Lakshmi + Lukshmee** (often pronounced Lock-shmee).

Just as Nārāyaṇa is Śrī Kṛṣṇa, only in a different form which displays the majestic aspects of His personality, Śrīmatī Lakshmi is Śrī Rādhā, only in a form and mood that matches that of Lord Nārāyaṇa.

Every human-like being on these other Vaikuṅṭhalokas have forms that resemble very beautiful young adults (early twenties). There are no children on these planets.

The residents of these lokas eternally engage in worshipping the Lord with great awe and reverence. Never, not for a single moment, do they forget that they are in the presence of "GOD!" They are all totally overwhelmed and enamored by the Lord's majestic qualities, His "power" aspect. Because of this awareness, their mood of loving exchange with the Lord is very inhibited, compared to the moods and loving exchanges of the resident of Vṛndavāna, whose love is dominated by the sweet aspects of Kṛṣṇa's personality.

On these planets there are no relationships based upon the moods of guardians/parents, nor does Lord Nārāyaṇa engage in sporting pastimes with friends. He has only one female companion, and even Her mood is affected by Her respect of His power and position.

One important thing to note is the fact that every entity on the Vaikuṅṭhalokas is fully content with the position they are in; they all consider themselves to be blessed by the Lord and they derive full satisfaction and bliss by performing the particular service they perform. Since their hearts desires are completely fulfilled, they do not want to give up the position they are in, nor do they consider that there might be any better position for them to be in.

From a general point of view, each and every resident, in every realm, is equally situated, no matter what spiritual planet they are on, or what compartment they are in. However, if we analyze the variety of emotional flavors available to these residents, we will find that there is a graduation of levels. From this angle of vision the residents of Vṛndavāna are situated in the topmost position. This is because the loving exchanges there are not inhibited by feelings of awe and respect for Kṛṣṇa.

One of the most important reasons for Lord Caitanya's visit was to present ways that we could understand and enter into these sweetest types of moods and relationships. His direct associates and other great gurus in our chain have written many books to fully establish and explain how this can be done. And, as we mentioned earlier, Śrīla Gurudeva is especially merciful in his encouraging us to develop these moods.

We could go on for eternity and never run out of things to tell you about the Vaikuṅṭhalokas and what goes on there. But for now we're going to use the basic picture we have drawn as a background, so that we can further discuss some of the other subjects this lesson will cover. We hope all of these topics and descriptions will begin to help you to understand the inconceivable; the amazingly wonderful acintya-śaktī of Lord

Kṛṣṇa.

### Lord Balarāma

Śrī Kṛṣṇa expands Himself into an infinite number of forms. When we describe these forms we are limited by material words, thoughts, and concepts. Therefore, when we use words like "first", "then", or "next" our materially conditioned minds immediately try to relate them to time, or sequences of events; from first to last.

What we need to try to do is to go beyond these limiting concepts. In the acintya reality of the spiritual worlds there is no past or future. There is only an eternal now. Therefore, when we use these words that seem to convey a sense of time, we only do so because they are the only tools we have to try to describe things that are beyond the limitations of material words.

With that in mind, we will tell you that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in His blooming youth, 13 to 16 year old form, is the "original" form of God, and that "at one time" nothing existed except Him. When He decided to participate in activities that would allow Him to experience a variety of exchanges of emotions, He "first" expanded into Lord **Balarāma + Buh-luh-rām** (rām like mom).

Lord Balarāma is Kṛṣṇa, only in a very slightly different form, and, most importantly, with a completely different mood. The most immediately recognizable difference in Their forms is that Kṛṣṇa's complexion is dark and Balarāma's is very white. We also find that Kṛṣṇa wears golden yellow garments, while Balarāma wears blue.

In Vṛndavāna, and in the two areas where Kṛṣṇa appears as a prince and as a king, Lord Balarāma's role is that of Kṛṣṇa's "older" brother. The fact that He occupies this position is very important when it comes to the difference in the mood of these two personalities of Kṛṣṇa.

Lord Balarāma is described as a "pastime" expansion of the Lord. His main purpose is to aide Lord Kṛṣṇa's enjoyment of pastimes. For this reason, He always has the mood of being the Lord's servant. So, even though He occupies the position of an older brother, which would normally put Him in a superior position, He always considers Himself to be Kṛṣṇa's servant. This mood of servitude will continue to be an important part of our discussion.

Since Balarāma was "created" in order to expand the Lord's pastimes, He Himself also expands into an unlimited number of forms. In Vṛndavāna He expands into countless male forms, who sport with Kṛṣṇa as His closet friends.

In addition to these expansions on Kṛṣṇaloka, Balarāma also expands into forms on the other Vaikuṅṭhalokas. These forms "then" further expand to carry out a variety of services for the Lord. Again, we could go on and on describing these forms and sharing their names and services with you, but we're not going to do that. Instead we're just going to share two of these expansions with you. We'll cover these two forms because the second form will relate directly to this lesson, and will come up in future lessons as well.

Kṛṣṇa Himself directly expands into His majestic form, Lord Nārāyaṇa. Similarly, Lord Balarāma expands into a majestic form in the Vaikuntha planets.

When the "time" comes for the creation of the material worlds, this majestic form of Balarāma further expands into a form that lies on the borderland between the spiritual and material worlds. This borderland has been variously described, as a river, an ocean, and a stream of spiritual energy.

This form of the Lord goes by more than one name, but we will select just one of His Names for now. We chose this name because it will aide our explanation at this point, and in the future as well. This gigantic form of the Lord is known as **Mahā-Vishnu + Muh-hā Vish-new** (hā like hot).

You should recognize the first part of His name. Mahā, just like in the mahā-mantra, means "great." **Vishnu** is a name for God that **refers to the almightiness and omnipresence of the Lord**. This name, Vishnu, is often used interchangeably with Kṛṣṇa, or with many other forms of the Lord.

Whenever this name is used, it is to be understood that "God"

Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa - Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare - Hare Rāma Hare Rāma - Rāma Rāma Hare Hare

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is being referred to. Although Mahā-Vishnu is an expansion, of an expansion, of an expansion of the original form of God, Kṛṣṇa, He is still God. He is vested with the full potency of the Lord. The main difference between Kṛṣṇa, and the unlimited number of Vishnu forms, is that Kṛṣṇa has 64 main qualities, whereas all of His Vishnu forms have only 60. We will discuss these qualities in the future.

From His position on the borderland river, Mahā-Vishnu breathes out an unlimited number of material universes, which come in varying sizes. Simply by His glance, He impregnates the material energy (māyā) with the seed of countless jīvas. These jīvas are immediately covered over by subtle bodies (mind, intelligence, and false egos) which then begin to attract material elements, in order to form material bodies, in accordance with their past activities and desires. In this way they can continue their journey through the cycle of repeated births and deaths.

We're going to end our discussion on Lord Balarāma and His expansions for now. We took you this far in order to help you understand a related, and yet quite different subject, so let's move on to discuss how these topics tie in with the Pañca-tattva.

### Lord Nityānanda

Just as Lord Caitanya is Kṛṣṇa, only in a different form, Lord Nityānanda is Lord Balarāma. Hopefully you recall that although Lord Nityānanda was older than Lord Caitanya, He always considered Himself to be Lord Caitanya's servant. This is a direct reflection of the relationship that Balarāma has with Kṛṣṇa. In fact, every single one of the unlimited number of expansions from Balarāma, and the expansions from those expansions, all have the mood of being servants of the Lord. Although they are God, They think of Themselves as Servants of God.

When we discussed the Pañca-tattva in Lesson 3, we told you that the relationship between Caitanya and Nityānanda was very brotherly. Now that you know that They are brothers, in Their Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma forms, this should help you to understand the closeness of Their relationship.

Like Balarāma, Lord Nityānanda always wore blue garments.

In Lesson 7 we discussed the relationships between the jīva, māyā, and the Supreme Lord. We also told you that the subject of relationships was very vast and deep. This subject includes topics such as those we have been discussing, the relationships between the various forms of the Lord. To study and learn about these types of relationships is a way of directly practicing bhakti. To hear about and to remember the names, forms, qualities, associates, and activities of the Lord are two of the most valuable ways to practice bhakti. To then speak on these subjects and explain them to others is to engage in kīrtana, which is the most beneficial of all bhakti practices. So learning and sharing these types of truths is something we all should desire to do.

We know it can be difficult to remember some of these truths, and even more difficult to find someone who is interested in hearing about them, but still, it is recommended that we develop a desire to become a preacher, for cultivating that desire is also a valuable spiritual practice.

We'll be returning to Lord Nityānanda in a bit, right now we're going to discuss another member of the Pañca-tattva and explain how He fits into the descriptions we gave earlier.

### Śrī Advaita

You may recall that when we introduced Śrī Advaita in Lesson 3, we did not capitalize the pronouns that referred to Him, although we told you that we could have done so because he was an avatār of the Lord. Śrī Advaita is Mahā-Vishnu. He is not an expansion; He is this form of the Lord, in a different form. Does that make sense to you?

Look at it this way, when an actor puts on makeup and a costume to play a role, he may become entirely unrecognizable, but he is still the same person.

Since Balarāma's original purpose was to expand the pastimes of the Lord, all His expansions serve this same purpose. So even though Mahā-Vishnu is Balarāma, who is Kṛṣṇa, all three appeared simultaneously, in the forms of Śrī Advaita, Lord Nityānanda and Lord Caitanya, in order to partake in the

pastimes of the Lord. And, as with Nityānanda, this explains why Śrī Advaita saw Himself as Lord Caitanya's servant, even though He was "older" (wore the costume of an older man) in that pastime.

Are you confused yet? Do you see why we began this lesson with such a long discussion on the Lord's acintya-śaktī? It's perfectly fine if you are a bit confused. Sometimes it will take a while for our limited minds to expand to a point where we are able to grasp these understandings. Until that time comes, we should at least accept them as valid, and reject any tendency the mind has to want to battle these truths through logic and argument.

Another point that we need to be aware of is that it will never be possible for us to understand spiritual truths without the Lord's mercy. The Vedas tell us that **non-devotees will never understand these subjects, even if they go on thinking about them for millions of years. Only those who receive the mercy of Kṛṣṇa or His pure devotee can understand these things.** Therefore, if you find yourself struggling to grasp something, don't spend time rolling it around and around in the mind. Instead, surrender to Śrī guru, chant the Holy Names without offense, and ask Śrīla Gurudeva and the Lord to bless you with understandings.

The reality of who Balarāma/Nityānanda and who Mahā-Vishnu/Śrī Advaita is, are so wrapped up in inconceivable truths, that we felt it would be helpful to introduce these truths the way we did in this lesson.

The other two associates of Lord Caitanya, that are included in the Pañca-tattva, are a bit less difficult to explain, plus we have already spoken a bit about Śrī Rādhā/Gadādhara in an earlier lesson, but still, we'll spend a moment or two on these personalities as well.

### Gadādhara Paṇḍit

Śrīmatī Rādhārānī takes on a male form in the pastimes of Lord Caitanya, this personality is Gadādhara Paṇḍit. Gadādhara was a childhood friend of Lord Caitanya. They were almost inseparable as they grew up together, and they stayed in each other's company for the majority of the Lord's stay on this planet.

Since these two personalities are just different forms of the Divine Couple, They are sometimes worshipped together as Deities, in the same way Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are. When worshipped together They are known as Śrī Śrī **Gaura-Gadai + Gow-ruh Guh-die.**

Gadādhara Paṇḍit is always shown wearing red garments, This is because the color red is used to depict the deep love that Śrī Rādhā has for Lord Kṛṣṇa, and Gadādhara Paṇḍit had this same deep love for Lord Caitanya.

### Śrīvās

Lord Caitanya's great friend Śrīvās is a very interesting personality. He is also very famous for his preaching abilities in one of his other forms, so it is no surprising that he is one of the Pañca-tattva, who are the five greatest distributors of prema.

It's actually very appropriate that we waited till this lesson to tell you more about Śrīvās because his personality also includes inconceivable traits. For instance, like the Lord, he also exists in many forms, all at the same time. While many of these forms appear to be identical, others have totally different features. He is also free to roam about, from the material to the spiritual worlds, as he pleases.

In one of his forms he is a cowherd boy who lives on Kṛṣṇaloka. He is a great friend of Kṛṣṇa, and he is quite famous for his jokes. He also makes everyone laugh through his comical behavior and unique dressing style.

In the form that he is perhaps even more famous for, he is a young man who was manifested from the mind of a great demigod. He was not "born." He has no mother. **He was simply created into existence in his fully developed form. He goes by the name Nārada Muni + Nā-ruh-duh Moon-nee** (nā like not). Nārada is his name, and a **muni is a person of great intelligence, who controls his mind and possesses vast**

**amounts of spiritual knowledge.**

By the arrangement of providence, Nārada Muni was once cursed to never be allowed to remain in any one place in the material worlds for more than three consecutive days. He simply took this as a blessing that would allow him an opportunity to do more traveling. He did not wish to travel for pleasure, he only wanted more chance to preach and do service.

And travel he did! Nārada Muni can travel at the speed of the mind, which is billions of times faster than the speed of light. He simply thinks of a destination, and he immediately arrives there.

The Vedas are filled with stories of his preaching activities. He is the guru of some of the greatest devotees in history. He is quite famous for arriving in just the right place, at just the right time.

For instance, it was Nārada Muni who arrived on the scene just as the sādhu who compiled the Vedas was trying to understand why he was not satisfied with his efforts, even though he had written about an incredible amount of spiritual truths.

It was Nārada Muni who instructed him to write about Names, forms, qualities, and pastimes of the Lord's personal forms and to fully establish bhakti-yoga as the supreme path.

His preaching successes would fill several lessons, and we may well mention him again in the future. Nārada Muni, the multi-world famous, intergalactic traveling preacher, who is the self-same personality of Śrīvās, just in a different form. (You can see a picture of Nārada muni and find out a little more about him at the end of this lesson.)

**The Importance of the Pañca-tattva**

The reason we have spent so much of this lesson leading you up to these descriptions of the members of the Pañca-tattva is because our worship of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa absolutely must include worship of Lord Caitanya and His followers.

In both Lessons 2 and 8, as in many other places as well, we've tried to get you to understand that without the mercy of Śrī guru you will never complete your journey to prema.

We hope you have taken this teaching to heart. After Lesson 8, and for the last two months, you should have been using the **BSGAMHOP** system, to help you enter into the various moods related to taking shelter of Śrī guru. If you have not yet begun this practice, there is probably little else we can say to convince you to do so.

In Lesson 3 we first told you of the importance of worshipping the Pañca-tattva. Again if you never bothered to learn their mantra and to spend some time each day honoring them, we may not be able to convince you to take this step either, but we've decided to spend some time in this lesson trying to get you to do so.

Please consider the statement we are about to present to you. We've put it in bold face type, as we often do with extremely critical points that we need you to focus on. Take this statement to heart. Even if you do not understand why this statement is true, please accept it as infallible evidence. Do not ignore this statement. If you are not yet able to grasp this truth, follow it anyway. Pray to Śrīla Gurudeva and the Pañca-tattva and they will give you an understanding of this truth.

After we share this statement we will also give you some additional evidence from the Vedas as to why this statement is true.

**Your heart will never become enraptured by the Holy Names, the pastimes, and the abode of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa if you do not take shelter of the name, pastimes, associates, and abode of Lord Caitanya first.**

Taking shelter of Lord Caitanya includes taking shelter of the other members of the Pañca-tattva as well.

There is a great deal of Vedic evidence as to why the above statement is true.

In 1986, all of the devotees of Lord Caitanya celebrated the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Lord Caitanya's appearance. At that time Śrīla Gurudeva wrote a series of articles discussing the special characteristics of Lord Caitanya and reasons that He is so glorious. In order to help you understand the above statement we are going to share some of Śrīla Gurudeva's teachings with you.

**The Special Qualities of Śrī Caitanya**

When we introduced you to Lord Caitanya in Lesson 3, we admitted that we knew many might find it hard to believe that God Himself was on this planet just 500 years ago. But this fact is something we need to come to grips with.

Śrīla Gurudeva shares a verse from the Veda's that tells us this: if we can understand and accept that Lord Caitanya is the Supreme Controller, God Himself, the Supreme Personality, we then become eligible to attain other spiritual knowledge as well. By accepting that Lord Caitanya is the Supreme Lord one becomes free from his karmic debt. This allows him to break his connection to the material energy and attain his spiritual body.

In His rain cloud colored form as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord is certainly very merciful. Mercy is indeed one of the qualities that He is never without. It is because of His mercy that He descends to protect His devotees, to destroy the wicked, and to reestablish righteousness, whenever there is a decline in proper behavior.

It is also due to His mercy that we are able to learn, remember, and understand, the Lord's śaktīs, His majestic qualities, and His sweetness.

Although the Lord shows His mercy whenever He descends, only Lord Caitanya is specifically described as having descended out of His tender compassion. All avatārs exhibit compassion when they descend to the material worlds, but it is only in regards to Lord Caitanya that we find compassion listed as the reason for His descent.

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa descended in His original form, as the cowherd boy who went on to speak the Bhagavad-Gītā, He did not easily bestow bhakti, loving devotion, even to His close associates. In fact, the Vedas tell us that He would easily grant material sense pleasure, or release from material bondage, and yet He kept bhakti hidden.

Lord Caitanya, & the other members of the Pañca-tattva, did not hide bhakti. In fact, they freely distributed it. They traveled far and wide in order to firmly establish bhakti-yoga as the only path to prema.

**In the Gītā, Lord Kṛṣṇa says that He bestows bhakti in exact proportion to our level of surrender to Him, not more, not less, but in exact proportion (BG 4.11)**

On the other hand, the Pañca-tattva, under the direction of Lord Caitanya, distributed the path of bhakti and its fruit, prema, to anyone and everyone, regardless of their qualification.

Another consideration that reveals the compassion of Lord Caitanya is that when we chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, the power of the Names is greatly affected if we commit offenses to the Names. But when it comes to chanting the Names of Lord Caitanya and Prabhu Nityānanda these considerations do not exist.

Lord Caitanya further displayed His unlimited compassion by personally describing the path of bhakti. He explained both the philosophy and science of the path, and how we are to practice this science.

In addition to this, He told us that by propagating the loud public chanting of the Holy Names, He ensured that even entities that could not personally take part in the chanting could be delivered. This takes place when they are simply touched by the air that mingled with the sound of the Names.

There is no limit to His compassion, and as we continue in this course we will give you more examples of why He is known to be the most merciful of all of the Lord's forms.

Keeping these examples of Lord Caitanya's compassion in mind, you should review the **underlined, bold face statement** that we share in the last section, and you should keep that statement in your heart as we discuss this next teaching.

**Chanting under the Shelter of the Pañca-tattva**

There are no strict rules when it comes to chanting the mahā-mantra. It can be chanted anytime and in any circumstances. And yet, if we are wise, we will always do our best to honor and respect the Holy Names.

One of the ways that our gurus have told us we can properly

## Staple

prepare ourselves for chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra is to first chant the Pañca-tattva mantra.

When we originally shared the Pañca-tattva mantra with you we had not yet discussed the offenses to the Names, so we did not go into detail about the fact that the Pañca-tattva mantra does not consider these offenses. We did briefly mention it, and the fact that it can help you avoid offending other mantras, but we gave little detail on this point.

The fact that this mantra does not accept offenses is one of the reasons that we should always chant it before we chant the mahā-mantra. We should not however think that by chanting it we are immune to the offenses against the Names. To think we can use its power to overcome offenses, and to therefore not be careful about avoiding them is a version of the seventh offense, committing sins on the strength of the Holy Names.

The Pañca-tattva mantra will help us avoid offenses and lessen the effects of those we do commit, but chanting it does not give us the ability to freely commit these offenses.

Lord Caitanya is the avatār for this degraded age we live in. He came, along with His associates, to point out the fact that it is only through the power of the Names that we can escape the incredible strength that māyā possesses in this age. Lord Caitanya both delivered this message, and showed us by His own example, that we must focus our bhakti practices on chanting the mahā-mantra.

When we find out that the Pañca-tattva mantra does not accept offenses, many of us ask why we can't just chant it instead of the mahā-mantra. The reason is simply that the Vedas and Lord Caitanya Himself specifically instruct us to chant the mahā-mantra. To chant the Pañca-tattva mantra in its place would be to make up our own system of practice.

We should chant the Pañca-tattva mantra as an opening mantra and in combination with the mahā-mantra. If you ever get the opportunity to hear group chanting led by devotees, or take part in this chanting, you will find that they often begin by singing the Pañca-tattva mantra before they chant the mahā-mantra.

We also want to re-mention a point we made in Lesson 3. When we take shelter of the Pañca-tattva it is best to do so in a very sincere and dedicated way. The mantras power will take effect, no matter how we utter it, but we are wise to put our heart into taking shelter of the Pañca-tattva.

That is why we recommended learning all that we told you about these personalities, looking at their pictures while you say their mantra, and making offerings to them as well.

The Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra is the Divine Couple. Before we bring Them into our presence, by calling out Their names, we should do our best to purify our thoughts and prepare our hearts for Their arrival. Carefully and prayerfully chanting the Pañca-tattva mantra is an excellent way of doing this.

The highest teachings of Bhagavān-tattva, bhakti-tattva, and prema-tattva (the spiritual truths regarding the Lord, bhakti, and prema) are very deep and mysterious. Until the descent of Lord Caitanya, there were hidden secrets within these truths that only He had the power and compassion to reveal. The fact that He taught us these secrets is another sign of His unmatched mercy.

One of our great gurus wrote a book, a novel actually, where he incorporated many tattvas, from the most basic to the most profound, into a simple story. He wrote this novel in the language of the area he grew up in, in order to make it understandable to the common man.

This course is partly designed with that same goal in mind. Since he was so merciful he revealed very deep secrets, even in this book, which was to be widely distributed and read by all. Following in his footsteps we will now share a teaching that he shared.

This teaching takes us back to our original subject in the lesson, the inconceivable potencies of the Lord. It may be awhile before you are able to grasp and appreciate the beauty, the mercy, and the incredible compassion of this truth but still, we felt that we should share it with you.

If we can surrender our hearts to Lord Caitanya and the Pañca-

tattva, and simultaneously develop our prema for Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, then we can, upon attaining perfection, take on a spiritual body in the realms of Kṛṣṇaloka where Lord Caitanya enacts His eternal pastimes, and, we can simultaneously take on a spiritual form that will enable us to reside in Vṛndavāna and engage in pastimes with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This statement should give you a taste of the amazing and wonderfully sweet rewards that await those who dedicate themselves to the practice of bhakti-yoga.

However, going back to our statement in bold, we will only be able to do this if we take shelter of Lord Caitanya, before we try to approach the pastimes of the Divine Couple.

We hope, that by showing you the reasons that you should take shelter of the Pañca-tattva, you have become convinced to do so.

Calling Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa into our presence should be a very sacred and special thing. It is not something that we should take lightly, nor should we feel a need to be in a hurry to do so. Taking the time to sincerely take shelter of the Pañca-tattva before we chant the mahā-mantra will help us prepare a pure state of consciousness to call Śrī-Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, and it will also open up the possibility for us to spend eternity with all of these wonderful personalities.

We may have spent almost this entire lesson just to get you to practice this technique, when perhaps we could have simply asked you to do so, without discussing all of the other related topics, and yet, we felt that building a foundation of knowledge about these other tattvas would assist you in understanding why you should engage in this practice.

So now that we've accomplished the main thing we set out to do with this lesson, we'll spend the time we have left this month to share one of the wonderful pastimes of Lord Caitanya with you. After all we've told you so far, we think you'll understand why we chose this particular pastime.

**No Sinner too Fallen**

In Lesson 3 we told you that Prabhu Nityānanda was one of the first two preachers that Lord Caitanya sent out to begin His mission of mercy. The other preacher was a great devotee that we have also told you about. His name is Śrīla **Haridās Ṭhākura + Huh-ri-dās T-hā-koor** (dās like wasp-usually pronounced Huh-ree-dās)

Śrīla Haridās is the devotee who chanted Holy Names over 300,000 times every day.

As they travelled on their door-to-door preaching mission they would beg each resident to chant Kṛṣṇa's names, to worship Him, and to practice bhakti-yoga.

One day they came across two drunks, **Jagāi + Juh-gie** and **Mādhāi + Mud-hie**. Asking who these two were, they were informed that these two brothers were the worst criminals in the city. Although born in a highly religious family they had taken to meat eating and intoxication. Their language was always filthy and abusive. They committed countless sins, from theft to arson to looting. Everyone avoided them because they were prone to attack and beat people without reason. The citizens warned the two preachers not to approach these drunken rogues.

Hearing this news, Lord Nityānanda immediately decided to preach to them. Although many of the towns folk did not yet know of Lord Caitanya, most everyone knew of these two ruffians, so Lord Nityānanda thought, "If these two criminals could become sober, law-abiding citizens by the Lord's mercy, then Lord Caitanya's glories will spread everywhere."

Taking the Lord's order to preach very seriously, He explained to Haridās that they had been instructed to preach to everyone, even the most fallen, so they must do so. He said they would simply rely on the Lord to take care of the results of their efforts.

Hearing Nityānanda's decision made Haridās aware that these two drunks were already saved, for Lord Nityānanda's mercy was so great that they could not avoid it.

As they began to approach these two, the citizens again warned them not to. They said they would surely be beaten or killed, as these two did not even respect holy men.

Still, the two preachers went to the drunks and told them, "Chant Kṛṣṇa's names and worship Him, for the Lord is your

greatest treasure. Give up your sinful ways and surrender, thus you will gain the Lord's mercy."

Hearing this advice, the two brothers immediately ran toward the two preachers, hurling the most abusive words and shouting, "Get them! Catch them!"

The preachers fled. As they ran, Haridās said they would surely be killed for having given instructions on the Holy Names to unqualified, faithless drunks. Of course, they were actually very great personalities, who were carrying out on a mission of the Lord's, so they were totally beyond all such considerations, but still, we can see by the comment of Haridās, the serious nature of the offense of preaching to the faithless.

Easily escaping the staggering drunks, the two saints went to see Lord Caitanya to report the day's activities, as He had asked them to do each day. When He heard about what the drunkards had done, He became enraged, and He said He would destroy them as soon as the chance arrived.

Lord Nityānanda "reminded" Him that He had descended to deliver even the greatest sinners. He told Lord Caitanya that His fame as the most merciful incarnation would reach unlimited heights if He gave His mercy to these two fallen souls.

Hearing these words, Lord Caitanya stated an important tattva. He said that the two drunks were already delivered, simply because Nityānanda desired them to be. If someone receives the mercy of Lord Nityānanda, Lord Caitanya automatically gives His mercy to that person.

On the other hand, if a person disrespects, fails to honor, or does not receive Nityānanda's mercy; Lord Caitanya will not bless him. Lord Caitanya says He is totally sold out to His pure devotees. We must receive the mercy of a sādhu to receive His blessings.

Back to our story – The two drunks regularly moved from one area of town to another, looking for new people to terrorize. By divine arrangement they began to live on the banks of a river near Lord Caitanya's home.

They lived so close by, that at night they could hear the chanting of the Holy Names, as the Lord held kīrtana parties. In their drunkenness, they would dance to the sound of the drums and cymbals. In this way their purification began.

Then one day Lord Nityānanda decided to again go see these two rogues. When they saw Him, they called Him over and began to speak to Him. Not liking something He said, Mādhāi picked up a piece of a broken clay pot and threw it at Nityānanda. It hit Him, cutting His forehead, and blood began to flow.

Jagāi was shocked by his brother's action. As Mādhāi began to strike Nityānanda, Jagāi stopped Him, telling him there was no reason to strike a travelling holy man. This was a sure sign that Jagāi was becoming purified of his evil mentality.

Nearby people, who had seen what happened, ran to tell Lord Caitanya. The Lord, who always protects His devotees, becomes enraged. He ran to the spot of the incident, and, seeing the blood on Nityānanda, He called upon His most devastating weapon, a spinning disc that He uses to sever the heads of those who threaten or harm His devotees.

When the drunks saw this disc appear they became very scared. But, before the Lord could take their lives, Nityānanda intervened. He told the Lord, "When Mādhāi tried to hurt Me, Jagāi stopped him. Although I have been cut, I feel no pain. Please spare these two and give them Your mercy."

When the Lord heard these words He became so pleased with Jagāi that all His anger faded away. He told Jagāi that he had won His heart by protecting Nityānanda, and He embraced Jagāi with great love. He told Jagāi that from that day forward he would become a devotee and experience the awakening of his prema.

Seeing the Lord's mercy, everyone became joyous. Hearing the Lord's blessing had caused Jagāi to faint in bliss, so the Lord told him to arise. When he came to, he saw Lord Caitanya in His four-armed form. Recognizing this as proof the Lord Caitanya was the Supreme Lord, and realizing his great fortune, he fell before the Lord, clutched His lotus feet, and cried like a child.

Seeing the mercy his brother had received, Mādhāi also fell at

the Lord's feet and begged for forgiveness. But Lord Caitanya told him that since he had offended a devotee, which is one of the greatest sins, he must first approach Nityānanda, the one he had offended, and receive His blessings, before his sins would be forgiven.

Hearing this, Mādhāi fell at Nityānanda's feet and begged for His mercy. Upon seeing his sincere, humble plea, Lord Caitanya told Nityānanda that He should show Mādhāi mercy. Of course Nityānanda complied with the Lord's request, forgiving Mādhāi with a firm embrace.

Now both of these great sinners were completely purified of their unlimited sins. Lord Caitanya then told them that if they would give up their sinful ways, He would manifest in their hearts. He then took the two brothers to His house and allowed them to join in a kīrtana party, which further converted them into top class devotees. He predicted that the town's people would soon consider it a blessing to associate with the same two brothers that they had formerly feared.

Shortly after that, Mādhāi sought out Nityānanda and asked if there was anything he could do for Him. Nityānanda told him to construct a place at the river where the citizens could go to bathe. He and his brother constructed this bathing place, and, after it was complete they would go there to pay respects to, and to beg forgiveness from all the people they had formerly terrorized. This bathing spot can still be visited to this day.

So this story shows us that even the worst of sinners can be forgiven by the Lord. We all have done things that we need to be forgiven for, but if we can chant the Names then we need not worry about our past. We need to focus on surrendering to a guru, taking shelter of the Pañca-tattva, and devoting our lives to the practice of bhakti-yoga.

### **Review & Closing**

So this month's travels are all but complete. We hope we didn't wear you out too much by taking you on a space flight to the edge of the material universe, and beyond, all the way to the spiritual worlds.

Our attempt to explain the unexplainable, the Lord's acintya-śaktī was a bit involved, perhaps we could have blasted off sooner, but we felt we should present some reasons why we should not reject such teachings simply because our limited, defect-ridden mind and senses cannot grasp them, or because the argumentative mind decides to dismiss these truths, simply because it doesn't find them "logical."

Now that we've given you a short fly-by look at what goes on in the Vaikuṅṭhalokas, we'll be able to spend more time there as we slowly but surely begin to introduce you to more of the associates of the Divine Couple and describe the pastimes they all perform there.

We also passed on some more knowledge about those who make up the Pañca-tattva, which was one of the main things we set out to do this month. We ask you to please learn these truths about these givers of incredible mercy, and that you making taking shelter of them an important part of your daily bhakti practices. Then we closed with the story of how even the two terrible sinners, Jagāi and Mādhāi, were delivered from the ocean of their sins by the mercy of Lord Nityānanda and Śrī Caitanya. Their story is proof of the pudding that no one is too far fallen to receive the blessings and forgiveness of the Lord.

Thanks for joining us again on our journey to prema. We pray that you are soon able to grasp the inconceivable truth, that all perfections are included within the Holy Names of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

**We are, the servants of God's servants,  
The IPBYS Prison Program  
All Glories to Śrīla Gurudeva!**

Staple

**POCKET AIDE - LESSONS 7, 8, 9, & 10**Lesson 8

**Anārtha + uh-nurt/nārt-huh** - Obstacles on the path of bhakti

Lesson 9**Five Things We Must Give Up**

**Meat Eating** - All animals, all parts

**Intoxication** - All types

**Gambling** - All Forms

**Illicit Sex** - All types

**Association of non-devotees**

Lesson 9

**Tapa + tuh-puh** - Discipline, self-control, austerity  
**Sādhana + sād-huh-nuh** (sād like rod) - The method used to attain a specific goal

**Sādhana-bhakti** - The practicing stage of bhakti that involves using the material body's tools and senses to worship and serve the Lord

**Niṣṭhā + nisht-hā** (hā like hot) - Firm faith, fixed resolve that does not waiver, full determination, steadiness in one's bhakti practices

Lesson 10Lesson 10

**Acintya + uh-chin-tyuh** - Inconceivable, beyond the mind's limited range of abilities

**Kṛpā + kri-puh** - Mercy

**Kṛpā-śaktī** - The power to give the Lord's mercy to others

**Māyā** - That which can be measured

**Vai + vie** - Without

**Kuntha + koont-huh** - Anxiety

**Loka + lo-kuh** (lo like go) - Planet

**Vaikuṅṭhaloka + Vie-koont-huh-lo-kuh** - A planet where no anxiety exists, a spiritual planet where no material illusions exist

**Kṛṣṇaloka + Krish-nuh-lo-kuh** - Lord Kṛṣṇa's topmost spiritual planet

**Vṛndavāna + Vrin-dā-vun** (dā like dot) - A rural cow herder's village where Kṛṣṇa lives

**Lakshmī + Luk/Lock-shmee** - Lord Nārāyaṇa's wife

**Balarāma + Buh-luh-rām** - Kṛṣṇa's brother

**Mahā-Vishnu + Muh-hā Vish-noo** - An expansion of Balarāma, He creates the material universes

**Vishnu** - One of God's names, refers to the almightiness and omnipresence of the Lord

**Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā Quotes to Study**

**4.36** Even if you are the most sinful of all sinners you will be able to cross over the ocean of sufferings, created by those sins, by situating yourself in the boat of spiritual knowledge

**4.34** One who wishes to understand spiritual knowledge must bow down to a guru who possesses such knowledge, ask him questions about these truths, and render service to him. Those who have fully realized these truths can impart and reveal this knowledge to others.

**Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā Quotes to Study**

**2.46** Everything that can be attained from many small wells can easily be attained from a large lake. Similarly, everything attainable by the many types of worship explained in the Vedas, can easily be attained by one who fully understands them (and thus practices bhakti-yoga).

**4.11** Everyone follows one of the Lord's various paths, and all will receive rewards that exactly equal the type, level, and mood of service they perform

**The Material Senses - Lesson 9**

**THE Mind** - King of the senses. Known as the 11th sense

**Knowledge Acquiring/Pleasure Seeking Senses**

The \*\* - The sense of \*\* - Arise from the \*\* element

**Ears** -

**Hearing** -

**Space**

**Skin** -

**Touch** -

**Gasses/Air**

**Eyes** -

**Sight** -

**Heat/Fire**

**Tongue** -

**Taste** -

**Liquids/Water**

**Nose** -

**Smell** -

**Solids/Earth**

**The Material Tools - Lesson 9****The Tools of Action**

The \*\* - Provide tools to \*\*

**Hands** -

**Grasp/Obtain** things

**Feet** -

**Move about**

**Mouth/Voice** -

**Speak**

**Anus** -

**Excrete Wastes**

**Genitals** -

**Produce Children**

Anārthas - Lesson 8Illusions about Spiritual Truth

Illusions about our own spiritual identity  
 Illusions about the Lord's spiritual identity  
 Illusions about bhakti-yoga - The goal & practices of  
 Illusions about the Lord's māyā-śaktī

Desires for Temporary Things

Desires to enjoy material things in this world  
 Desires to enjoy material things on higher planets  
 Desires to attain mystical powers  
 The desire to attain liberation

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Lesson 7

**Sukṛti** + soo-kri-tee - Spiritual credits  
**Śaktī** + shuk-tī - Energy, potency, or power  
**Jīva** + jee-vuh - Every living entity  
**Māyā** + my-uh - Material energy of the Lord  
**Japa** + juh-puh - Personal chanting

Anārthas - Lesson 8Obstacles Which Arise from Past Sins

Ignorance  
 The "I" and "mine" concepts of the false ego  
 Attachment to things that give pleasure to the senses  
 Distaste for unpleasant situations  
 Attachment to, or absorption in, sinful activities

Obstacles Which Arise from Past Good WorksObstacles Which Arise  
from Committing OffensesObstacles Which Arise in Relation to BhaktiAnārthas - Lesson 8Committing Offenses

Offenses toward Śrī Kṛṣṇa  
 Offenses against the Holy Names  
 Offenses toward the Lord's Deity form  
 Offenses toward other jīvas

Weakness of the Heart

Attachment to useless things  
 Performing forbidden acts  
 Envy  
 Desire for fame and prestige

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The painting at left depicts Nārada Muni as an eternal spaceman, having been endowed with a spiritual body by the grace of the Lord. He can travel in the outer spaces of both the material and spiritual worlds without restriction and can approach any planet in unlimited space within no time. He can go to the spiritual Vaikuntha planets to see Nārāyana and then immediately come to this planet in the material world. In his previous life he was a son of a maidservant. Because of his association with pure devotees of the Lord, he was elevated to the position of an eternal spaceman and thus attained full freedom of movement. As a liberated person who has no material body, he can go anywhere and everywhere without difficulty. Saint Nārada travels all over the universe, educating people and encouraging his disciples to preach this process of devotional service so that all the conditioned souls may be able to revive their original consciousness, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and thus gain relief from the miserable conditions of material life.

Lesson 7

**Nāmācārya** + nām-ā-chār-yuh - one who teaches by his own example  
**Sachī Devī** + Suh-chee Day-vee - Lord Caitanya's mother  
**Māyā-śaktī** - Creates the illusions that the false ego relies on  
**Jīva-śaktī** - Situated on the shore; the energy that makes "us", "us" and keeps our material bodies "alive"  
**Japa beads** - 108 beads, to count a round of japa  
**Jap** + **juh** - to utter or whisper, within the heart or verbally

Lesson 8Taking Shelter of Śrī Guru

Beloved Śrī Guru/Śrī Gurudeva  
 Accept My Humble Offerings Please

**Bow** down to Śrī Guru/Śrīla Gurudeva  
 Pray for **Service** and **Surrender** your heart to him  
 Pray for his **Guidance** and promise to follow it  
 Pray for the **Association** of sādhus  
 Pray for **Humility**  
 Make an **Offering** to him and ask him to accept it  
 Say your own **Personal Prayers** to him

## Staple

Correspondence Course  
Lesson 11

1. What does acintya mean?
2. If you gave a one-word answer to the above question, say a bit more about the Lord's acintya Śakti.
3. Name the four defects of the senses.
4. Do you understand how these defects make it difficult to attain true knowledge from our material senses?
5. Where can we find the boat of knowledge?
6. How can we get into the boat of knowledge?
7. How can we fuel the boat of knowledge?
8. Which Śakti does the Lord allow His pure devotees to have full use of?
9. Where does the best evidence come from?
10. Why is it important to attain Vedic knowledge from those on the bhakti path?
11. Can we use logic to understand achinta subjects? Why or why not?
12. Say a few words about how faith affects the flame of the mind.
13. Why is it futile to attain the heavenly planets?
14. What does Vaikunṭha mean?
15. What planet does Śrī Kṛṣṇa live on?
16. What is Vṛndāvana and what goes on there?
17. Describe Kṛṣṇa's form. If you wish, you may use your own words.
18. Say a few words about the various "ages" of the form Krishan exhibits on Kṛṣṇaloka.
19. When you read of these forms, and the activities the Lord carries out in each of them, which is most attractive to you? (Be sure to remember you answer to this question. It will come up later in this course.)
20. What is Kṛṣṇa's name in His "thunder" form?
21. Are you more attracted to worshipping Lord Nārāyaṇa or to having a relationship with Kṛṣṇa? (Remember your answer to this question as well.)
22. Who is Lord Balarāma? (Be thoughtful before answering.)
23. What is Lord Balarāma's mood?
24. Which form of the Lord is involved in the process of creation?
25. Who is Viṣṇu? (Be thoughtful.) What does Viṣṇu mean?
26. Who is Lord Nityānanda (Be thoughtful.)
27. Can non-devotees understand Vedic truths?
28. Say a few words about Nārada Muni.
29. Name each member of the panca-tattva and give the name of the other form that they also exist in.
30. Why is the panca-tattva an important part of our bhakti practices?
31. Name at least four of Lord Caitanya's special qualities.
32. Who were the first two preachers sent out by Lord Caitanya?
33. What do you think of the story of Jaghai and Madhai? What was your favorite part of this story?
34. Do you use the pocket aides we supply? Do they help you in your studies?
35. For you personally, what was the most important teaching in this lesson? Why did you choose this particular teaching?

You may formally participate in this course by sending your answers to our Alachua team (see address—on page 1), or you may use these questions for self-study