

A Prepared Excerpt from the Ladies' Darśan with Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj in the Sevā Kuñj in the Soquel Sevā Āśram May 17, 1996.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: Kṛṣṇa is giving me the opportunity to serve Him and His devotees in our very nice *āśram* with the many newcomers and old devotees who are here. But the important thing is that they will give attention, meaning faith and faithful chastity, to Guru and Gaurāṅga; they must be faithful and chaste within their service life. We have all joined within Kṛṣṇa consciousness but we need to progress. Progress will come through chastity and sincerity. We should not lose those two qualities and qualifications in any way. Everyone cannot do so much service no doubt, according to their capacity everyone will do *sevā*. But Kṛṣṇa will accept everything if only they are sincere and they are enriched with full faith. So sincerity is very important for everyone.

Enthusiastically many new devotees are joining but they must think that they will be faithful to their guru. Guru is so important. You are all thinking that I am the guru but as I say this I am actually thinking of my guru. In this way our preceptorial line goes up to Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu. You must think of my desire, what I need, and I must think of my guru's desire. This is our procedure to connect with the Queen—Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. She is the chief commander. Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu is under the Her guidance. If there is any need for direct guardianship that is controlled by Lalitā Devī. But she also has some direct guidance from Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī about what even Lalitā Devī may not know. That is a her position.

Everywhere someone may have some special qualities and qualifications, but usually not everyone does. But if anyone is sincere and faithful, Kṛṣṇa must bestow His mercy upon them. That is only our hope. If we think, "We are all qualified," that is wrong, that is not true. "We are all unqualified," that is the truth. But if there is sincerity within our mood of service, then the proper result will come to us. And you all are very happily offering your service to the Divine Master and your expectations must be fulfilled. My prayer to my Guru Mahārāj is that he will give His blessings to you all. And I am also always with you all. I have nothing more than that hidden anywhere, only this prayer to Guru Mahārāj, that he will give you strength for your practicing life. If you have any questions you can ask me. That is very good. Our private meeting here is very important. Yes?

Kṛṣṇa Priyā Didi: Maybe, when *gr̥hastha* women are doing so much service for their family and the temple, they are getting very overwhelmed and they don't always chant their rounds, or read very much, or get much rest. What would be the best internal mood for them to keep themselves enthusiastic?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: '*Gr̥hastha*' is an *āśram*, for that reason it is called the *gr̥hastha āśram*. *Brahmācārī* is also an *āśram*. Living in an *āśram* means living in an environment where Kṛṣṇa consciousness is flowing. So service in one's *gr̥hastha* life can be transferred to service of Kṛṣṇa. *Gr̥hasthas* must do what is required for their maintenance. But side-by-side, they are leading their practicing life and they will not forget in any way what is most valuable—the

service of Guru-Vaiṣṇava. In that way they will continue their *grhastha* life. I have seen that our good *grhasthas* make arrangements to give *bhoga* to the Deities. They do their jobs outside, come back and offer something to the Deities. They also practice devotional singing and reading with their children as possible by them. In this way they teach their children about Kṛṣṇa consciousness very affectionately. It is necessary to teach children very carefully and affectionately, otherwise a “revolt mentality” will develop within them. It is best not to give the children a chance to revolt. So they should be taught very affectionately with a sympathetic mood. The *grhasthas* will think, “My children have come to me by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa and I will properly nourishment them.” In this way they will continue their *grhastha* life. Yes?

Sureswarī Didi: Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, I have one question, all these ladies here are good friends, I know them all. They work very hard. They are all concerned about their husbands and their families. I think we need a little encouragement to develop our own inner hankering and faith. How we can make ourselves appreciate reading and chanting, and knowing that that is an important part of our life?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: You should have discussions about your religion—religious classes and discussions. Having discussions together is very important.

Sureswarī Didi: Among the ladies?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: Yes, among the ladies you should have discussions where you can freely discuss spiritual matters. And it will be good if you can make within your society an advisor post for one experienced lady devotee to freely give advice to others about their difficulties. And the ladies who receive the advice must be humble and accept it.

Sureswarī Didi: That's the hard thing. I don't know if they will accept it.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: Yes, but it is good. Discourses about Kṛṣṇa consciousness are always good. Discourses as possible by you all, weekly, or twice a week, or three times a week is very good. Better than reading books alone in our room is discussion where everyone can try to participate. In that way you all will grow. You will do *sevā* but enthusiasm is also necessary. Enthusiasm will come through discourses and discussion. If you all will open yourselves to advice about why you do *sevā* and what *sevā* is suitable for you then your society will progress. And whoever gives any advice must do so affectionately.

Sureswarī Didi: And chanting *japa*?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: You can also chant *japa* for half-an-hour or something. Everyone should sit and in a mood of meditation chant *japa*. That is very good, that is the best, I can say.

Sureswarī Didi: And children will chant *japa* too?

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: Children can also try to follow their father and mother. They can finish four rounds easily within half-an-hour, or maybe forty minutes.