

Homages from the Publishers

Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (India)

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine*

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you and your instructions are the force that keeps ISKCON together. Your instructions are the safe and sure way for all devotees who want to cross over the ocean of material existence. If we follow your instructions without adding or subtracting anything, then the result is assured.

Our difficulties in following your instructions are due to our past conditioning, and only by your mercy can we hope to be steady.

Your instructions are certainly rooted in the path laid out by the previous *ācāryas*, and we can have full faith in those instructions by being true to the *paramparā*. Your application of the previous *ācāryas'* instructions according to time, place, and circumstance is perfect, a fact proved by the result.

One instruction stands out in my mind more than others, and that is your request to your followers to distribute your books. This one activity, you said, is the way to really please you. So, why is there resistance in our minds to following this important instruction? If we could take to heart this one instruction and carefully implement it, the whole world would change for the better.

This world is becoming more and more intolerable, with pollution and demoniac leaders who aren't able to help themselves, what to speak of the poor people. Your instructions are like a big sword that can cut through the onslaught of Māyā. However, we need the strength to lift that sword, strength that comes through detachment from material desires. Plus, we need to keep the sword sharp by intense devotional practices. In this way we can be successful in our fight with Māyā.

It may sound over-simplified, but I truly believe that all we need to do is distribute your books as much as possible, and that Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu will take care of the rest.

Life Is Meant to Please You

This life is meant to please you;
If you're glad, we will be too.

Your instructions are grease on the wheels,
But Māyā's so close on our heels,
We only guess how the spiritual feels.

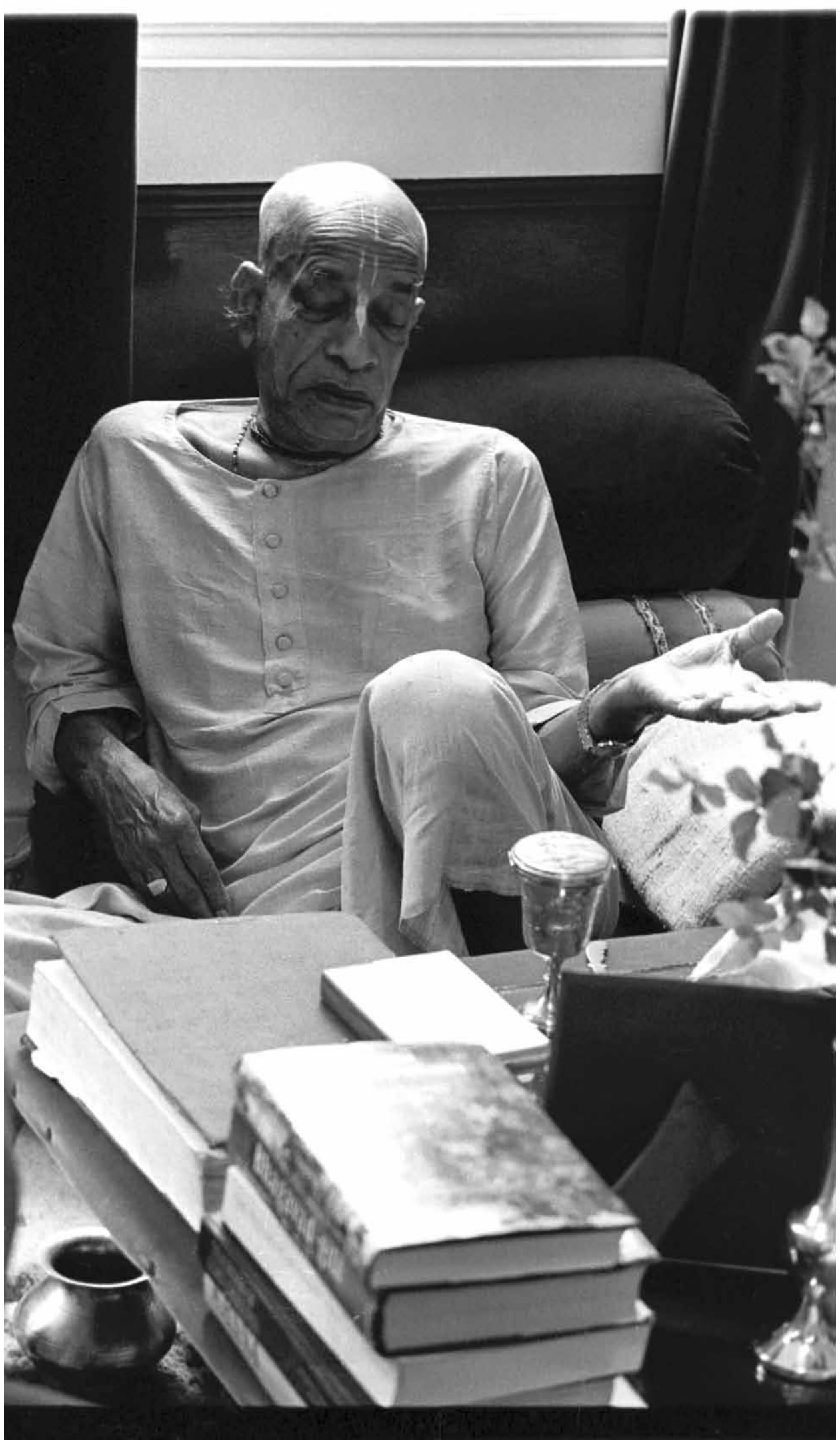
Mahāprabhu's mercy is great;
Without it, sealed is our fate.
Please help us not to take late.

"Books are the basis," you said.
We need to get that in our head
So Kṛṣṇa nectar can be read.
Help us get out the lead.

As you can see, a poet I'm not,
But it's try to please you or I rot.
Such a bracing life is my lot.
Only your mercy can untie the knot.

Your servants at the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust offices in India.

(written by Bhīma Dāsa)



The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (North America)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our prostrate obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, recently, while reading your *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, I came across a statement of yours that concisely expressed the powerful impetus you felt to produce your books, and their profound significance as well:

Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu instructed His disciples to write books on the science of Kṛṣṇa, a task which those who follow Him have continued to carry out down to the present day. Due to the unbreakable system of disciplic succession, the elaborations and expositions on the philosophy taught by Lord Caitanya are in fact the most voluminous, exacting, and consistent of any religious culture in the world. [*Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, “Lord Caitanya’s Mission”]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we here at the North American BBT offices feel extremely grateful that you’ve given us a chance to help you make your “elaborations and expositions” on Lord Caitanya’s philosophy widely available to this world’s ignorant, suffering population. Please accept this humble poem in your honor.

His Mission . . . and Ours

O Prabhupāda, on this great day
When you appeared, just like a ray
Of Kṛṣṇa’s vast effulgence bright,
To give this blind world back its sight,

We thank you from the bottom of
Our heart, and pray with deepest love
That we may serve your lotus feet
In every circumstance we meet.

As years go by and books go out,
We see what life is all about:
To serve your mission, and our Lord’s,
By spreading wide your sacred words.

As well, you want us all to strive
To let those words direct our lives.
This safest path will lead us Home,
No more in Māyā’s realm to roam.

Your servants at the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust offices in North America.

(written by Draviḍa Dāsa)

Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (Northern Europe)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, this past year I have become more seriously aware of how weighty, demanding, and life-absorbing the service you left us is. It requires all our intelligence and all our energy to carry it out. And if we don't want to be lost from your mission through misunderstanding or sidetracked by personal interest, if we want to help your movement become the spiritually vital organization you envisioned it to be—one that offers your shelter to devotees and your compassion to the world—we must have complete dependence on and unwavering trust in your instructions.

But to develop the humility and simplicity to become a true follower is so difficult. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I miss you deeply and long for you to be here. You wanted us to create, in this day and age—within the movement and within ourselves—“the wonder of an atmosphere surcharged with devotional service to the Lord.” How can we possibly do that without you here, guiding us closely?

Whenever I ask your disciples this they remind me that even when you were here you emphasized the power of your books—that *they* are our association with you, that most devotees had very little opportunity to associate with you when you were physically present, that we are not as bereft as we think. I am never quite emotionally satisfied with this answer, but I know they are right. Your books offer a flood of mercy and unbroken association, free for the taking for me and every other person anywhere in the world, qualified or unqualified, man, woman, or child, and, by the hard work of your followers, in almost any language.

Nārada Muni speaks of his encounter with his own *bhakti-vedāntas* like this:

As they were leaving, those *bhakti-vedāntas*, who are very kind to poor-hearted souls, instructed me in that most confidential subject which is instructed by the Personality of Godhead Himself. By that confidential knowledge, I could understand clearly the influence of the energy of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the creator, maintainer, and annihilator of everything. By knowing that, one can return to Him and personally meet Him. [*Śrīmad-Bhagavatam* 1.5.30–31]

Like Nārada Muni's *bhakti-vedāntas*, you were with us so briefly, Śrīla Prabhupāda, yet while you were present you worked so hard to guarantee that you would never be absent from us. In your books, in your association, you made the nature of the transcendentalist attractive and left us with the most confidential knowledge so that we too could return to Kṛṣṇa and personally meet Him. You also ordered us to spare no efforts to give to others what you gave us by making your books available to everyone everywhere. With that order you blessed us with a lifetime of service at your feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please allow us the grace to become real disciples. Times have changed since your departure and we have also grown older, and while we may have to adjust how we serve your mission in this way or that, the way forward is still based on the same principles you taught us: full dependence on the holy name and full submission to your mercy. Please help us to live for nothing else but that.

Your servants at the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust offices in Northern Europe.

(written by Kaiśorī Dāsī)