

GREED

(03_Devamrita Swami 1.10.03)

Divonmorsk

Today we're going to continue our discussion about Krishna and greed. It's expected that because you're trying to be devotees of Krishna that you're going to take an interest in Krishna. We've been speaking about how love means at least to take an interest in someone. So you can tell your Krishna consciousness is becoming more successful when you take more interest in Krishna.

We discussed how the cowherd girls of Vrindavan didn't want Krishna as their husband for the purpose of satisfying their senses. They simply thought that if Krishna was their husband it would be better for His pleasure. A devotee of Krishna means someone who is thinking of Krishna's pleasure. I would like you to ask yourself how much you consider yourself a devotee of Krishna. You see, Krishna consciousness is not theoretical, just like your relationships with others in this material world are not theoretical. Living in this world means you're involved with others' names, form, qualities and activities, but the problem with the names, forms, qualities and activities of others in this world is that these things are all temporary. If you are spirit soul, that means you're looking for eternal satisfaction. You should analyse your activities and catch yourself: see how your heart is seeking eternal satisfaction in temporary things - very frustrating. You see, in your heart there is a loving propensity, you cannot deny that, there's nothing wrong with that, but you have to know what to do with your loving propensity. So the problem with material life is what?

Devotee: Everything is temporary.

Devamrita Swami: Ok, what else?

Devotee: That all enjoyment leads to suffering, birth, old age, disease, loneliness. Lack of love, there is no happiness.

Alright, I want to give you a reason that may cause you to analyze in a different way. The problem with the material world is that we are sending our loving propensity here there and everywhere, except where we should send it. Now think about that. Packed up in your heart are loving vibrations but you're sending these loving vibrations in your heart everywhere except where they should go. Everyone here likes to love yes? Is there anyone here who's against

love? The ladies will easily admit that they like love, the men will not admit it, but they like it. The loving propensity is present in all creatures.

Now, just think about it, my problem in life is that I don't know where to aim my loving vibrations. Isn't that an interesting way to analyse your life? First of all you're not denying that you have a loving propensity, even the men have to admit they like love, that they have a loving propensity. So first admit you have it. It's necessary for our Krishna consciousness that we admit we have a loving propensity. Yes this material world is temporary and it's full of suffering but don't forget that the suffering and temporariness is mainly in relation to your loving propensity. It's frustrating trying to love something that's temporary, it's frustrating and miserable trying to love matter. Once again were dealing with misapplied loving vibrations; the sooner you understand this the quicker you can straighten out your life.

We can really become spaced out if we don't know what to do with our loving propensity. How many of you have felt like this before: "My dear loving propensity, I don't know what to do with you?" Raise your hand, yes. It's there, right? Its inside you, it's swelling up, but you don't know what to do with it, it's coming out of your ears, out of your nose. Sometimes we even want to scream, "I want someone to love!" So first we have to admit that we have this desire. In Krishna consciousness we don't deny this, whether you're a *brahmacari*, *grhastha*, *vanaprastha* or *sannyasa*, you do not deny we have a need to love. Now what are we going to do with that loving propensity, how are we going to love? And who are we going to love? That is what *bhakti yoga* is about.

In this way I would like you to understand that Krishna consciousness is the love religion, and Krishna is the Supreme lover. But love is not a cheap thing, we must become purified in *bhakti yoga*. I think you'll do yourself a lot of good if you first admit that you have this loving propensity, then you can base your life on how you're going to love. Is this a practical way to live? You're all looking for practical ways to arrange your life style. So why not, when you wake up in the morning make a plan: "How am I going to love today?" This is a good plan both for men and for women, I know for the men it may sound kind of sentimental because men like to think they're self sufficient, but the men want love and to love just like everyone else. So women, they'll talk about it easily on the telephone to all their girlfriends, "I need love, I want love, do you know anyone available?" Now what do the men do? They don't talk about it unless they're drunk, and then they start talking "Oh my heart, she hurt me so badly, that woman really destroyed me, took all my money, took my heart." But ordinarily, they don't talk about it because they're proud. But still everyone wants love and wants to love, because it's the real pleasure in life. So try this when you wake up in the morning, as you're putting on your tilak in the mirror

om kesavaya namah then “Ok, how am I going to love today, who am I going to love today?” Does that sound like Krishna consciousness? Yes! Of course it is. Krishna consciousness means applying your loving vibration to Krishna, when you apply your loving propensity to Krishna then you know the secret for loving everyone. Only by loving Krishna can you love everyone. Anybody tried to love everyone? How did you do it?

Not in Krishna consciousness, but your way. . . Who tried to love everyone without Krishna consciousness? What did you do? Say it.

Devotee: I wished happiness to everyone.

Devamrita Swami: Well, how do you wish happiness to everyone? Do you know everyone? How many people do you know? How many people are passing in front of your vision? How can you wish happiness to everyone?

Devotee: From the heart.

Devamrita Swami: But how do you do that?

Devotee: I just concentrate.

Devamrita Swami: And then what, you cut out a piece of your heart and give that to them. How do you love everyone?

Devotee: Allow my heart to love.

Devamrita Swami: But your heart is so tiny. Really, how many people can you affectionately love? I’ll tell you the truth, not even *one* person successfully. Think about that. We have difficulty loving just one person successfully. That’s why after some time, romance disappears. Who else has tried to love everyone? Any men? Yes ok, let’s hear from the men.

Devotee: Try to understand everyone.

Devamrita Swami: How can, even our tiny little self understand everyone? We don’t even know everyone, and we don’t even understand ourselves. Who else has tried to understand everyone?

Devotee: When I followed Christianity, I tried to follow the bible and understand how it is that Jesus loves everyone, how he equally treats everyone and I tried to do the same.

Devamrita Swami: Jesus said if you believe in me then I’ll give you salvation. So he made this criterion; if you believe in me, if you accept me then there is salvation; but when the Lord comes as Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda He distributes the taste of Himself freely. Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityananda They say “Taste love of God first and then We’ll talk about what should happen next.” Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityananda don’t say “First you believe

in Us and then you can taste Us.” They flood the universe with love of Krishna and say “Taste it, and then We’ll talk.” Nevertheless, it’s true, in the Christian world, Jesus Christ is the closest thing people know about universal love.

Once again, please tell me: How do you love everyone? Do you go out on the street in the centre of Moscow and walk up to everyone and say “I love you.” Have any of you done that?

Devotee: We will be misunderstood.

Devamrita Swami: Indeed; therefore I ask, how do you love everyone--that is my question. Krishna is the perfect object for your love, He has unlimited potencies to fulfill your love. You love your girlfriend or boyfriend but then they become tired of you or you become tired of them, then you make an excuse how to get away from that person. You don’t say “Oh I’m tired of you.” You say “Oh I’m going to visit my mother today, I’m going to visit my friends today.” Right? You don’t say “I need a break from you.” Krishna however, has the unlimited ability to satisfy your love, the more you serve Krishna the more Krishna appears to you. You don’t know any relationship like that in the material world, you don’t have any relationships like that in which the person in your relationship, everyday is newer and newer, right? It’s not there in the material world, even in the best relationships it’s not there, right? Even those of you who are happily married you cannot say to your spouse “Everyday you’re a newer person, everyday you’re more fresh.” You can’t say that! What do you usually say, “Oh my wife is nice, my husband is nice we try to get along if there’s some arguments we try to minimize it, we try to cooperate with each other” right? That’s the way you say - in the best relationships it’s like that. But try to understand in a relationship with Krishna the Lord is ever fresh, ever new. The whole point in hearing Krishna’s pastimes is to understand Krishna is the most suitable object of your love, so please try to understand this, think about it very deeply. Krishna consciousness is the love religion for greedy people.

Ok, my point is that you cannot love everyone outside of Krishna consciousness. Ok, now you all have admitted it’s not possible to love everyone outside of *bhakti yoga*; everyone will agree yes? Ok. Now the next question, Ordinarily, how do you go about loving one person?

How do you do it? What is the success formula? What do you do to be successful in loving one person?

Devotee: Try to serve him.

Devamrita Swami: Try to serve that person. Did you iron his clothes?

Devotee: Giving presents.

Devamrita Swami: Giving presents, so was that very effective?

Others, is this a very effective way in loving one person? Is it very effective? Come on, tell me? Who here has not tried to love one person, raise your hand. . .everyone has tried. Ok, tell me the success stories. What do you do?

Devotee: Just try to satisfy his false ego.

Devamrita Swami: Just try to satisfy his false ego huh? Powerful love?

Everyone here agrees they've tried to love at least one person, so by these efforts did you experience ever-increasing bliss and knowledge? I'm just asking an innocent question. If you've said "When I'm around you my bliss is like a limitless ocean; when I'm with you my knowledge is increasing without limitation." Anyone said that to the beloved?

Devotee: There is just hope.

Devamrita Swami: Right. Hope against hope. But still we are all interested in this business of loving. Obviously we need to know the success formula for loving. So I'm asking you these questions to show you the real reason why you took up Krishna consciousness. You have to admit it to yourself - admit that in the material world you failed at love. That is humility. When Lord Caitanya says *trnad api sunicena* to be more humble than a straw in the street, that humility means to admit "I failed at loving in the material world." Because I'll tell you the truth; if in material life you had experience satisfying love, you wouldn't be here. Do you understand? What happened was, even though you might have had nice relationships, still a part of you was not satisfied; that is true of both the men and the women. So there's a positive and a negative reason why you come to Krishna consciousness. Yes, you can say "I came because the material world is hellish and Krishna is blissful," you can say like that, but I want to give you a more precise reason. You came to Krishna consciousness because your loving propensity was not satisfied in the material world, that's the negative reason, and the positive reason is, you saw hope for love in Krishna. So that's another reason why you should joyfully follow the process of *sadhana*, to fulfil your quest for perfect loving exchanges. Now, what is the greatest pain that we can feel while practising Krishna consciousness?

Devotee: Separation from devotees.

Devamrita Swami: Anyone else?

Devotee: Frustration.

Devamrita Swami: Why frustration?

Devotee: Because we're not so good as we think we are.

Devamrita Swami: The greatest pain you feel while practising Krishna consciousness?

Devotee: When we see our material attachment, when they are opened.

Devamrita Swami: That's not the greatest pain, the greatest pain we feel when practising Krishna consciousness is when our loving relationships with other devotees become disturbed. You know what that feels like "I thought they were devotees, but then they treated me so badly." That is the most painful feeling "I thought that person was a devotee, a great devotee and then this happened." That is the greatest pain.

Moving on in our discussion, we should learn to understand that *bhakti yoga* means feeling with loving exchange, it's the art, science and culture of how to have perfect loving affairs. So what does advancement in Krishna consciousness mean? Advancement in Krishna consciousness means that you become more and more expert in having loving relationships. You may wonder "What's it like to become an advanced devotee, how does it feel?" One thing you should know is that as you become more advanced in spiritual life you're more able to sustain loving relationships with others; because when you fix your relationship with Krishna you can deal with the parts of Krishna.

Now I know you've all read *Bhagavad-Gita*; who here has not read *Bhagavad-Gita*? Ok, now you know the verse in the fourth chapter where Krishna says *tad viddhi pranipatena pariprasnena sevaya*. Krishna says if you want to know the truth then you approach a *guru*. Everyone knows that verse? But what does Krishna say is the effect of having approached a genuine *guru*? That is described in the next verse, *yaj jnatva na punar moham* you won't be in illusion anymore, Krishna says. And what is the proof that you're not in illusion anymore? Krishna says "You'll see that all living entities are My parts and parcels"--that means you'll be able to love properly. Here is the effect of having approached a bonafide *guru*. I wonder how many of you thought of that before, it's right there in *Bhagavad-Gita*; Krishna is saying, when you approach My representative then this is the effect you'll get, in other words Krishna is saying 'You'll know how to love properly.' When you know how to love properly that means you're not in illusion anymore; you know what to do with your loving propensity - that is the real difference between the devotee and the non-devotee. Non-devotees do not know how to deal with their loving propensities, so in Krishna consciousness we want lots of relationships but we want to be effective in those relationships. What disturbed you in the material world is that you were not effective in your relationships. Remember? You tried so hard to love, right? You talked and talked, you squeezed and squeezed, and the real love didn't emerge. You gave so many gifts, you accepted so many gifts, you tried to please

someone's senses, they tried to please yours, talk and talk and squeeze and squeeze, hug and hug - where's the love? That is non-devotional life. Now what attracts you to Krishna consciousness is that you see an opportunity for pure and perfect loving exchanges, (baby starts crying)... the child is crying because it wants the mother's love. What about the big children here, the adults? Just like the babies crying for attention and affection, similarly the big children, the adults, are actually crying for love and affection--not just the ladies but also the men. That's what you're looking for in Krishna consciousness: "Who's going to love me in *bhakti yoga*?" Yes, is that what everyone wants? But that means you're looking for Krishna, Krishna is the Supreme lover, He can maintain loving relationships with unlimited devotees.

The question for today is how determined are we to love Krishna. In order for there to be that greed that we've been speaking about, there has to be determination. You all know what it's like to endeavour with determination, maybe you have this determination at work or at school to achieve some goal, make a lot of money or sports. So in *bhakti yoga* you apply that determination for the sake of loving Krishna. Krishna is watching for that. When you show determination for practising Krishna consciousness then Krishna starts to notice you. But in the beginning you just need to become a little purified, is that alright? A small price to pay, in terms of a few regulative principles--what's the big deal! The regulative principles protect you from dirty things. Waking up a little early in the morning - that's all, chanting a little Hare Krishna -what's so difficult! So now I'm giving you another definition of *sadhana bhakti*, not just a list of rules and regulations. It's a chance to show that you are determined to get Krishna's love. This is very exciting. Our daily schedule is an opportunity to show Krishna we're determined to get His love. Now who is a good example that you can think of to motivate you in loving Krishna with determination? Of course in the beginning stages of *bhakti yoga* you don't think of it as loving Krishna do you? We think that we're concentrating on doing the things with determination that will develop our love for Krishna. For example, we know what the people in India do when a married couple decides to have a child, whether the couple is *grhastha* or *grhamedhi*. First they think about it and then they start putting money in the bank, for five years; then they have the child - not that things happen whimsically. No, they plan many years in advance. They put money aside, even they have money in the bank for the child's education, eighteen years after childbirth. Well, that shows you how we should make plans to love Krishna. First we have to show our determination.

A wonderful example of that determination is Srimati Rukmini. I told you we were going to discuss the *gopis* in the forest and Rukmini in the palace. Rukmini's example is very exciting because she shows you how to scheme to

get Krishna. How many of you have schemed to get someone? Raise your hands, yes, it's just like Premavardhana's wife, Ananda Vardhana. She said how she schemed to get him. It's kind of fun to scheme to get someone yes? To make plans to capture one person, well that's what Rukmini did with Krishna. Of course Rukmini is Krishna's internal potency, therefore she is more than just compatible with Him. She didn't have to get an astrological chart, because she's His internal potency. But for Krishna's pleasure the pastime happens like they have just discovered each other. So what does the *sastra* say about the relationship between Srimati Rukmini and Srimati Radharani? Rukmini is a plenary expansion of Srimati Radharani. The *Padma Purana* explains that when Krishna is young He enjoys in the forest with cowherd girls, the daughters of farmers, and when He is an older youth He enjoys in the palaces with the daughters of Kings. And the *Skanda Purana* explains that Rukmini is in Dvaraka what Srimati Radharani is in the forest of Vraja. So although the *Bhagavatam* says that Rukmini chose Krishna, the fact is that they are always eternally in love with each other.

Pariksit Maharaja always asks the questions that push Sukadeva Gosvami to describe the Lord's pastimes, he says to Sukadeva, I want to know about Ruciranana; *ruci-ranana* is a name of Rukmini, it refers to this beautiful woman who has a face that has beauty expanding like a lotus flower. We've never seen such a beautiful female face in this world, a beautiful face expanding like a blooming lotus. Rukmini is also known as *Bhismakasuta*, she's the daughter of Maharaja Bhismaka. So Pariksit Maharaja said, "I heard Lord Krishna captured Rukmini and took her away, I want to hear all the details about this because we'll never get tired of hearing about Krishna." His pastimes are ever-fresh and the Lord's pastimes when you hear about them, destroy the *lokamala*, the contaminations, *mala*, of the material world, the *loka*. That is how *krishna-katha* is; it cleanses away not only your individual contamination but in fact the contamination of the whole world. The amazing thing about this gathering we're having here at Divonmorsk, of 4,000 devotees is that it is working to destroying the sinful contamination of the whole world. That is the effect when devotees gather to discuss Krishna. So what's the first thing you should know about Rukmini and Krishna's coming together? Besides that Rukmini is a plenary portion of Srimati Radharani, first understand that she had a desire for Krishna. She developed that desire simply by hearing about Krishna's qualities. She was a single, chaste girl living in the palace of her father and saintly persons, even Narada Muni would come and visit, and these saintly persons would describe about Krishna. So immediately Rukmini had the desire "That's the one I want. I don't care for any other suitor. I want Krishna, I must have Krishna." This is the kind of excitement you want to feel in devotional service. Why make

Krishna consciousness so boring? Without this hunger, this greed for Krishna, Krishna consciousness is not so interesting. You see, ordinary religion is actually very boring “I believe in God . . . do you believe in God? I try to live a moral life--especially when everyone is watching. I want to be good, do you want to be good?”

Boring! That’s why some of you were saying that there can be trouble from material desires in your execution of Krishna consciousness. Especially if religion is boring, then attraction between male and female can seem very appealing. You understand? If religion is boring then obviously the only thing interesting left to do is to be seemingly endlessly involved in male and female attraction. Therefore Srila Prabhupada blames the impersonalist for the spread of illicit sensual desires around the world because the impersonalists seek to obliterate the exciting life devotees share with Krishna. Without understanding the exciting life of Krishna and His pastimes, then you’ll just turn to sinful life, but once you start to understand the production of greed for Krishna then life becomes exciting.

The point is we can also develop our attraction for Krishna just by hearing about Krishna. Remember *sadhana bhakti* means developing desire, developing greed. You want to feel it deep in your heart, deep in your mind “Krishna is for me, I’ve got to have Him.” Isn’t that fun! “Krishna, I’ve got to have Him.” You should get to the point where your minds’ scream out like that. Can you imagine those things? Your heart and your mind screaming out together; try it silently.

In spiritual life hearing about Krishna is the same as seeing Krishna. You know how in the spiritual world all the senses are interchangeable?

angani yasya sakalendriya vrttimanti
govindam adi purusam tam abam bhajami

The eyes can hear, the tongue can see. So Rukmini is saying, by hearing about Krishna’s beauty I am seeing Krishna's beauty. When you chant the Hare Krishna *mantra*, first comes the name to you, then form, qualities, pastimes. That’s why *Padma Purana* says:

atah sri-krsna-namadi
na bhaved grabhyam indriyaih

First *nama*, the holy name then *adi*, all the other things follow. What follows? Form, qualities, pastimes - the holy name brings all these things. You don't have to artificially imagine these things while you're chanting japa.

This is how Krishna consciousness begins, a desire to love Krishna, because Krishna's all attractive. Rukmini made up her mind simply by hearing, and she concluded, "That's the only one I want." So what else happened? Krishna had heard about Rukmini, He had heard about her beauty and because He's the Supreme Personality of Godhead He has only the best for His pleasure. So Krishna had decided Rukmini is for Me. Now, there are some parallels with our devotional daily life; by hearing about Krishna we'll become attracted and then Krishna will notice us. When you chant *japa* every morning Krishna's noticing you "This devotee is chanting My glories." If you chant nice *japa* Krishna pays attention, just like you're hearing about Krishna, Krishna's hearing about you. Once Srila Prabhupada explained *japa* and *kirtan* in this way: "If you will chant nicely, Krishna will hear nicely." Krishna will hear you nicely if you chant very nicely, and then Krishna will make it possible for you to be Krishna conscious. So you should chant your *japa* with that kind of mentality, "I'm going to chant with my heart." Have you ever tried talking with your heart? How many have tried that? You can say *Hare Krishna* with your heart, you can say it with your lips or you can say it with your brain- you can think it, but you can also shoot out the *maha mantra* with your heart. Just like that baby that was crying, from your heart you can cry out *Hare Krishna*, and Krishna listens 'Oh, someone's heart is crying for Me.' Krishna will hear nicely, but if you're just chanting spaced-out *japa* then how do you expect Krishna to pay attention? But Krishna wants to pay attention to you, so simply call His name with your heart. Now don't say that your heart cannot do this. Indeed, your heart has the power.

You know what it's like when you have something in your heart, something's burning in your heart. I think they have some expression; I was hopelessly in love. Yes, some of you have felt like that before? Yes even the men are raising their hands. I was hopelessly, helplessly, turned upside down by love. That's the heart! My heart was captured even though my mind and intelligence told me something else. So you know what it's like when you feel something pulling your heart. So that heart energy is meant for chanting the holy name. Often, we think our heart is meant for our own private purposes and everything else is meant for Krishna, right? "Krishna You can have my money, You can have my time, You can have my physical energy in service, but my heart is my business." You don't want to admit, but everyone is feeling that their heart is their dearest possession. So they conclude: "I decide what to do with my heart, if Krishna proves Himself to be satisfactory then I'll give my

heart.” Right? Yes. “I’ll wait and see what kind of God Krishna is; meanwhile the *prasada* is very good so that will keep me busy while I’m waiting to make up my mind completely about Krishna. What is it you’re waiting for? You’re watching and waiting to see what to do with your heart: “Am I going to give my heart to Krishna’s service? Maybe yes, maybe no, maybe just two days of the week, not everyday.”

We also think: “I’m not foolish. Although I’ll give my heart to *maya* immediately, I’ll never do that to Krishna! You have to be much more careful with Krishna. I’ll give my heart to anyone in *maya*, but with Krishna, I have to be very, very cautious. You just don’t know what Krishna’s going to do; *maya* is trustworthy but Krishna--I don’t know.” This is our craziness.

Bhakti yoga means to combine an offering of our mind, intelligence, our body and our heart in Krishna’s service. This is why you need a spiritual master: to teach you to engage every part of you in Krishna’s service. The desire to do that comes by hearing about Krishna. Rukmini heard about Krishna, and Krishna heard about Rukmini, but there was some problem. There was a big impediment, that actually only served to make the eternal romance more exciting. Although Rukmini wanted Krishna and even her father wanted her to have Krishna, her brother Rukmi had another idea. He hated Krishna; therefore, he thought that his sister should marry Sisupala, an empowered demon. Can you imagine the Goddess of Fortune marrying one of Krishna’s greatest enemies? You know what Sisupala was like when he was a baby boy? Even before he could talk properly, he would blaspheme Krishna. Sisupala couldn’t even speak whole sentences; yet as a baby he was able to insult Krishna with power and determination. So this is who Rukmi wanted his sister to marry! How did Rukmini handle this big obstacle--what did she do?

Did she just lament as we might, while handling our own challenges and barriers: “Oh how horrible, it’s hopeless, I’ll never be Krishna conscious. No one cares, no one understands. Guru Maharaja doesn’t care, the devotees don’t care, Krishna consciousness works on everyone but me.” No, Rukmini did not lament like that. Notice her example: she made a plan. She didn’t just give up: “*Maya*’s too much, too strong; there’s no way I’ll attain my goal.” She immediately started thinking how to get Krishna even though there was difficulty. She arranged for a *brahmana*, to carry a message to Krishna, because she knew that *brahmanas* always tell the truth. What happened when the *brahmana* arrived in Dvaraka to deliver the message to Krishna?

First of all, what was Krishna doing in Dvaraka? He has just run away from Jarasandha. Did you know that? Krishna has become famous as Ranachora, “One who runs away from battle.” Why did He do that? You know, Krishna

had Muchakunda kill Kalayavana by burning him with his eyes and then Krishna killed Kalayavana's army. Then what did Krishna and Balarama do? Although they're *Bhagavan*, the possessors of unlimited opulences, after killing Kalayavana's huge army, They went around collecting all the jewels from the bodies of dead soldiers. This is the Supreme Personality of Godhead! He has everything, yet Krishna and Balarama are having some fun treasure hunting, collecting all the jewels from the deceased and piling all the jewels onto big wagons to take back to Dvaraka. This is divine enjoyment! Killing millions of soldiers and then taking all their jewels - that is God.

Generally, especially the ladies don't like these particular pastimes of Krishna, they don't like the killing pastimes, but Prabhupada explains that pure devotees know that everything Krishna does is auspicious. The real devotees of the Lord want to hear everything Krishna does, whether Krishna's dancing with the *gopis* or killing demons, or collecting jewels from dead bodies. The real devotees of the Lord don't deny one drop of Krishna's pastimes, but the artificial devotees say, "I only want to hear about Krishna in Vrindavan, I don't want to hear about Krishna killing soldiers and cutting off their heads." Only immature devotees think like that.

Once in Los Angeles the artists were painting pictures for the *Bhagavatam* and they liked to make lots of pictures of Krishna with the *gopis*. And Prabhupada wrote a letter complaining, "Who's filling my books simply with pictures of Krishna and the *gopis*? We want to see how Krishna controls everyone." So we should learn to relish every type of pastime of the Lord; we should not discriminate "I only like the Vraja *lila*, I don't want to hear about the rivers of blood caused by Krishna and Balarama's killing." How many of you say like that--"I'm not so attracted to the *lilas* when Krishna kills"? Raise your hand if you think like that, be honest. To actually be a devotee of the Lord means to appreciate everything Krishna does. So Krishna and Balarama piled these wagons high with jewels from all the dead soldiers and then suddenly Jarasandha and his armies attack for the eighteenth time. Then what does Krishna and Balarama do? Dropping all the jewels, they start to run! How can this be? Krishna simply abandoned all the precious jewels He had so carefully gathered, and then He apparently ran from a foe He had already defeated seventeen times before? This pastime shows the Lord's opulence of renunciation. God means the possessor of all opulence: *sadaisvarya purna*. Krishna has all wealth, strength, fame, knowledge, beauty and renunciation. Now He is displaying His opulence of renunciation: "Look Balarama, we collected millions of jewels. Now Jarasanda is attacking. Let's just leave all the booty and run." What bliss! That is God.

You couldn't do that—renounce so quickly, without hesitation. You would think, “How can we just leave all this? We laboured so intensely to gather such precious gems--we can't just leave it all behind!”

You know when the terrorists attacked the New York World Trade Centre and the buildings were about to collapse, killing thousands of people, many persons resisted to immediately run down the stairs to escape. They were working for investment firms, brokerages, and they all had big desktop computers in which all their financial deals were recorded. Once they finally realized that they had to flee, many initially struggled to take their computers with them, down one-hundred and more flights of stairs! Just see--there's acrid smoke choking the air, no lights, and then when the call to flee is sounded, they say, “Oh no! We cannot leave our computers--all our years of work, all the financial data is stored there!” As they tried to pick up and carry their computers, other people implored, “No, just drop it, run, run, run for your life!” We have to go down over one-hundred flights on the emergency stairs. Can you imagine this? Then you think of Krishna's leaving behind millions of costly jewels, after He and Balarama had patiently gathered them. And you think of His running from Jarasandha, after having already defeated him seventeen times—on each occasion totally annihilating Jarasandha's armies.

This time Krishna and Balarama just start quickly walking away on Their lotus feet. What did Jarasandha think? “Aahaa--They're afraid of me! Ha Ha--just see the cowards! I am victorious--so great that They are fleeing from me!”

We know that Krishna and Balarama ran up to the top of a mountain. The *Bhagavatam* describes that apparently Krishna and Balarama were tired, but how can you truly be tired and climb a mountain that's ninety miles high? “We're tired of running from Jarasandha, so lets climb a ninety mile high mountain.”

Jarasandha had a brilliant idea “After searching the terrain below the peak of this mountain, I can't find Them—that means, of course, that those two cowards are hiding at the top. Now I shall set a fire around the peak of the mountain. Surely They will burn to death—there's no escape.” And what did Krishna and Balarama do? They jumped from the mountain top down ninety miles to the ground. Sounds like great fun, yes?

Let us reflect: Why did Krishna run away? You see, we glorify Krishna for His pastimes with the devotees in Vrindavan and we also glorify Him for His running from a battle. He's thinking, “I've defeated Jarasandha so many times before; now it's apparently getting repetitive, at least for My devotees, My audience. I've killed his army seventeen times—now let Me do something else.” Like what? Rukmini. Krishna's thinking, “I don't want to fight now, I've got romance on My mind.” That is God, He knows what to do: “Come on

Balarama, let's get back to Dvaraka so I can be ready for a love letter to come.” Krishna knows how to enjoy.

In Dvaraka when the *brahmana* arrived, Krishna first asked him, “Do you feel satisfied in your mind? Are you performing your religious principles properly?”

Krishna worships the *brahmana*, massages his legs, and also inquires: “Are the citizens in your land happy? If the citizens are happy it means they have a good King. Please know that good kings are very dear to Me.” Then the Lord said, “Please, I think you have a confidential mission, please reveal it to Me.” So the *brahmana* read Rukmini's letter.

I want you to remember this letter because it is such a perfect example of attraction and determination in Krishna consciousness. What did Rukmini write? “O Bhuvana-sundara, O beauty of the world!” Did you ever say that to anyone? You can try it when you're at home, if you're married. Say to your husband or wife “O beauty of the world.” Everyone knows it's not true, but when you say that about Krishna, the words are inadequate. Just see how Rukmini is bold in her presentation: “O Bhuvana-sundara!” She wants Krishna and she's going to say everything directly--she doesn't waste any time because she doesn't have any time! Very soon she is supposed to marry Sisupala, so she gets right to the point. “Krishna, I've heard about Your qualities. The description of Your qualities has entered my ears and consequently all my material distress has gone away. As the description of Your beauty enters my ears, I am seeing the perfection of Your form in my eyes. What is the result of this meditation? I am shamelessly fixing my mind upon You!”

Note the mighty devotional power of her presentation—a tsunami of pure love. Of course, Krishna is naturally the correct object for such intensities. What else does she say to Krishna? She calls Him *nri-simba*. Not, in this case, that He is Nrisimhadeva. What she means here is that He is the lion among men. Can you imagine saying that to any man today? In *kali yuga* all the men and women are woefully devoid of potency. Therefore now probably a woman would have to say, “O housecat among men!” Yes, in *kali yuga* you have to do the best you can. Sukadeva Gosvami says: *daksyam kutumba bharanam* (*Bhag. 12.2.7*) In *kali yuga* if a man can just take care of one wife and two children, he's known as *daksya*, expert. Isn't it so, if you know a *grhastha* man who can take care of two children and one wife, you think, “He's doing so well.” The *Bhagavatam* says this is a symptom of *kali yuga*, since in normal times, normal *yugas*, it's no big deal to take care of even a large family. Krishna is eternally the suitable object for such glorification. So, Rukmini said like that, “O lion among men.” This is her *bhakti*. She knows how to attract Krishna—it's an art, a

culture, a science. Let us not be lazy. We want eagerness to learn how to attract Krishna.

What else did she say? “You’re *mano-abhirama*, You’re the one who delights all the minds.” Furthermore, “What girl, at the right time and of a good family, could not choose You for marriage?” She’s eloquently open and direct: “Krishna, You are irresistible; therefore I’ve chosen You to be my husband and I surrender to You.”

Then the plea: “O *vibhu*, unlimited one, please reciprocate and choose me as Your wife. O *ambujaksha*, lotus-eyed one, don’t let a jackal-like man touch me-- I’m only meant for You, the lion- hero. I’m meant for You, now I’m Yours.” What a beautiful letter.

Then she presents her transcendental C.V., her spiritual résumé: “Look at my record for this life and my past life. If indeed I’ve performed pious activities for many lives, to the *gurus*, the *brahmanas*, and the demigods; if I’ve pleased Lord Narayana, then please, You come, take my hand.”

She explains, “Krishna, You’re so great that one life of pious activities is not enough to get You.” This is the attitude of real love. Next she presents her scheme to Krishna. She’s always thinking how to be Krishna conscious, how to arrange for Krishna to get her. She said, “Krishna You might be thinking that if Your coming and kidnapping me will set off a big bloody fight in the palace, many woman and other innocent civilians may die. But here’s a kidnap-plan for You that will avoid such bloodshed.”

Here Srimati Rukmini is showing us how to scheme for Krishna, how to plot to get Him. Yes, let us all offer plans to the Lord how He can capture us, through our dedicated chanting and daily service: “Krishna, I’ll be doing devotional service and it’s all for You; Krishna I’ll be chanting Your holy name, I’ll be hearing about You, all for You. Come get me.” Rukmini’s showing you how to do that.

And now her grand finale: “Krishna, if You say I can’t get Your mercy now, then what will I do? I hereby declare that I will perform severe penances all my life until my body is weak and dies. I will repeat this for hundreds of lifetimes-- until finally I get Your mercy.

This is the perfect example of determination to be Krishna conscious. What mundane person would we ever say these words to? “For hundreds of lifetimes I will perform severe austerities just to get you!” Who, in this material world, has ever said that, to someone else in the material world? Anyone? No, impossible. But Krishna deserves such words and determination. Our Krishna consciousness will become powerful when we understand that Krishna is

worthy of that kind of perseverance: “I’ll go through *bhakta* training and purification hundreds of times, for hundreds of births, just to get You, my Lord.”

Rukmini is showing you how to love. Her example of loving determination is not possible on the material platform. This kind of dedication is only possible in connection to Krishna.

What were the *brahmana*’s last words to Krishna? “Krishna, do what You like, but if You do indeed want her, there’s not much time left--You must act now...!

We’ll continue tomorrow. Srimati Rukmini’s beauty and Krishna’s reaction to it will be our topic tomorrow.