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Speaker: HH Vedavyasapriya Swami



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Devotee question: A person who is following Sankaracarya, or even from different religions, for example Islam. He has been studying Koran or following those things. So his mind is set for his religion is best. Even in Hinduism someone will say Krishna is best, the Supreme, whereas someone will say we worship another form of Krishna, or another incarnation, like Rama. So what is best? What is good and bad? It's like a debate.

Vedavyasapriya Swami: "It's not a debatable thing. There is a lot of misunderstanding created. Religion is one (Srimad Bhagavatam 1.1.1-2, Bhagavad-gita 18.66). Philosophically, that is theoretically, and practically also. Because the underlying call of all the denominations you are talking of is the same...

"How did Chaitanya Mahaprabhu preach to Muslims? Without any animosity, and He convinced them, and converted them (Caitanya-caritamrta, Adi 17.143-171, 17.215-220).

"In ISKCON, and especially Russia, there are more Muslim devotees than anybody in the whole world. They will chant full-time. Prabhupada didn't go to convert them. Prabhupada brought the philosophy of love of Godhead in a very explicit way through the books of Bhagavad-gita and Srimad Bhagavatam. He didn't care to write other books. Only that supports the personalism aspect and devotional aspect (Bhagavad-gita 11.54). He took it as the conclusive, because he's a follower of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and who broadcast that chanting of Hare Krishna will be sung in every town and village, right? (Chaitanya Bhagavat).

"So this methodology that Prabhupada brought, Prabhupada did not confront anybody there, that you are bringing another religion, that you are that. Neither is Bhagavad-gita a sectarian book. It touches only the soul and Supersoul (Bhagavad-gita 2.17, 2.22, 13.22-23). Not the body, not the gender, not the caste or creed. It touches the soul. In any form. Whether woman form or man form, or a pig form, or anything. Right? So this is the most common denomination, that we can appreciate, that sectarian scriptures do not touch on (Bhagavad-gita 11.53). Vedas would not touch, because it's filled with the three modes of material nature (Bhagavad-gita 2.45). Therefore it has not been appreciated much, or they could not penetrate into the depths of the Vedas. Because they came to plunder all these riches and they took it. Germans took it.

"So we see when Prabhupada came to America he was so much humble. He said, "My dear Lord, I do not know where you have brought me." Seeing the skyscrapers of Boston harbour, the town, the city. He wrote this particular poem. That, "This is a place of ugra-karma. Ugra-karma means one which is motivated by mode of passion and ignorance. Because they are so much motivated. They want to put up big, big, big things. And industrialization and technology. It's ugra-karma - violent activity (Bhagavad-gita 16.9). And therefore it creates violence. they try on violence. The entire economy is on the basis of violence - ugra-karma. But we must have purpose, otherwise why should we be there? As a matter of fact, I do not know their language even. But, I am a puppet in Your hands. You can ake me dance. Just the way You want. Otherwise, even though my name is Bhaktivedanta, neither I have bhakti, nor I am a knower of Vedanta. So please make me an instrument because I have nothing but only faith in Your holy name. Make me Your instrument." (Markine Bhagavad-dharma, A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada)

"And he gave that faith to others. The holy name. And there also he said, "The Lord has thousands and millions of names (Sri Siksastaka 2). You can chant any (of His) names. Even from your scriptures. But if you don't get result please chant, Hare Krishna Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama Hare Hare. There is no

compulsion, but do it." And that purity, simplicity and complete conviction that Prabhupada had, it penetrated the heart of people, and under the banner of the Hippidom, the singing and chanting, it flourished...

"We are transforming the heart. Prabhupada said "You can become a better Christian by chanting Hare Krishna". And that's a fact. Every religion has some good part of it, and those who don't follow become fanatical.

"So because Prabhupada was fearless he was completely convinced. It is a fact, one becomes fearless in preaching - mukam karoti vacalam pangum langhayate girim, yat-krpa tam aham vande sri gurum dina taranam, paramanandam dina-tarinam sri-krnsa-caitanya-devam (adapted from Bhavartha Dipika, Mangala Stotram 1)."