

Sannyasa Asrama - Part 2

BY: MAHESH RAJA

Feb 24, UK (SUN) — Srila Prabhupada's instructions on the sannyasa asrama, in five parts.

02-09-76 Letter to Brahmananda:

AS FAR AS ENTERING CREMATORIUM IS CONCERNED, NO, WE CANNOT GO. That is social system, but we are sannyasis. A SANNYASI IS IN SPIRITUAL LIFE, NOT IN SOCIAL LIFE AT ALL.

05-04-76 Letter to Nityananda:

THE BEADS OF THE FIRST INITIATES CAN BE CHANTED ON BY ONE OF THE SANNYASIS and the thread for brahmana initiation is herein enclosed. After the fire yajna you can play a recording of the gayatri mantra played into the right ear of the brahmana initiate.

05-23-76 Letter to Nityananda:

On your recommendation I am accepting Danny Miller and Michael McKinly for first initiation into Hare Krishna chanting. YOU CAN HAVE SANNYASIS CHANT ON THEIR BEADS, AND GIVE THEM THEIR SPIRITUAL NAMES AND BEADS AT THE FIRE SACRIFICE. They must abide by the regulative principles; no illicit-sex, no intoxication, no gambling, and no meat-eating, and chanting minimum of 16 rounds daily. Then there will be steady and sure progress. Their spiritual names are:

Danny--Kalaksara das
Michael--Gunavasa das

01-22-76 Letter to Jayatirtha:

You have suggested that some men are best engaged in doing business. I agree. All grhasthas who are interested in doing business should do so in full swing. Yat karosi yad asnasi, yaj juhosi dadasi yat. yat tapasyasi kaunteya tat kurusvamad arpanam. Let this be the guiding principle. So let all the grhasthas who wish to, execute business full-fledgedly in the USA and in this way support Gurukula. BUSINESS MUST BE DONE BY THE GRHASTHAS, NOT BY THE SANNYASIS OR BRAHMACARIS. NEITHER THE SANNYASIS OR BRAHMACARIS CAN BE EXPECTED TO SUPPORT GURUKULA. The parents must take responsibility for their children, otherwise they should not have children. It is the duty of the individual parents. I am not in favor of taxing the Temples. The parents must pay for the maintenance of their children. Neither can the BBT be expected to give any loans. Now the BBT 50% for construction is pledged to the projects in India--Bombay, Kuruksetra, Mayapur. The profits from the businesses should first go to support Gurukula and balance may be given for the local Temple's maintenance. Grhasthas can do business. IT IS BEST IF THE TEMPLE PRESIDENTS ARE EITHER SANNYASIS OR BRAHMACARIS.

01-13-76 Letter to Jayatirtha:

SO FAR YOUR SUGGESTION THAT THEY SEW CLOTHES FOR THE SANNYASIS DEITIES IT IS NOT POSSIBLE. Sannyasis may have NO connection with women.

09-04-75 Letter to Paramahansa:

Regarding the restaurant, that is the defect, that if we divert our attention more on business. Therefore it is very difficult. Things should be adjusted so that temple programs are not hampered. THE BRAHMACARIS AND SANNYASIS MUST STICK TO THE TEMPLE ACTIVITIES. ONLY THE GRHASTHAS CAN TAKE PART IN THE RESTAURANT. Our aim should not be to work for profit. You American boys and girls can make very large profit, but why you have taken to Krishna consciousness? You are not meant for profit making but for advancing in spiritual life. So we should not take to the restaurant for profit making at the cost of slackening of spiritual life. This is dangerous.

08-04-75 Letter to Vedavyasa:

Regarding your questions, you may not be so advanced that you will take the karmi remnants as prasada. The karmis should not be given so much that there is waste. You can give them a little, and then if they like you can give them more. This system should be introduced everywhere. I have seen myself that so much prasada is being left. This is not good. Regarding the attitude for taking prasada, if you think it is something palatable, so let me take more and more, then that is sense gratification. But, still it is prasadam so it will act. Prasad is transcendental, but one should not take too much. SANNYASIS MAY TAKE THE MAHA-PRASADA BUT NOT TO OVEREAT. CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU WAS TAKING, BUT ON PRINCIPLE HE WAS AVOIDING.

02-11-70 Letter to Balmukundji Parikh:

According to our Sastras, the brahmacaris, the vanaprasthas, and the sannyasis are allowed to collect alms and are considered as the children of the society, which is composed of householders. In other words, our Vedic civilization is the most perfect community project. Only the grhasthas are supposed to earn money, especially the ksatriyas and the vaisyas, and the money is distributed community-wide. The community is divided into four parts, the brahmacari, the grhastha, the vanaprastha, and the sannyasi. OUT OF THESE FOUR DIVISIONS, ONLY THE GRHASTHAS ARE SUPPOSED TO MAINTAIN THE BRAHMACARIS, THE VANAPRASTHAS, AND THE SANNYASIS. That is the whole program, which means if there are 100 members in the community, three-fourths of the whole number, namely 75%, are maintained by the one-fourth members, namely 25%. OUR MOVEMENT IS FOR PREACHING THE SANKIRTANA VIBRATION, SO WHILE THE BRAHMACARIS AND VANAPRASTHAS OR THE SANNYASIS TAKE TO THIS PREACHING WORK, THE GRHASTHAS OR HOUSEHOLDERS CAN MAINTAIN THE TEMPLE AND INSTITUTION.

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According to Vedic civilization, the bodily identification is divided into eight: brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, sudra, brahmacari, grhastha, vanaprastha, and sannyasa. Varnasrama-dharma. So human civilization begins, according to Vedic understanding, when there is varnasrama system. Otherwise it is not human civilization. Therefore in the Bhagavad-gita it is stated, catur-varnyam maya srstam. This system should be followed. Then, gradually, one has to come to the spiritual. Chaotic society cannot help us. There must be systematic social order: brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya, sudra, catur-varnyam, and brahmacari, grhastha, vanaprastha, and sannyasa. SANNYASA IS NOT VOLUNTARY, BUT IT IS COMPULSORY. AT THE LAST STAGE ONE MUST TAKE SANNYASA. AFTER FIFTIETH YEAR ONE MUST TAKE TO VANAPRASTHA, VANAM VRAJET. THIS IS SYSTEM. SO... SYSTEM OF PURIFICATION, HOW TO BECOME DESIGNATIONLESS. AND IF WE KEEP THE DESIGNATION, THEN, SASTRA SAYS, SA EVA GO-KHARAH: "ONE WHO KEEPS THE BODILY DESIGNATION, HE'S NO BETTER THAN THE COWS AND THE ASSES, ANIMAL."

Srimad-Bhagavatam 3.24.40 Purport:

Kardama Muni followed the Vedic injunction that no one in sannyasa life can have any kind of relationship with women. But what is the position of a woman who is left by her husband? She is entrusted to the son, and the son promises that he will deliver his

mother from entanglement. A WOMAN IS NOT SUPPOSED TO TAKE SANNYASA. SO-CALLED SPIRITUAL SOCIETIES CONCOCTED IN MODERN TIMES GIVE SANNYASA EVEN TO WOMEN, ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO SANCTION IN THE VEDIC LITERATURE FOR A WOMAN'S ACCEPTING SANNYASA. Otherwise, if it were sanctioned, Kardama Muni could have taken his wife and given her sannyasa.

03-14-67 Letter to Brahmananda:

A female is never awarded the order of Sannyasam. Because a female is never considered independent and Sannyasam was never awarded to any female in the past by the great Acaryas like Sankara, Ramanuja etc. THE FEMALE SANNYASINS ARE TO BE IMMEDIATELY UNDERSTOOD AS PRETENDERS OR PROSTITUTES.

Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya lila 3.6:

*etām sa āsthāya parātma-niṣṭhām
adhyāsitām pūrvatamair mahadbhiḥ
aham tariṣyāmi duranta-pāram
tamo mukundāṅghri-niṣevayaiva*

SYNONYMS: etam--this; sah--such; asthaya--being completely fixed in; para-atma-nistham--devotion to the Supreme Person, Kṛṣṇa; adhyasitam--worshiped; purva-tamaih--by previous; mahadbhiḥ--acaryas; aham--I; tarisyami--shall cross over; duranta-param--the insurmountable; tamah--the ocean of nescience; mukunda-anghri--of the lotus feet of Mukunda; nisevaya--by worship; eva--certainly.

"[As a brahmana from Avanti-desa said:] 'I shall cross over the insurmountable ocean of nescience by being firmly fixed in the service of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. This was approved by the previous acaryas, who were fixed in firm devotion to the Lord, Paramatma, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.'"

Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya lila 3.6 Purport:

In connection with this verse, which is a quotation from Srimad-Bhagavatam (11.23.57), Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī Thākura says that of the sixty-four items required for rendering devotional service, acceptance of the symbolic marks of sannyasa is a regulative principle. If one accepts the sannyasa order, his main business is to devote his life completely to the service of Mukunda, Kṛṣṇa. IF ONE DOES NOT COMPLETELY DEVOTE HIS MIND AND BODY TO THE SERVICE OF THE LORD, HE DOES NOT ACTUALLY BECOME A SANNYASI. IT IS NOT SIMPLY A MATTER OF CHANGING DRESS. In Bhagavad-gītā (6.1) it is also stated, *anasritah karma-phalam karyam karma karoti yah. sa sannyasi ca yogi ca*: one who works devotedly for the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa is a sannyasi. THE DRESS IS NOT SANNYASA, BUT THE ATTITUDE OF SERVICE TO KṚṢṆA IS.

The word paratma-nistha means being a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Paratma, the Supreme Person, is Kṛṣṇa. Isvarah paramah kṛṣṇah sac-cid-ananda-vigrahaḥ. Those who are completely dedicated to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa in service are actually sannyasis. AS A MATTER OF FORMALITY, THE DEVOTEE ACCEPTS THE SANNYASA DRESS AS PREVIOUS ACARYAS DID. HE ALSO ACCEPTS THE THREE DANDAS. LATER VISNUSVAMI CONSIDERED THAT ACCEPTING THE DRESS OF A TRIDANDI WAS PARATMA-NISTHA. THEREFORE SINCERE DEVOTEES ADD ANOTHER DANDA, THE JIVA-DANDA, TO THE THREE EXISTING DANDAS. THE VAISNAVA SANNYASI IS KNOWN AS A TRIDANDI-SANNYASI. THE MAYAVADI SANNYASI ACCEPTS ONLY ONE DANDA, NOT UNDERSTANDING THE PURPOSE OF TRI-DANDA. Later, many persons in the community of Śiva Svami gave up the atma-nistha (devotional service) of the Lord and followed the path of Sankaracarya. Instead of accepting 108 names, those in the Śiva Svami sampradaya follow the path of Sankaracarya and accept the ten names of sannyasa. Although Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu accepted the then-existing order of sannyasa (namely

eka-danda), He still recited a verse from Srimad-Bhagavatam about the tridanda-sannyasa accepted by the brahmana of Avantipura. Indirectly He declared that within that eka-danda, one danda, four dandas existed as one. Accepting ekadanda-sannyasa without paratma-nistha (devotional service to Lord Krsna) is not acceptable to Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. IN ADDITION, ACCORDING TO THE EXACT REGULATIVE PRINCIPLES, ONE SHOULD ADD THE JIVA-DANDA TO THE TRI-DANDA. THESE FOUR DANDAS, BOUND TOGETHER AS ONE, ARE SYMBOLIC OF UNALLOYED DEVOTIONAL SERVICE TO THE LORD. Because the ekadandi-sannyasis of the Mayavada school are not devoted to the service of Krsna, they try to merge into the Brahman effulgence, which is a marginal position between material and spiritual existence. They accept this impersonal position as liberation. Mayavadi sannyasis, not knowing that Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu was a tridandi, think of Caitanya Mahaprabhu as an ekadandi-sannyasi. This is due to their vivarta, bewilderment. IN SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS AN EKADANDI-SANNYASI; INDEED, THE TRIDANDI-SANNYASI IS ACCEPTED AS THE SYMBOLIC REPRESENTATION OF THE SANNYASA ORDER. BY CITING THIS VERSE FROM SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM, SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU ACCEPTED THE SANNYASA ORDER RECOMMENDED IN SRIMAD-BHAGAVATAM. The Mayavadi sannyasis, who are enamored of the external energy of the Lord, cannot understand the mind of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

TO DATE, ALL THE DEVOTEES OF SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU, FOLLOWING IN HIS FOOTSTEPS, ACCEPT THE SANNYASA ORDER AND KEEP THE SACRED THREAD AND TUFT OF UNSHAVED HAIR. THE EKADANDI-SANNYASIS OF THE MAYAVADI SCHOOL GIVE UP THE SACRED THREAD AND DO NOT KEEP ANY TUFT OF HAIR. THEREFORE THEY ARE UNABLE TO UNDERSTAND THE PURPORT OF TRIDANDA-SANNYASA, AND AS SUCH THEY ARE NOT INCLINED TO DEDICATE THEIR LIVES TO THE SERVICE OF MUKUNDA. They simply think of merging into the existence of Brahman because of their disgust with material existence

Note: Below tuft of hair and sikha to be given up belongs to the mayavadi school.

Caitanya-caritamṛta Madhya lila 10.108:

There are regulative principles governing the renounced order. One has to perform eight kinds of sraddha. One must offer oblations to one's forefathers and perform the sacrifice of viraja-homa THEN ONE MUST CUT OFF THE TUFT OF HAIR CALLED A SIKHA AND ALSO GIVE UP THE SACRED THREAD. These are preliminary processes in the acceptance of sannyasa, and Svarupa Damodara accepted all these. HOWEVER, PURUSOTTAMA ACARYA DID NOT ACCEPT THE SAFFRON COLOR, A SANNYASI NAME OR A DANDA, AND FOR THIS REASON HE RETAINED HIS BRAHMACARI NAME. ACTUALLY PURUSOTTAMA ACARYA DID NOT ACCEPT THE SANNYASA ORDER FORMALLY, BUT HE RENOUNCED WORLDLY LIFE. HE DID NOT WANT TO BE DISTURBED BY THE FORMALITY OF THE SANNYASA ORDER. HE SIMPLY WANTED TO WORSHIP LORD SRI KRSNA WITHOUT DISTURBANCE; THEREFORE WITH HEART AND SOUL HE TOOK UP THE RENOUNCED ORDER BUT NOT THE FORMALITIES ACCOMPANYING IT. Renunciation means not doing anything but serving the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna. When one acts on this platform, trying to please the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one is both a sannyasi and a yogi. This is confirmed in the Bhagavad-gita (6.1):

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca
anāśritaḥ karma-phalaṁ
kāryaṁ karma karoti yaḥ
sa sannyāsī ca yogī ca
na niragnir na cākriyaḥ*

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: One who is unattached to the fruits of his work and who works as he is obligated is in the renounced order of life, and he is the true mystic, not he who lights no fire and performs no work."

Caitanya-caritamrta Antya lila 13.61:

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura comments on this incident as follows: Vaisnavas are all liberated persons, unattached to anything material. Therefore a Vaisnava need not accept the dress of a sannyasi to prove his exalted position. Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu accepted the renounced order from a sannyasi of the Mayavada school. Present-day Vaisnava sannyasis, however, never think that by accepting the dress of the sannyasa order they have become equal to Caitanya Mahaprabhu. IN FACT, A VAISNAVA ACCEPTS THE SANNYASA ORDER TO REMAIN AN ETERNAL SERVANT OF HIS SPIRITUAL MASTER. HE ACCEPTS THE SANNYASA ORDER KNOWING THAT HE IS UNEQUAL TO HIS SPIRITUAL MASTER, WHO IS A PARAMAHAMSA, AND HE THINKS THAT HE IS UNFIT TO DRESS LIKE A PARAMAHAMSA. THEREFORE A VAISNAVA ACCEPTS SANNYASA OUT OF HUMILITY, NOT OUT OF PRIDE.

Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.15.11 Purport:

ANYONE, WHETHER A GRHASTHA OR A SANNYASI, CAN KEEP SMALL DEITIES of the Lord suitably packed or, if possible, installed, and thus worship the Deities of Radha-Krsna, Sita-Rama, Laksmi-Narayana, Lord Jagannatha or Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu by offering food prepared in ghee and then offering the sanctified prasada to the forefathers, demigods and other living entities as a matter of routine daily work.

Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.5.23-24 Purport:

In the process of worshiping the Deity it is sometimes enjoined that one worship the Deity within the mind. In the padma purana, Uttara-khanda, it is said, "All persons can generally worship within the mind." The Gautamiya Tantra states, "FOR A SANNYASI WHO HAS NO HOME, WORSHIP OF THE DEITY WITHIN THE MIND IS RECOMMENDED."

Room Conversation, 02-19-77, Mayapur:

NO. A SANNYASI'S NOT REQUIRED. CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU, WHEN HE WAS TRAVELING, HE WAS NOT CARRYING ANY DEITY. Deity worship is specially recommended for the grhasthas. That is compulsory.

11-23-67 Letter to Umapati:

When a disciple misunderstands a bonafide spiritual master, the master regrets for his inability to protect the disciple and sometimes he cries with tears in the eyes. WE HAD AN EXPERIENCE WHILE MY GURU MAHARAJA WAS ALIVE. ONE OF HIS DISCIPLES WHO ACCEPTED SANNYASA WAS ONE DAY FORCIBLY DRAGGED BY HIS WIFE. MY GURU MAHARAJA LAMENTED WITH TEARS IN HIS EYES SAYING THAT HE COULD NOT SAVE THE SOUL. We should always, therefore, be careful in the matter of being attacked by Maya's influence and THE ONLY MEANS OF GUARANTEE IS TO CHANT HARE KRISHNA OFFENSELESSLY.

07-29-72 Letter to Sudama:

Regarding your question, ALL should offer due respect to a Sannyasi. His position is always superior to all other inmates of the temple. HE MUST ALWAYS MAINTAIN THAT SUPERIOR POSITION BY ACTION & BEHAVIOR.

01-05-76 Letter to Satsvarupa:

YES, AS A SANNYASI AND GBC YOUR FIRST DUTY IS TO READ MY BOOKS. OTHERWISE HOW WILL YOU PREACH? In order to remain steadily fixed in Krishna consciousness there must be a sound philosophical understanding. Otherwise it will become only sentiment. Whenever you find time please read my books.

08-30-60 Letter to Brahmananda:

I do not know what you mean by cooperation with Kirtanananda Maharaja. IN OUR SOCIETY EVERYONE, EITHER A BRAHMACARI OR SANNYASI OR GRHASTHA, WHO HAS DEDICATED HIS LIFE AND SOUL FOR THIS MOVEMENT, THEY ARE ALL ON THE SAME LEVEL OF SANNYASI. FOR THE PRESENT MOMENT, NOBODY CAN CLAIM AN EXTRA HONOR FROM HIS GODBROTHERS. EVERYONE SHOULD TREAT HIS GODBROTHERS AS PRABHU. BUT NOBODY SHOULD TRY TO CLAIM ANY EXTRA HONOR ON ACCOUNT OF AN OFFICIAL POSITION. I do not know why Kirtanananda Maharaja says that his authority overrides yours. At the present moment everyone is working under my authority. Similarly, Kirtanananda also should work under my authority. So the condition imposed by Kirtanananda as stated by you does not look well. A sannyasi has got four stages of elevation: kuticak, bahudaka, parivrajaka and paramahamsa. THE SANNYASA IN THE PARAMAHAMSA STAGE IS THE SPIRITUAL MASTER OF EVERYONE. I have asked Kirtanananda Maharaja to work on the bahudaka stage for the present. I discussed this point with him when I was in New Vrindaban. This stage means he should move amongst people to draw their attention to the New Vrindaban scheme and try to attract their attention for its development. SO HE SHOULD IMMEDIATELY BEGIN THIS BAHUDAKA PROGRAM AND COLLECT MONEY FROM OUTSIDERS, NOT FROM INSIDERS.

11-27-70 Letter to Jayapataka:

YOUR TITLE IS ACTUALLY TRIDANDI SWAMI OR TRIDANDI BHIKSU, WHICH IS THE FIRST STAGE OF SANNYASA LIFE. Tridandi Goswami is for one in the fourth stage of sannyasa life which is paramahamsa stage.

Srimad-Bhagavatam 1.13.30 Purport:

The ekadandi-svamis are mostly fond of the Himalayas, but the Vaisnava sannyasis are fond of Vrindavana and Puri. THE VAISNAVA SANNYASIS ARE NAROTTAMAS, WHEREAS THE MAYAVADI SANNYASIS ARE DHIRAS. Maharaja Dhrtarastra was advised to follow the dhiras because at that stage it was difficult for him to become a narottama.

Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya lila 6.48:

It is the etiquette among sannyasis, those on the fourth platform of spiritual life, to offer respects by saying om namo narayanaya ("I offer my respectful obeisances unto Narayana"). This greeting is used especially by Mayavadi sannyasis. ACCORDING TO THE SMRTI SCRIPTURES, A SANNYASI SHOULD NOT EXPECT ANYTHING FROM ANYONE, NOR SHOULD HE CONSIDER HIMSELF IDENTICAL WITH THE SUPREME PERSONALITY OF GODHEAD. Vaisnava sannyasis never think of themselves as being one with the Lord; they always consider themselves ETERNAL SERVANTS OF KRSNA, and they want to see everyone in the world become Krsna conscious. FOR THIS REASON, A VAISNAVA SANNYASI ALWAYS OFFERS HIS BLESSINGS TO EVERYONE, SAYING KRSNE MATIR ASTU ("MAY YOU BECOME KRSNA CONSCIOUS").

Caitanya-caritamrta Adi lila 7.103:

Mayavadi sannyasis address each other as Narayana. Whenever they see another sannyasi, they offer him respect by calling om namo narayanaya ("I offer my respect unto you, Narayana"), although they know perfectly well what kind of Narayana he is. NARAYANA HAS FOUR HANDS, BUT ALTHOUGH THEY ARE PUFFED UP WITH THE IDEA OF BEING NARAYANA, THEY CANNOT EXHIBIT MORE THAN TWO. Since their philosophy declares that Narayana and an ordinary human being are both on the same level, THEY SOMETIMES USE THE TERM DARIDRA-NARAYANA ("POOR NARAYANA"), WHICH WAS INVENTED BY A SO-CALLED SVAMI WHO DID NOT KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT VEDANTA PHILOSOPHY.

Caitanya-caritamṛta Ādi līla 3.34:

Some SO-CALLED VAISNAVAS say that the renounced order of life is not accepted in the Vaisnava sampradaya, or disciplic succession, from Lord Caitanya. This is not a very intelligent proposition. Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu took the sannyasa order from Śrīpāda Kṛṣṇa Bhaṛatī, who belonged to the Sāṅkara sect, which approves of only ten names for sannyasis. LONG BEFORE THE ADVENT OF ŚRĪPĀDA SĀṅKARĀCĀRYA, HOWEVER, THE SANNYASA ORDER EXISTED IN THE VAISNAVA LINE OF VIṢṆUSVĀMI. IN THE VIṢṆUSVĀMI VAISNAVA SAMPRADĀYA, THERE ARE TEN DIFFERENT KINDS OF SANNYASA NAMES AND 108 DIFFERENT NAMES FOR SANNYASIS WHO ACCEPT THE TRIDANDA, THE TRIPLE STAFF OF SANNYASA. THIS IS APPROVED BY THE VEDIC RULES. THEREFORE VAISNAVA SANNYASA WAS EXISTENT EVEN BEFORE THE APPEARANCE OF SĀṅKARĀCĀRYA, ALTHOUGH THOSE WHO KNOW NOTHING ABOUT VAISNAVA SANNYASA UNNECESSARILY DECLARE THAT THERE IS NO SANNYASA IN THE VAISNAVA SAMPRADĀYA.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.19.22 Purport:

SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL, THE SANNYASA ORDER HAS CARRIED THE TRIDANDA. LATER SĀṅKARĀCĀRYA INTRODUCED THE EKADANDI-SANNYASA. A TRIDANDI-SANNYASI IS A VAISNAVA SANNYASI, AND AN EKADANDI-SANNYASI IS A MĀYĀVĀDĪ SANNYASI. There are many other types of sannyasis, who are not approved by Vedic rituals. A TYPE OF PSEUDO-SANNYASA WAS INTRODUCED BY INDRA WHEN HE TRIED TO HIDE HIMSELF FROM THE ATTACK OF VIJITASVA, THE GREAT SON OF KING PṚTHU. NOW THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT TYPES OF SANNYASIS. SOME OF THEM GO NAKED, AND SOME OF THEM CARRY A SKULL AND TRIDENT, GENERALLY KNOWN AS KĀPALĪKA. ALL OF THEM WERE INTRODUCED UNDER SOME MEANINGLESS CIRCUMSTANCES, AND THOSE WHO HAVE A POOR FUND OF KNOWLEDGE ACCEPT THESE FALSE SANNYASIS AND THEIR PRETENSES, ALTHOUGH THEY ARE NOT BONA FIDE GUIDES TO SPIRITUAL ADVANCEMENT. At the present moment some missionary institutions, without referring to the Vedic rituals, have introduced some sannyasis who engage in sinful activities. The sinful activities forbidden by the śāstras are illicit sex, intoxication, meat-eating and gambling. THESE SO-CALLED SANNYASIS INDULGE IN ALL THESE ACTIVITIES. THEY EAT MEAT AND FLESH, FISH, EGGS AND JUST ABOUT EVERYTHING. THEY SOMETIMES DRINK WITH THE EXCUSE THAT WITHOUT ALCOHOL, FISH AND MEAT, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO REMAIN IN THE COLD COUNTRIES NEAR THE ARCTIC ZONE. These sannyasis introduce all these sinful activities in the name of serving the poor, and consequently poor animals are cut to pieces and go into the bellies of these sannyasis. As described in the following verses, such sannyasis are pakhandis. Vedic literature states that a person who puts Lord Nārāyaṇa on the level with Lord Śiva or Lord Brahma immediately becomes a pakhandi.

Note: Observe also how Śrīla Prabhupāda wants women whose husbands have left home to take sannyasa to live austere lives also.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.23.20 Purport:

When Caitanya Mahāprabhu took sannyasa, His wife, Viṣṇupriyadevī, although only sixteen years old, also took the vow of austerity due to her husband's leaving home. She chanted her beads, and after finishing one round, she collected one grain of rice. In this way, as many rounds as she chanted, she would receive the same number of rice grains and then cook them and so take prasāda. This is called austerity. Even today in India, widows or women whose husbands have taken sannyasa follow the principles of austerity, even though they live with their children. PṚthū Mahārāja's wife, Arcī, was steadily determined to execute the duty of a wife, and while her husband was in the forest, she followed him in eating only fruits and leaves and lying down on the ground. Since a woman's body is considerably more delicate than a man's, Queen Arcī became very frail and thin, parikarsita. When one engages in austerities, his body generally becomes lean and thin. BECOMING FAT IS NOT A VERY GOOD QUALIFICATION IN

SPIRITUAL LIFE BECAUSE A PERSON WHO IS ENGAGED IN SPIRITUAL LIFE MUST REDUCE THE COMFORTS OF THE BODY--NAMELY EATING, SLEEPING AND MATING--TO A MINIMUM. Although Queen Arci became very thin from living in the forest according to regulative principles, she was not unhappy, for she was enjoying the honor of serving her great husband.

Caitanya-caritamrta Madhya lila 7.23:

BEING A SANNYASI, I HAVE A DUTY TO LIE DOWN ON THE GROUND AND TAKE A BATH THREE TIMES A DAY, EVEN DURING THE WINTER. But Mukunda becomes very unhappy when he sees My severe austerities.

02-28-74 Letter to Sukadeva:

IN REGARDS TO YOUR QUESTION ABOUT HOW THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A SANNYASI AND THE TEMPLE PRESIDENT SHOULD BE, MY HOPE IS THAT YOU WILL ALL BE ABLE TO COOPERATE TOGETHER. The temple president is in charge and the sannyasi should not contradict the instructions. ALTHOUGH IF HE DOES SEE SOMETHING WRONG OR IF HE SEES A FAULT OR DEFECT HE SHOULD BRING IT OUT DIRECTLY TO THE TEMPLE PRESIDENT. And then work it out in a Krsna Conscious way. NOT THAT HE WILL TRY TO OVER-RIDE THE TEMPLE PRESIDENT'S AUTHORITY. I WANT THAT YOU ALL WORK TOGETHER COOPERATIVELY.

10-18-73 Letter to Jagadisa: It is nice that Subaladas Maharaja is travelling. As sannyasi, he should travel. THE MORE A SANNYASI TRAVELS AND PREACHES, THE MORE HE BECOMES EXPERIENCED AND UNATTACHED.

11-14-73 Letter to Revatinandana: I am glad that you are traveling and preaching. This is your main business. FOR A SANNYASI THE MORE HE WANDERS AND PREACHERS, THE MORE HE BECOMES EXPERIENCED. THE PEOPLE BENEFIT, HE BENEFITS, AND FROM A MATERIAL POINT OF VIEW HE'LL PROFIT. SO CONSTANTLY TRAVEL AND DISTRIBUTE BOOKS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.

Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.5.36 Purport:

The words bhikṣor marga, "the path of the renounced order," are very significant in this regard. A sannyasi is called tridāṇḍi-bhikṣu because his duty is to beg alms from the homes of grhasthas and TO GIVE THE GRHASTHAS SPIRITUAL INSTRUCTIONS. A SANNYASI IS ALLOWED TO BEG FROM DOOR TO DOOR, BUT A GRHASTHA CANNOT DO SO. Grhasthas may earn their living according to the four divisions of spiritual life. A brahmana grhastha may earn his livelihood by becoming a learned scholar and teaching people in general how to worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He may also assume the duty of worship himself. Therefore it is said that only brahmanas may engage in Deity worship, and they may accept as prasada whatever people offer the Deity. Although a brahmana may sometimes accept charity, it is not for his personal maintenance but for the worship of the Deity. Thus a brahmana does not stock anything for his future use. Similarly, ksatriyas may collect taxes from the citizens, and they must also protect the citizens, enforce rules and regulations, and maintain law and order. Vaisyas should earn their livelihood through agriculture and cow protection, and sudras should maintain their livelihood by serving the three higher classes. UNLESS ONE BECOMES A BRAHMANA, ONE CANNOT TAKE SANNYASA. SANNYASIS AND BRAHMACARIS MAY BEG ALMS DOOR TO DOOR, BUT A GRHASTHA CANNOT.

Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.11.35 Purport:

Herein it is clearly stated by Narada Muni that one should not be accepted as a brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya or sudra according to birth, for although this is going on now, it is not accepted by the sastras. As stated in Bhagavad-gita (4.13), catur-varṇyam mayā

srstam guna-karma-vibhagasah. Thus the four divisions of society--brahmana, ksatriya, vaisya and sudra--are to be ascertained according to qualities and activities. If one was born in a brahmana family and has acquired the brahminical qualifications, he is to be accepted as a brahmana; otherwise, he should be considered a brahma-bandhu. Similarly, if a sudra acquires the qualities of a brahmana, although he was born in a sudra family, he is not a sudra; because he has developed the qualities of a brahmana, he should be accepted as a brahmana. The Krsna consciousness movement is meant to develop these brahminical qualities. Regardless of the community in which one was born, if one develops the qualities of a brahmana he should be accepted as a brahmana, and he then may be offered the order of sannyasa. **UNLESS ONE IS QUALIFIED IN TERMS OF THE BRAHMINICAL SYMPTOMS, ONE CANNOT TAKE SANNYASA.**

Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.10.8 Purport:

TO ACCEPT SANNYASA MEANS TO COMMIT CIVIL SUICIDE. BUT SANNYASA IS COMPULSORY, AT LEAST FOR EVERY BRAHMANA, EVERY FIRST-CLASS HUMAN BEING.

Srimad-Bhagavatam 6.18.41 Purport:

Woman is now depicted very well from the materialistic point of view by Kasyapa Muni. Women are generally known as the fair sex, and especially in youth, at the age of sixteen or seventeen, women are very attractive to men. Therefore a woman's face is compared to a blooming lotus flower in autumn. Just as a lotus is extremely beautiful in autumn, a woman at the threshold of youthful beauty is extremely attractive. In Sanskrit a woman's voice is called nari-svara because women generally sing and their singing is very attractive. At the present moment, cinema artists, especially female singers, are especially welcome. Some of them earn fabulous amounts of money simply by singing. **THEREFORE, AS TAUGHT BY SRI CAITANYA MAHAPRABHU, A WOMAN'S SINGING IS DANGEROUS BECAUSE IT CAN MAKE A SANNYASI FALL A VICTIM TO THE WOMAN. SANNYASA MEANS GIVING UP THE COMPANY OF WOMEN, BUT IF A SANNYASI HEARS THE VOICE OF A WOMAN AND SEES HER BEAUTIFUL FACE, HE CERTAINLY BECOMES ATTRACTED AND IS SURE TO FALL DOWN.** There have been many examples. Even the great sage Visvamitra fell a victim to Menaka. Therefore a person desiring to advance in spiritual consciousness must be especially careful not to see a woman's face or hear a woman's voice. **TO SEE A WOMAN'S FACE AND APPRECIATE ITS BEAUTY OR TO HEAR A WOMAN'S VOICE AND APPRECIATE HER SINGING AS VERY NICE IS A SUBTLE FALLDOWN FOR A BRAHMACARI OR SANNYASI.**

09-07-74 Letter to Cidananda:

SO FAR THE QUESTION OF MARRIAGE, THIS IS GENERALLY NOT THE CONCERN OF A SANNYASI. THEREFORE I HAVE ASKED THE TEMPLE PRESIDENTS TO TAKE CARE OF THIS MATTER IN A MATURE AND RESPONSIBLE WAY. I therefore request you to approach the temple president there and the GBC and ask for their advise.

Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.12.7 Purport:

Brahmacarya essentially means the vow not to marry but to observe strict celibacy (brhad-vrata). A BRAHMACARI OR SANNYASI SHOULD AVOID TALKING WITH WOMEN OR READING LITERATURE CONCERNING TALKS BETWEEN MAN AND WOMAN. THE INJUNCTION RESTRICTING ASSOCIATION WITH WOMEN IS THE BASIC PRINCIPLE OF SPIRITUAL LIFE. Associating or talking with women is never advised in any of the Vedic literatures. THE ENTIRE VEDIC SYSTEM TEACHES ONE TO AVOID SEX LIFE SO THAT ONE MAY GRADUALLY PROGRESS FROM BRAHMACARYA TO GRHASTHA, FROM GRHASTHA TO VANAPRASTHA, AND FROM VANAPRASTHA TO SANNYASA AND THUS GIVE UP MATERIAL ENJOYMENT, WHICH IS THE ORIGINAL CAUSE OF BONDAGE TO THIS MATERIAL WORLD.

Srimad-Bhagavatam 8.9.14-15 Purport:

A sannyasi or a person about to perform a ritualistic ceremony SHOULD NOT dress himself in clothing sewn with a needle.

Srimad-Bhagavatam 7.6.9 Purport:

"By rendering devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna, one immediately acquires causeless knowledge and detachment from the world." (Bhag. 1.2.7) If one engages in devotional service from the beginning of life, he easily attains vairagya-vidya, or asakti, detachment, and becomes jitendriya, the controller of his senses. ONE WHO PERFECTLY ENGAGES IN DEVOTIONAL SERVICE IS THEREFORE CALLED GOSVAMI OR SVAMI, MASTER OF THE SENSES. UNLESS ONE IS MASTER OF THE SENSES, HE SHOULD NOT ACCEPT THE RENOUNCED ORDER OF LIFE, SANNYASA. A strong inclination for sense enjoyment is the cause of the material body. WITHOUT FULL KNOWLEDGE ONE CANNOT BE UNATTACHED TO MATERIAL ENJOYMENT, BUT AS LONG AS ONE IS NOT IN THAT POSITION ONE IS NOT FIT TO RETURN HOME, BACK TO GODHEAD.

05-23-76 Letter to Damodara:

You have asked about Rupanuga. So I have asked him to not remain secluded but to work vigorously as grhastha now that he has returned with his wife. There is nothing wrong in his preaching as you are and so many GBCs as grhastha. SO ALTHOUGH IT IS OFFICIALLY A FALLDOWN FROM SANNYASA, THERE IS NO LOSS IF HE WILL BECOME MORE ENTHUSIASTIC BY THIS WAY. SO PLEASE CONTINUE TO COOPERATE WITH HIM AND IMPLEMENT ALL OUR REGULAR PROGRAMS.

05-23-76 Letter to Rupanuga:

SO YOU SHOULD NOT CONSIDER TAKING SANNYASA AGAIN, BUT IN YOUR COUNTRY IT IS NOT A GREAT THING. ALTHOUGH OFFICIALLY IT IS A FALLDOWN FROM SANNYASA, IN YOUR COUNTRY NO ONE UNDERSTANDS SANNYASA. THE MORE IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE IS THAT WE SHOULD PURIFY OUR THOUGHTS AND ENGAGE THEM IN KRSNA'S SERVICE. Please try to understand this important principle: being disgusted with their nasty thoughts people sometimes attempt to become thoughtless, but this is never possible. We should encourage everyone to not become thoughtless but to purify their thinking by always thinking of Krsna in the recommended ways. So I request you to go back preaching vigorously along with your wife who is also a good preacher.

09-21-75 Letter to Gaura Govinda:

Regarding your returning to your own village, A SANNYASA IS NOT SUPPOSED TO GO BACK TO HIS OWN VILLAGE.