

There are five different characteristics of happiness that we feel when we live our lives centred on God. One characteristic we've talked about, is the nature of the happiness as being unconditional. The weather man tells you, "it's going to be a nice weekend", meaning the conditions are going to be good. We think because the conditions are going to be good, we can have a fun weekend. If the weatherman had said, "It's going to be a nasty weekend with snow and rain, we would think, "Oh, we can't have a fun weekend." Is that conditional? Yeah, that's conditional – but the happiness of someone who is centring their life on Krishna is unconditional.

The second feature of that happiness is that it is unlimited; you can't quantify it. Even the Pacific Ocean, as big and as vast as it is, has its limits. It has its limits, but the pleasure that one gets from living a God centred life has no limits; there's no quantifying it, there's no imagining it, there's no measuring it; it is unlimited.

The third feature we've talked about is that happiness is unshakeable. Those people who are in God consciousness, who are centred on Krishna, they cannot be budged or swayed one iota from that fixity of the lotus feet of Krishna. As described in the Mahabharata, 16 year old Abhimanyu, Subhadra's grandson, was trapped and slaughtered unfairly during the Kurukshetra war by the greatest Kauravas Maharathis warriors - Duryodhana, Ashwathama, Karna, Bhishma, Dronacharya and Jayadratha. Lord Krishna was on the battlefield at the time of his death. Someone with a lesser, more shakeable faith would have lamented and asked why the Lord let this happen when he was present; those are the ruminations of a lesser personality. But, it is said that when the news was brought to Subhadra, Abhimanyu's grandmother, that he had been killed unfairly on the battlefield in the presence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, she assimilated that information without a trace of blame for Krishna. There was no trace of blame, not even a hint. She understood that Krishna had not missed the fact that Abhimanyu was being killed. She knew that, whatever happens, Krishna was on the

battlefield, and even though Abhimanyu was killed, that means Krishna was behind it. Her faith in Krishna was unshakable, it did not budge.

Some of us worship God in order for him to accomplish the things that we want him to accomplish - we go to him with our own shopping list. We like to keep him around, but on the periphery of our lives, so that we can call him just when we require his assistance. We do the same thing to a policeman. We don't develop an intimate, friendly, sharing time – watching TV together kind of relationship with the policeman. We keep the policeman at a distance in the periphery, but when there is trouble we are very quick to call him. We call 911 and the policeman comes to save us and we say “thank you very much; I'll see you again the next time there's trouble.”

Prabhupada said, during World War II, the ladies in Germany would go to church and pray for their sons, husbands, and fathers to come back from the war fields alive. When they did not come back alive from the war, they lost faith in God and became atheists. So ask yourself this question, if you consider yourself a person of faith, is it a manly or womanly faith, or is it a namby-pamby, wimpy faith. Is it shakeable the first time there's a “boo!”, or is it unshakeable. Is it a faith that gets budged when things don't go as you want them to, or is it that kind of unshakable faith you have when God is not just on the periphery but is President in your heart; he is not only a resident, but he is the President of your heart.

The pleasure we feel from having a God-centric life is unearned. Here Prabhupada says, "Because he remains satisfied in the loving service of the Lord, he can remain steady like the ocean, and therefore enjoy full peace¹." Others never attain peace; the fruitive workers, the salvationists and the yogis who are after mystic powers like yogis are always unhappy because of unfulfilled desires.

1 [BG 2.70]

Bhukti-mukti-siddhi-kami. Bhukti are those people who want to enjoy this material world. Mukti are those who want liberation. Siddhi are those who want Mystic powers. Kami are those who lust after things; they want to enjoy the material world. The word which was common in all these was “want,” “want,” “want,” “want.” When you want something from God, when you want to use God for your own purposes, you will never know peace but those who are completely surrendered with the Lord as the President of their hearts, they are not disturbed under any circumstances and are always in a state of spiritual transcendental pleasure. This pleasure is unearned. It is not something that we have to work for, or qualify for. We don’t have to fill out an application, or have a certain parentage or birthright, and we don’t have to have certain abilities; it’s innate- it’s built within us. We get pleasure from centring our lives on God, and that is when we can feel unlimited oceanic tidal waves of pleasure. We don’t have to earn it; it’s something that is our right and our heritage - all we have to do is to claim it.

Prabhupada's title - His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, these words sounded very pretentious to me at first. When I first came to the Krishna Consciousness movement, someone explained to me that “His Divine Grace” means that the spiritual master is the grace, the mercy given to us by the grace of God. God's grace actually appears in the form of a realized spiritual master. When one is sincere about finding God, then God sends a bona fide spiritual master as his representative. That is why the bona fide spiritual master’s title is pre-faced with the words “His Divine Grace”. We didn’t earn it. It’s not like we had special qualifications.

I asked a group of school children once; do you have a caste system in your High School? They said, “Oh no, we don’t have a caste system.” I asked them, is it true that 90% of the conversations in your high school are about 10% of the students, the ones that are better looking or athletic? Are if you’re not that good looking or athletic, is it true that you are considered of less value than someone else? I said, is that true in your high school? and they said “Oh yeah, you bet.” I said you have a caste

system. You have the idea that some people are more valuable than others, but that's not true from God's point of view. God crafted each one of us unique and special so that we could do individually unique and special works for him. And the fact is, we can approach God and claim his love as our heritage - not because of who *we* are, but because of who God is and how *He* sees us. He does not discriminate. Even on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, Krishna did not see the Kauravas as the bad guys and Pandavas as the good guys; he saw them all as his sons. Some sons were a little off track while others were on track, so he had to deal with them differently, but he loved them all equally. Every parent knows that he could be disciplining one child and patting the other child on the head, but that does not mean that the child being patted on the head is the one he loves and the child that he is disciplining is the one he hates. He loves them equally but based on their behaviours, he is obliged to treat them differently. It is not partiality - it is the same impartiality.

Similarly, the guru is available to everybody, not because of how *we* are but because of how *God* created us. Lord R̥ṣabhadeva told his sons that there is no reason to labour very hard to get sense pleasure in this world while in this human form of life². Such pleasures are available even to the hogs. Pigs smile the widest when they've got nice garbage and stool to eat. Their taste buds are built in such a way that when they eat stool and garbage, and they enjoy it like we enjoy eating ice cream. They taste garbage as a delicacy - like a gourmet meal, and they smile. If they can get happiness by eating garbage, than why should we be interested in the same level of happiness as is freely available to the hogs? We are human beings who are made in the image of God. We do not have to settle for that level of happiness; something much better is reserved for us, and here it is; rather, we should undergo penances with which our beings will be purified. The only penance that is required from us in this age

2 [SB 5.5.1]

of Kali is that we not be animal like. We should not eat like the hogs, sleep like the bear, mate like a dog or pigeons, and fight like the lion. We should have a little bit of self-restraint and we should be civilized, and the result of all these penances - of just being restrained and not letting ourselves be dictated to - purifies our senses. Our senses will be purified and we will be able to enjoy unlimited transcendental bliss.

There is a story of this guy who started out on his front porch looking for treasure. He travelled all around the world looking for this great treasure for many, many decades that he could not find anywhere in the world. Then, after his travels he came back to his own home, and while gardening in his backyard his spade hit something and when he unearthed it, there was a huge treasure; right in his backyard and it had been there all along. So a spiritual, God-centred bliss is just there; you just have to dig it up and it is available to you – you just have to take it up – it’s always there; it’s in our nature.

Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, an incarnation of Krishna, appeared on this planet 500 years ago as a devotee of Krishna. It is said of him,

namo maha-vadanyaya
krishna-prema-pradaya te
krishnaya krishna-chaitanya-
namne gaura-tvishe namah³

, that of all the expansions of Krishna, Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is the most merciful. He has come in Kali Yuga- the most materialistic age, and he is delivering the love of God- the most exalted treasure. The next question we need to ask ourselves is, “what do I have to do to earn this love of God? How much does it the cost? What do I have to do to earn it?” The answer is "just take it".

3 ISKCON devotee prayer

The age of Kali Yuga is similar to the merchant who puts all his goods on a ship and takes it to a foreign land hoping to make a profit there, and when he gets there he realizes that no one wants his goods so he's not going to go through the expense of going back, so he's going to go on the street and try and say "anyone who wants it, just take it." Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu realized that this treasure, which yogis and aestheticians and philosophers dedicated their whole lives with penances to obtain, in this Kali Yuga - nobody wants it; nobody is interested. So therefore, it is available free of charge, so don't waste your life on those pleasures that are freely available to the dogs and hogs. "By the result of the work in which one is engaged, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna, should be worshiped. If one thinks like this always in this way, in full Krishna Consciousness, then by the grace of the Lord, he becomes fully blissful⁴." The Lord says in the Bhagavad-Gita that he takes charge of delivering such a devotee.

There is a story of two businessmen, Pullman and Carnegie, in the beginning of the railways. They were always competing and trying to outdo each other. To compete, they kept lowering their prices. Eventually, they were both going to go broke, so Carnegie suggested that they meet and talk about some kind of reconciliation or amalgamation. They met and Carnegie talked about this new sleeper car invention that passengers could instead of sitting up, sleep through the long Trans-Atlantic journeys. Pullman thought it was a good idea but he was a bit reluctant about a merger, so he asked Carnegie, "What are we going to call the sleeper car?" Carnegie said, "We're going to call it the Pullman car" and because it was to be named after him, Pullman agreed. The sweetest sound in any language is the sound of one's own name. Why is that true for us? Because we come from God, what is true for us is also true for God. He likes to hear his glories enumerated. It is a natural instinct and the

4 [BG 12.7]

Lord, being an individual personality, is not an exception. It is a natural psychology and the psychological characteristics that we have are but reflections of the same psychology which originates with the absolute truth. The only difference is, the Lord is the one who is worthy of having his glories enumerated and we are not⁵. So what I'm saying is that if you are chanting the names of God, you will attract the Lord. He is attracted by the devotees singing his glories. When you say, Allah, Jehovah or

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

, the Lord is attracted. He wants to go and listen to who is saying that.

Krishna came to this planet 5000 years ago, and was on the planet for 125 years during which he exhibited many pastimes. Krishna means *all attractive*. That is why we prefer attracting the all attractive Lord, by chanting,

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

In fact, Krishna is so attractive he has all wealth, all fame, all beauty, all knowledge and all humility. He is so attractive that he attracts millions and millions and millions of cupids, but Krishna himself is attracted by those who chant his holy names. So if you chant,

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

, then you are the attractor of the attractor of millions of cupids. Because we come from the Lord, we like to hear others' chant our glories, and that propensity originates in the absolute truth. So when you chant His glories, He comes and listens to you.

5 [SB 1.6.33]

The last characteristic of transcendental pleasure is unending pleasure. This is different from unlimited pleasure in that it's like a time line. It has no beginning and no end. This is unending, ever enduring pleasure. Lord Sri Krishna is the source of innumerable varieties of pleasure. In fact, he is the ocean of eternal pleasure⁶. Pleasure comes in many different forms. In the spiritual world, pleasure has five categories.

1. Shanta: those who like to support the Lord's pastimes in the spiritual world. They take the form of water, or clouds, blades of grass or the soft breeze, and they are hoping that the Lord will enjoy the gurgling of their waves; or enjoy standing on the softness of the grass so that His foot is massaged.; or he will enjoy the clouds as they pass overhead; or he will enjoy the smell of the breeze. These are eternally liberated devotees who have finished with birth, death and old age and want to serve the Lord eternally in neutrality.
2. Dasya- those who recognize that the Lord is superior and who want to do service to him as his subordinates are servants. Those are the cow herd boys or the younger associates of the Lord.
3. Sakhya- friendship with the Lord. This is when the Lord allows his devotees to become equals because of love and devotion. He allows them through love and devotion to equal the unequalled Lord. No one is greater than or equal to the Lord in strength, beauty, knowledge, wealth, or renunciation, so if someone is allowed to be equal to the Lord, it is because the Lord agrees to become their equal out of love. Krishna allows some devotees to be friends with him.
4. Vatsalya – parenthood. Yashoda wanted to serve the Lord, and there is no more ideal position to serve another person, then as a mother. Of all the relationships that we know in this

6 [SB 11.7.4]

material world, the one that most approaches the closest to spiritual love is the love that the mother feels for her child. So mother Yashoda wanted to feel that love and she wanted to serve Krishna as a mother. She prayed in her previous life that if you are going to come and descend on this planet then please do so as my child. “Please, allow me to clothe you and feed you. Please come as my dependent.” God had no need of those services, but she felt the need to serve him as a mother. Most people who are religious see God as the father. The idea of God being the father is so that he can provide; He gives you stuff. As your love for God matures, you want to serve him. But the opportunities for serving the Lord as a father is limited, so when God becomes your child - when the Lord becomes a dependent, then you can really give him your love. When God agrees to let you clothe him, then you can really give your love. When God agrees to let you to feed him, then you can really give him your love. When God comes home dirty and you need to give him a bath, then you can really give him your love. So the position where one can most render selfless service to God is that of a parent, of a mother.

5. Madhurya rasa: conjugal love; the loving mood of Krishna and his associates. The relationship between Lord Krishna in his associates, in conjugal love is so pure, so selfless, and so exultant that we cannot even imagine the level of the Gopis, the amorous associates of the Lord. One time, the Lord wanted to illustrate how unselfish the gopis in conjugal love are, so he asked Narada Muni to get the dust from some of his devotee’s feet so that his headache can be cured. So Narada Muni went around requesting dust from people's feet to cure the Lord's headache. Nobody agreed to give him the dust from their feet, because they were scared they will go to hell for that but when Narada Muni approached those in the conjugal mood of love and asked them to give the dust off their feet for the Lord's headache they agreed. They did not care whether they will go to hell; they just wanted to take care of the Lord.

Pleasure is not homogenous, it is not uniform. Just like the ocean, pleasure has all kinds of waves; big waves and little waves; big winds and little winds that can configure unlimited forms of waves. Pleasure is multifaceted, multidimensional, unlimited, and unending. In fact, one of the first books that Prabhupada published was called Krishna, The Reservoir of Pleasure. Krishna tells Arjuna in the Bhagavad-Gita that never was there a time when I did not exist, nor you, nor all the people here, nor in the future will any of us cease to exist⁷. If your pleasure is real, it will be eternal because you are eternal; so if it is real pleasure, it should be eternal. The pleasure that we feel after having taken some intoxicants feels like eternal pleasure but it's temporary; it disappears after some time, so that is not real pleasure. If it was real pleasure, it would have been better the next day, and it would be increasingly and progressively better moment by moment. That is why this series of talks, where we make God the centre of our lives, is called "thrill at every moment". In his purport to the Bhagavad-Gita Prabhupada says - we all hanker in life to have a thrill at every moment⁸. We have all had moments in our lives when we have been touched with pure happiness, and we asked ourselves why we cannot live that moment forever. Why can't we feel like that 24 hours a day, seven days a week instead of once a decade? The answer is not only that can, you but you should, because it is your nature. You are part and parcel of God, Sac-cid-ānanda; you are eternal, full of knowledge and your nature is ānanda- bliss so you can, and you should, and if you are not experiencing life as a thrill at every moment, then you are not in full spiritual health. We are not spiritually wholesome. If it is temporary -it is an illusion; it is not real. Only real happiness is eternal, so if you serve God, the happiness will be

7 [BG 2.12]

8 [BG 18.76]

eternal because He is eternal so this service to him cannot have any other characteristic than to be eternal. Because I existed before this body, I will exist after this body. If I am fixed in service, this body is just a chapter. I will be serving before, I will be serving after. This service is eternal. The name of the spiritual world, the kingdom of God is called Goloka Vrindavan. Goloka means the place where there are a lot of cows. Krishna likes cows because they are gentle, they are eating the grass and they give us milk. Vrindavan means Tulasi. Tulasi is a sacred plant which permeates the abode of the Lord. So the abode of the Lord is the place where there are a lot of cows and a lot of Tulasi plants and anyone who goes to the eternal world will never come back to this material world.

Now the question is how we get back to the Lord's abode. Some people came here to learn what it is to have a material body through experience, but not everybody learns the same way. Some people learn without the experience. Like a father who has four sons -telling them not to touch the fire. Three of the sons will not touch the fire, but the fourth one may want to touch the fire to experience it. So everyone learns in different ways. Having come here, we will not want to come back here again unless it is a mission like Lord Jesus Christ. He was a liberated soul; he was not forced to come here but he came here because God wanted him here. The pleasure comes in serving God, so whether we serve him in the spiritual world, or we serve him as Messiah or as a messenger, it doesn't matter. It is the service that counts and if we are successful in the service, whether we make millions and millions of followers and we deliver them all back to God- or whether we just bang our heads against the wall and get no results, it doesn't matter. The pleasure comes from the service.

Prabhupada says that one who hears the Gita from the right source, directly from Krishna, attains full Krishna Consciousness. The result of Krishna Consciousness is that one becomes increasingly enlightened and enjoys life with a thrill, not only for some time, but at every moment. When Krishna spoke to Arjuna, Arjuna was paralysed and very depressed. Today's population has a

problem with depression. Arjuna's depression, by hearing from Krishna - the reservoir of pleasure, by drinking the nectar of Krishna's instructions - he got his vitality and strength and optimism back. So how do we counteract depression? We drink the nectarine instructions of the Lord through the ears and let it go and nourish the heart, just as Arjuna did. Arjuna was totally depressed but after hearing submissively, drinking the nectarine messages of Krishna orally, he became firm and free from doubt and delusion and prepared to act in accordance with Krishna's instructions. Sanjaya was narrating Krishna's talk with Arjuna to the old blind King Dhritarashtra. He is surprised that Arjuna – a warrior, who can kill 10,000 warriors easily, is shaking and looking to Krishna for advice and then he sees after some time to Arjuna is not shaking anymore, he has picked up his bow. Arjuna has put his shoulders back and he is thrusting his chest out. Arjuna is smiling and taking on his confidence, and he is telling Krishna, “my illusion is now gone and I have regained my memory, by Your mercy. I am now firm and fixed and am prepared to act as per your instructions⁹.” Sanjaya, in the last verse of the Bhagavad-Gita, sums up by saying “Oh King as I have repeatedly recall recounting this dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna, I will take pleasure in every moment¹⁰.”

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

9 [BG 18.73]

10 [BG 18.76]