

ENTERING THE SACRED SPACE

1. *Becoming conscious of the self*
2. *Observing from your position as soul*
3. *Connecting with the Divine*

LIVING IN THE DIVINE CONNECTION: Developing a Sense of Relationship with Kṛṣṇa

Ultimately, our devotional practices are meant to help us enter the sacred space and connect with and serve Kṛṣṇa there. However, there is a crucial ingredient to all devotional practices: they have to be performed with a sense of relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

Devotional practice without a sense of relationship with Kṛṣṇa is like a shadow of the real thing. Shadows cannot nourish us. What happens when you eat only the shadow of a meal? You remain hungry and will feel the need to go elsewhere to satisfy your appetite. Similarly, we tend to seek happiness in illusory things when we taste only a shadow of spiritual life. We feel spiritually weak and commit offences. By these *anarthas*, or acts against our own interest, our spiritual progress can be almost permanently blocked.



—❖❖❖ A MEDITATION TO FIX THE MIND IN ❖❖❖ OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH KṚṢṆA

To end “shadow practice” Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura recommends a simple meditation that fixes the mind in a correct understanding of our position in relation to Kṛṣṇa (*sambandha-jñāna*):

- *I am an atomic particle of consciousness and Kṛṣṇa's eternal servant.*
- *Kṛṣṇa is the infinite conscious entity and my only master.*
- *The material world is the prison house meant to reform my absent-minded tendencies.*

(*Harināma-cintāmaṇi*, 3.25)

You are a soul, a part of Kṛṣṇa, and He is your master. You are in this world only to realize your relationship with Him.

This sense of relationship with Kṛṣṇa will give you the necessary taste for your spiritual life. It will take you away from the shadow of devotional existence to a substantial devotional life full of inspiration. Develop your taste and your glowing “Yes!” to Kṛṣṇa-consciousness! This eagerness will pull you into the sacred space.