

Bhaktisiddhanta's Words of Advice to Sadananda

Letter from Sadananda

20 September 1955

Into English, within square brackets and

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Latest changed 22.1.20

My dear Vamandas, dear Hella, Günther, friends, [...]

You must be absolutely clear, not only about Krishna-Caitanya's divine form, but also acquire the fundamental metaphysical-philosophical principles [tattva-s]. Best of all is to make a list of the places where they are mentioned. In order not to misread a text, You must never forget that the essential point is only mentioned *once*. One simply has to keep this in mind when one reads the whole context.

The great difficulty for us – for you there and us here – is to make ourselves understood by the people, because they have two major shortcomings (don't be angry!!):

1) *Samskaras*, i.e., from everything people have heard, read, believed and felt (consciously and unconsciously), since childhood until now, they have acquired certain meanings of the terms God, soul, piety, saviour, meaning of life, meaning of religion, deliverance, which they read *into* the words of the Shastram-s, and then it is so tremendously difficult to understand that *everything* we heard, experienced, believed, and thought is wrong, and that one has to begin anew, as if one were a child that does not know, and has not thought or heard *anything*.

I myself would never have been where I am today, if not already as a youth I doubted what people, poets, scholars said and got myself ready to learn the most strange languages, just to be able to read a text that dealt with God and the meaning of life in the original text itself and free myself from what others read into it from their mind and heart.

Then, on the second day after my arrival here, my Gurudeva told me: “The first thing you have to do is to collect all what you learned, read, excerpted, felt, know. Put it in a big bag and throw it into the sea where the sea is deepest and start anew.”

Once when I felt sad that I did not grew up as a Hindu in India and the concepts deva, devi, avatara, bhakti etc. do not arouse the inner associations (samskara-s) that every Hindu gets, he became even angry and said: “You missed nothing. It is a blessing that you did not imbibe all these associated ideas. You would have learned only *wrong* things. There is nothing to be learned from people, poets etc. You have to learn from God directly – i.e. what God teaches in His Own words (in the Shastram-s).”

2) Neither you there nor the people here have taken the trouble to read a small book like the Gita properly, i.e. to read what *it truly says*. As explanation of words, elucidation of the meanings have everyone – you there and people here – relied on “acharya-s”, who used the Gita to support their own theories and justify themselves; like Shankara did, and everyone did: Madhva, Ramanuja etc., and thereby *concealed*, distorted what did not appeal to them. And on top of that people have relied on interpretations by guru-s and philosophers, who understood neither the text nor the acharya-s. [...]

From the bottom of my heart,

I am with You,

Sadananda