

# Dainyam or Self-depreciation

Extract from a letter by Svami Sadananda Dasa 11.11.60

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Dear Mrs. D.,

From your letters I can see that you are secretly looking forward to Svami Bon's<sup>1</sup> arrival. I really hope he will fulfil your expectations. But over and over again, I must tell you that it is not wise to commit oneself to a *person* – be it Vamandas, Svami Bon or Sadananda – but rather to the content of the *message* Krishna and Gurudev send to all of you over there.

It is decidedly much better if all of you vie with each other for understanding the content of this message in the best, clearest and most profound way – and not in envy and jealousy vie with each other for whose seva is most worthy of being received and praised by Vamandas, Svami Bon or Sadananda.

In my opinion, you give yourself unnecessary anxiety, wondering if you or anyone else “belongs to” Radha or not. As you can see from the Caitanya-Bhagavatam and Murari Gupta's biography of Caitanya, each and everyone – including the eternal co-players – has his own individuality, and it is *not* so that everyone inwardly participates in the seva of madhurya- or yugala-rasa; no, just a few do.

The root of all bhakti is dasyam, to subordinate oneself to Him in knowing, serving Love. The more we *listen (read)* in a knowing, serving, loving way, the more an individual liking for a special sort of seva for an eternal form of Bhagavan develops; it might be Krishna in Dvaraka or Goloka, or Rama, or Narayana or Narasingha, etc.; a seva, which is always in one of the five great bhavas or rasas – without *any* depreciation of other bhavas or other forms of God to which one does not feel especially attached (oneself).

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<sup>1</sup> Sadananda's God-brother, who gave a series of lectures in Europe in 1960.

Imagine a flower bud, containing so many things. Can the subtle elements – drawn by the roots – which give nourishment and growth and are conducive to forming the whole bud, can they compete with each other as to who will contribute to the formation of the stalk, the filaments, the calyx, the petals or the sepals?

Your problem and others' problems could be solved, if you all as an experiment imagined yourself to be completely alone, without Vamandas, Hella, Sadananda, Svami Bon, etc., alone with God, so to say, the way you are when put into narcosis, and friends, relations, etc., yes, your own self, so to say, vanishes – and in a surrounding where there is nobody to talk to about Krishna and seva.

Now and then, one must try to imagine oneself in such an exceptional situation, in order to see where one stands inwardly, to what extent one is really rooted in bhakti and to what extent one only imagined oneself to be rooted. Then one becomes humble, and dainyam or depreciation of oneself – especially when it is *not* legitimate – is like the mother of true premabhakti. If one deserves to *de*-preciate oneself, then one will become even more modest, and then such dainyam or depreciation might be the foundation for a commencement of honest, true bhakti.

I beg you sincerely to discuss this letter among yourselves and let everyone copy it, as these instructions are very much needed, for myself, as well as for all of you over there – and not only once, but over and over again.

Always Your Sadananda

Radhe! Radhe!