



## S.K.S. SWAMINARAYAN TEMPLE (LONDON) – BAL YUVAK MANDAL

Westfield Lane, Kenton, Harrow, Middlesex, HA3 9EA Est. 1966 Charity Reg. No. 271034

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# Bhakti

## (1) DEFINITION

It can be described casually as for love for God – devotion towards Him. It is a means by which we can say to God how much we love Him.

## (2) WHAT DO SCRIPTURES SAY ABOUT IT

### Shikshapatri:

Dharma is the right conduct as authenticated by Shruti and Smruti. Bhakti is profound love for God coupled with knowledge of the majesty and magnificence of Lord Shree Krishna. || 103 ||

### Vachnamrut:

#### G.P.P 22:

Maharaj talks about Kirtan Bhakti (one of the 9 types of bhakti) whereby he says that person who sings his songs with instruments keeping his murti in mind is the best and the rest of people who sing kirtans to show off to people are merely wasting their time.

#### G.P.P 31:

Maharaj says in this Vachnamrut that we should do mahatmay sahit bhakti. We should consider ourselves lucky that we have got Aksharatit purnapurshotam and we are doing his bhakti. ( not just any ordinary persons bhakti but bhakti of ultimate....relate back to previous lit. of ultimate power)

#### G.P.P 40:

Maharaj explains difference between Bhakti and faith in this vachnamrut.

#### G.P.P 47:

Maharaj explains the 9 types of bhakti.

### Geeta:

Fix your mind on Me, be devoted to Me, offer service to Me, bow down to Me, and you shall certainly reach Me. I promise you because you are My very dear friend." (18.65).

In Srimad-Bhaagavatam, First Canto, Fifth Chapter, verse 17, wherein Sri Narada Muni advises Vyasji: "Even if one does not execute his specific occupational duty, but immediately takes direct shelter of the lotus feet of Hari (Kṛiṣṇa), there will be no fault on his part, and in all circumstances his position is secure. Even if, by some bad association, he falls down while



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executing devotional service, or if he doesn't finish the complete course of devotional service and dies untimely, still he is not at a loss. Maharaj say this same thing in the Vachanamrut.

### (3) HOW TO DO IT:

Discuss different ways of doing bhakti? (Discuss 9 types of bhakti)

#### Points

- Which bhakti is best for you? (Whichever Bhakti interests you more will take you closer to God).

### (4) WHERE CAN WE DO IT

Can we think of places where we can do Bhakti and how?

#### Points

Relate this question to your everyday life. E.g, driving – listening to kirtans/katha walking (chanting Swaminarayan, listening to ipod), eating (manshi pooja) etc.

### (5) ACHIEVEMENT

By doing bhakti we are purifying our souls from vasana (desires that hold us back from getting closer to Maharaj).

There are two types of bhaktos mentioned in the Vachanamrut, one is Nishkaam bhakt and the other is sakaam bhakt. What are the differences between the two? Who is the better bhakt?

#### Points

All materialistic desires are short lived and hence doing bhakti for material things will achieve temporary happiness, which leads to the vicious cycle of life and death. Hence its better to do bhakti for everlasting happiness and ultimately closer to Maharaj who is the ultimate happiness (Relate this to the presentation on ultimate power).

**Nishkaam bhakt** – they do bhakti to please Maharaj and do not wish for anything in return e.g. they don't even wish for moksha.

**Sakaam bhakt** – they do bhakti for attainment of something e.g. get a good job, pass exams, get rid of illness, be rich etc.



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### (6) Scenarios

After discussing the above lets see if you can use the knowledge to discuss the following scenario that most of us may have come across in our lives.

- You have recently started coming to Bal Mandal and many people question you regarding the Swaminarayan satsang and try to convince you that you should enjoy your life and complete all wishes and desires as this chance won't come again. How would you explain to them from a Bhakti point of view that this indeed is not the case?
- If you come from a family who do not have faith in God and they try to tell you that you are wasting your time by doing Bhakti. Sometimes they may physically or mentally harrass you just like Meerabai, how will try and overcome these obstacles?