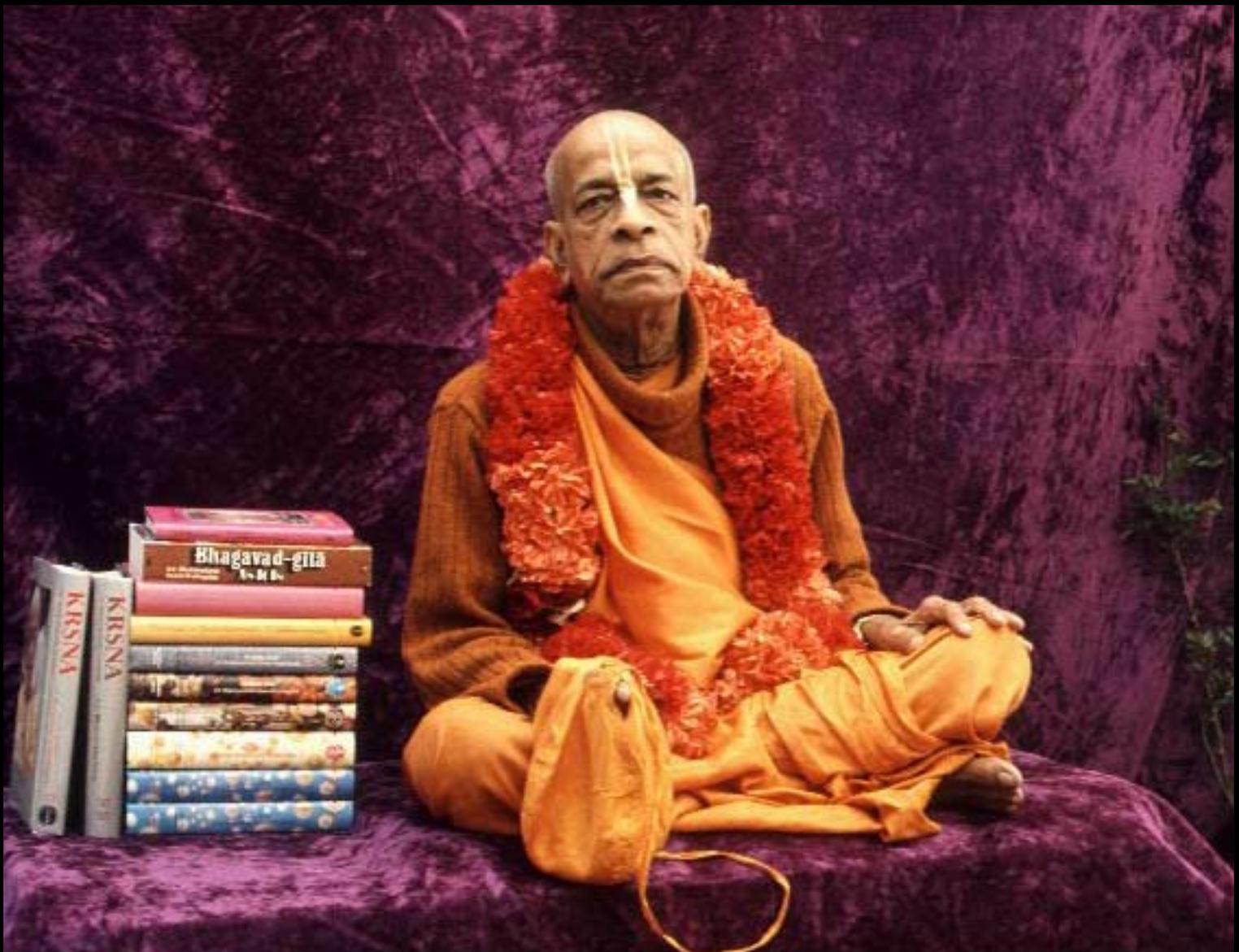
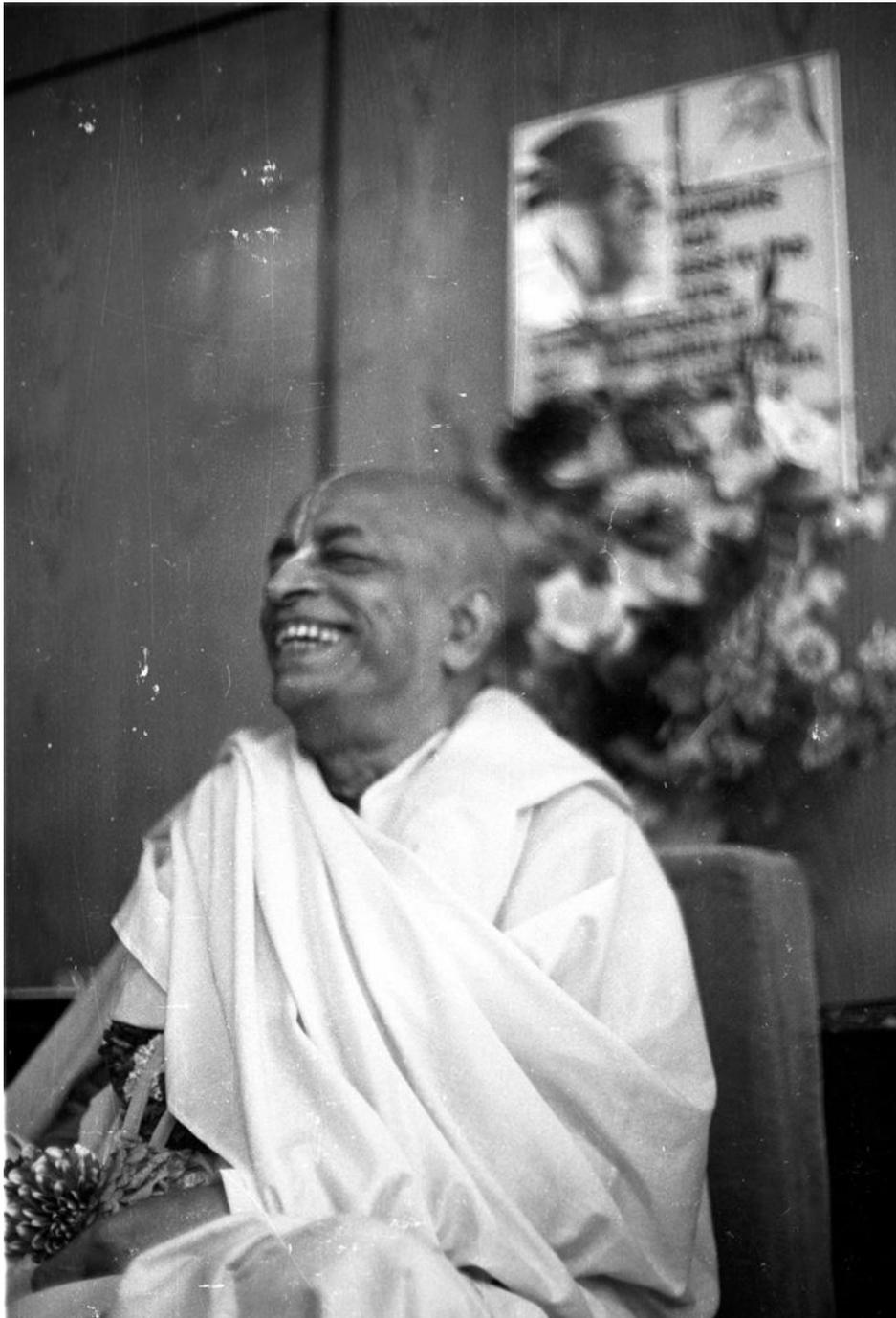


a response to: 'Accepting The Challenge'

Mayesvara Fails Challenge



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“It is best not to accept any disciples. One has to become purified at home by chanting the Hare Krsna *maha-mantra* and preaching the principles enunciated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Thus one can become a spiritual master and be freed from the contamination of material life.”

(Madhya, 7:130)



by Krishnakant

Mayesvara Fails Challenge

a reply to 'Accepting The Challenge'

Mar 19 1999 - At the conclusion of H.G. Mayesvara prabhu's latest paper 'Accepting The Challenge' (VNN EDITORIAL March 16, 1999) he confesses:

'I am actually very uncomfortable with the results of this analysis because I fear that the conclusions I have reached will only lead to further abuse and the same type of transgressions that have given ISKCON leadership such a bad name.'

He need not fear unduly since what follows exposes his paper as nothing but vacuous cyber-trash, and so there should be no danger of Mayesvara's latest ideas gaining any more support or credence than his previous 'dual system' or 'insert' doctrines did. Mayesvara asks to be excused for adopting a satirical tone, yet the only person he lampoons is himself.

Just to remind ourselves, the challenge Mayesvara needs to answer is defined on page 2 of 'The Final Order' and calls for evidence supporting the following two modifications or assumptions, which are referred to throughout the document:

Modification a) That the appointment of representatives or *ritviks* was only temporary, specifically to be terminated on the departure of Srila Prabhupada.

Modification b) Having ceased their representational function, the *ritviks* would automatically become *diksagurus*, initiating persons as their own disciples, not Srila Prabhupada's. ('The Final Order' page 2)

Clearly anyone attempting to refute the definitive *ritvik* position paper will need to focus on answering the above. Mayesvara claims to have read TFO three times, so let us see if he has provided clear evidence for the above 2 modifications, and thus not only 'accepted the challenge' but answered it too. As is customary Mayesvara prabhu will from now on be referred to as the 'author', and all his comments will be boxed.

The author starts with a thoroughly unproductive attack on the title of 'The Final Order' paper (TFO):

This is rather peculiar considering the fact that His Divine Grace never indicated that his July 9th letter was either an "Order" or the last thing he would do.

1. The word '**Order**' refers to the fact that the July 9th directive, issued by Srila Prabhupada, was an order to be followed by the whole society.
If it was not an order, what does the author think Srila Prabhupada was doing, just throwing up a helpful suggestion that the GBC could follow or not if they fancied?
When the spiritual master tells you to do something, that is, by definition, an order. The letter clearly tells his senior men how initiations were to be conducted from that time onwards. In other words, an order.
2. We have never claimed that an 'order' must have the word 'order' within it to constitute an order. This is just the imagination of the author. We have said that phrases such as '**WHEN I order**' cannot themselves be the illusive order referred to by the GBC since it is conditional. So there is no double standard. Like all the poorly constructed GBC papers he is trying hard to emulate, the author is unable to quote us making any of the points he claims we make. If he had then his '*straw man*' arguments would be exposed for what they are. (A '*straw man*' argument is when the author attributes arguments to us that we do not actually make. He then goes onto defeat these much easier fictitious arguments, being unable to defeat the actual arguments we do make. However the author then loses credibility with the audience the instant they realise what is going on).
3. The word '**Final**' arises from the fact that it most certainly was the last directive issued to the society on this particular issue, not on every issue. It clearly states on the cover of TFO that it deals specifically with '**INITIATION**'.

The above are just plain facts, explained in TFO, and thus our 'phrase' 'The Final Order' is an accurate description of the July 9th directive. It was an order from Srila Prabhupada to be followed by the whole society, and there was no other instruction sent subsequently countermanding it.

We never say that the countermanding order must have the word 'order' in it. The author tries desperately to make us say this by childishly 'INSERTING' the words in brackets:

Here they even concede that they would accept the conclusions of the GBC if Srila Prabhupada "... said something (very specific) like 'I am now ordering you...'"

We said 'something like' and the author makes out we are demanding something 'very specific'. The author quotes Srila Prabhupada using the term 'final order':

"The Lord's final order, or law, is that every conditioned soul surrender unto Him, learn to serve and love Him, and thus go back home, back to Godhead." - REF. SB 11.21.28 ""Always think of Me and become My devotee'-should be taken as *The Final Order* of the Lord and should be followed". - REF. TLC 11: Service to the Lord Playing By The Same Rules Using the same literal style of interpretation that the authors of the FO-Sastra apply to everyone else, we must conclude they believe Srila Prabhupada never issued any subsequent "orders" after July 9th.

This has to be one of the most stupid arguments ever made against our position, and that in an area of stiff competition.

- Where is it ever stated in 'The Final Order' that Srila Prabhupada never issued any instructions after July 9th?
- Did he not ask for milk, or a tape recorder?

Srila Prabhupada himself does not use the phrase 'final order' to imply that Lord Krishna issued no later instructions, only that of all instruction this was his final law for all conditioned souls. As we all know Lord Krishna said and did many things after he spoke the *Bhagavad Gita* to Arjuna, just as Srila Prabhupada said many things after July 9th 1977.

Thus the author's opening gambit fails miserably and in his own words :

To find such disparity on the first page renders the whole document suspect and makes it hard to take anything that follows the first few words very seriously.

The first three pages of the author's paper are fully indicative of just how seriously he should be taken. Thus we begin to wonder how carefully and open-mindedly the author really has read TFO. The most basic points he has already misconstrued, wasting his and everyone else's time. And he has yet to get past the title! Sadly the rest of his paper does indeed follow in the same vein, as predicted by the very quote he himself uses when making his faulty analysis of the TFO's title:

"Srila Prabhupada: If you miss one point, there is a mistake in your calculation. Regardless of what you add or subtract after that, the mistake is already in the calculation, and everything that follows will also be faulty"

(SSR, Cp. 4. "Kishna, Christos, Christ")

The author then starts a new line of attack:

All the thrashing about over the word "order", is really a ruse to dodge the fact that Srila Prabhupada did instruct his disciples to become Spiritual Masters.

TFO never claims otherwise. Of course all his disciples were meant to become spiritual masters, that is why Srila Prabhupada set up ISKCON and trained everyone how to preach. How have we dodged this issue? It is the author who continues to dodge the evidence for **modifications A & B**.

The "G" Word

This whole section, as well as not answering **Modifications A & B**, again is full of 'straw man' arguments. You can spot someone who is most likely employing 'straw man' arguments by the fact that he will never directly quote us. If he did the reader would see whether what he claims we are saying is in fact what we do say. We will give just a couple of examples:

"The intended result is that the unsuspecting reader gets the impression that all the quotes where Srila Prabhupada said "You Become Guru" become watered down to mean "You become a Rtvik priest".

We never state this in TFO. We never exclusively equate the word 'guru' with 'rtvik priest'. Rather we use the definition given by Srila Prabhupada, that anyone who teaches about Krishna is a Guru (including any *ritviks*).

When the "G" word is used in reference to Lord Caitanya Instruction the *Siksa* prefix is pasted in front of it because the idea of every disciple becoming a Spiritual Master is apparently such a remarkable order that the only thing the authors can think of doing with it is reject it! [He even repeats the Bengali words *amara ajnaya* which, when spoken by Lord Caitanya, literally means "HE IS ORDERING" us all to do this.. It is also ludicrous to suggest that Lord Caitanya gave this order and for some strange reason Srila Prabhupada is instructing us NOT to follow it.

We never say that the order to become a spiritual master must be rejected.

We simply say it should be executed in accordance with how it is given.

The author has obviously convinced himself that whenever we see the word 'spiritual master' we must always take it to mean an 'initiating' 'foot bathed', 'worshipped as good as god', 'lots of guru daksina', 'sum total of the demi-gods' type. We prefer to take it as it is given. If for instance Srila Prabhupada states that 'it is **BEST** not to accept any disciples', why should the so called student think he knows **BETTER** than the Guru.

- Srila Prabhupada tells us what is **BEST**, but we claim to know **BETTER** than him, and so we do the **OPPOSITE?!**

If that is how the author wishes to follow the instructions of Srila Prabhupada, then good luck to him. But many, many devotees, prefer to do what is **BEST** for them, as told to them by their spiritual master and **NOT** accept **ANY** disciples. It is the author therefore, who is rejecting the order to become spiritual master, since he is advocating doing it in his own fashion, which is contrary to the way Srila Prabhupada has taught us.

"I invite the skeptical reader to consult this list and check it for yourself. Srila Prabhupada stated over and over again that he wanted us all to become Spiritual Masters based on Lord Caitanya's original order 500 years ago."

- Since we have never stated that the word 'spiritual master' is not applicable to the 'amara ajnaya' verse, or that we should not become spiritual masters, again what is the purpose of this list?

The author has simply again given another 'straw man' argument and defeated it. It may fill up space and give the author an opportunity to demonstrate that he knows how to use the folio program, but it does not deal with the issue of responding to TFO and that challenge he keeps dodging. The author is just assuming that the word 'spiritual master' must mean the 'sum total of the demi-gods'. Yet the purports to the verse where the phrase 'spiritual master' is used, do not support him. They speak about staying an engineer, taking more than one wife, staying at home, and telling your friends and family about Krishna. That's great.

- What's wrong with this package?
- Why is the author so keen, to immediately jump up for the 'foot-bathing & daksina' 'world acarya' package?

We are already 1/3 of the way through, and the author has yet to offer us anything remotely approaching evidence for **Modifications A & B**, but has just given us a bunch of 'straw man' arguments and already answered points. Please note this combination. 'Straw man' and 'already answered'.

Its known as the **S & A**. Between them the S & A usually account for over 90% of any GBC 'replies' to TFO. The author has succeeded in outdoing the GBC since so far his reply consists of 100% 'S & A'.

First let us notice how the authors isolate the following eight words "It is best not to accept any disciples", and use it as a false stepping stone to conclude that Srila Prabhupada did not want us to become Spiritual Masters.

Another 'straw man'. We never say that Srila Prabhupada 'did not want us to become spiritual masters', what to speak of saying that this is what these 8 words state.

The problem here is that this conclusion is a direct contradiction to all the quotes provided above.

Since we have just shown that the conclusion he speaks of is wrong, the rest of his point is also wrong.

Similarly we find in the *Caitanya Caritamrta* that it is forbidden for anyone to "...accept the order of Sanyasa".

"In this Age of Kali, five acts are forbidden: the offering of a horse in sacrifice, the offering of a cow in sacrifice, the acceptance of the order of sannyasa, the offering of oblations of flesh to the forefathers, and a man's begetting children in his brother's wife.' - Adi 17.164

Yet we know that Srila Prabhupada not only took sanyasa himself but he also awarded it to many of his own students as well!

Here we see an example of extremely poor scholarship on the part of the author, demonstrating a lack of basic philosophical understanding. All things he accuses us of. There are two types of sannyasa, one of which is not allowed in Kali yuga, and one which is:

"Because such *yajnic brahmana* is not there in this *Kali-yuga*, therefore the all the *yajnas* are forbidden. *Asvamedham gavalambham. Asvamedham ga...uh, pala-paitrkam devarena sutot, sannyasam pala-paitrkam*. Even *sannyasa* is also in this age. *Karma-sannyasa*. That is called *karma-sannyasa*. The Vedic principle of *sannyasa* is to give up this *karma--karma* means *yajna--and take sannyasa*. But *vaisnava sannyasa* is *tri-dandi sannyasa*. They, that means the living entity is offering his body, mind and words for the service of the Lord. So *tri-danda sannyasa* can be accepted in this age, not otherwise."

(HDG A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada 28.12.72 S.B. Bombay).

[Accepting disciples is certainly a very dangerous risk for obvious reasons that we are all too familiar with. So it is not strange that Srila Prabhupada would remind us of how serious it is when one takes up the order to become a spiritual master by soberly pointing out: **"It is best not to accept any disciples."**]

Srila Prabhupada is not reminding us that it is 'dangerous' to take disciples. He tells us not to take any! One is a reminder about danger, the other is an instruction about what not to do. Also there is **NO** danger in accepting disciples for he who is a qualified *maha-bhagavata diksa* guru. The author is pretending to know better than his spiritual master.

Srila Prabhupada tells us what it is best **NOT** to do, since he wants the best for us. Instead the author states that he knows better and that we should do the opposite. We could apply that sort of reasoning to anything the Guru tells us not to do.

"It's also best not to go onto a battlefield because one could get very seriously hurt there, but it is the duty of the soldier to do that very thing despite the inherent dangers."

The author betrays not even the slightest glint of understanding of analogy functions. If you have a **SOLDIER**, by definition you already have an entity that has been told to **GO** onto the battlefield. Unless the author can prove that the word 'spiritual master' **MUST ALWAYS** mean a *diksa* guru, then the above analogy is not in any sense applicable.

Hermeneutics The authors of the FO-Sastra are very willing to hone in on these eight words in an attempt to negate the order given by Lord Caitanya but mature readers familiar with the rigorous rules of Hermeneutics don't fall for such cheap tricks.

The eight words (it is best not to accept any disciples) are not used to negate the order. They are part of the order as explained by the purport of the spiritual master who relayed it to us all.

- How can something negate itself?

The average devotee is not even necessarily familiar with this word or what it means and that may be a good explanation for why the FO-Sastra has been able to ply its way into appearing credible for so many. The point is that the ability to interpret religious scripture is a refined science that has established rules and procedures that must be adhered to if the resulting conclusions are to be considered credible. That science is called hermeneutics and the type of things that we are pointing out in this paper violate these accepted standards so scandalously no religious scholar of any merit would take the FO-Sastra seriously.

The pomposity of the author here is laughable. He sanctimoniously asserts that devotees may have been confused by TFO simply because they did not know the meaning of a big word. I think you will find that the professor who wrote the foreword to TFO knows more about the science of hermeneutics than the author, who does not even seem to have a basic grasp of the philosophy, what to speak of being able correctly interpret and apply it.

The only thing scandalous is the author's interpretation that *'its best not accept any disciples'* **MEANS** we should do the **OPPOSITE** and take as many as possible!

Here is yet another startling example of what can only be considered very sloppy work or a politically motivated agenda. In the **VERY NEXT PARAGRAPH**, after we are told it is best not to accept disciples, Srila Prabhupad specifically states that great souls **DO** take the risk of accepting disciples despite the inherent danger and this word of caution.

"Similarly, Narottama dasa Thakura and other great acaryas like Madhvacarya, Ramanujacrya and others accepted many thousands of disciples to induce them to render devotional service..."

1. Of course there is no danger for the great *acaryas*. That is why they are called great *acaryas*. Such authorised persons can most certainly accept thousands of disciples. We, on the other hand are told not to take any.
2. There is obviously a vast gulf between the activities and capabilities of the great *acaryas* like *Madhvacarya* and that of householders who are instructed to stay at home, carry on going to the factory, tell their friends and family about Krishna, etc etc. The author is completely confused here when he thinks they are identical.

The instruction for us to not accept disciples, is thus in no way at odds with the authorised activities of the great *acaryas*. They are two entirely different ball games.

But a completely different picture emerges when we change our focus from the word "Guru" to the word "Spiritual Master."

Just one quote will suffice to show that the word spiritual master does not **HAVE** to mean *diksa* guru:

"It is best not to accept any disciples. One has to become purified at home by chanting the Hare Krsna *maha-mantra* and preaching the principles enunciated by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Thus one can become a spiritual master and be freed from the contamination of material life."

(Madhya, 7:130)

If the author had pressed some more keys on his folio, he would have seen that Srila Prabhupada used the terms guru and spiritual master interchangeably, so the author's contention about this imagined duality between the two terms is false. Either word **CAN** mean *diksa* or *siksa* guru.

It depends on the context.

Linguistic magic tricks and a few manicured quotes may befuddle the casual reader but the volume of evidence that has been cited here makes it very clear that the word "Spiritual Master" does not mean "Siksa Guru" and that Srila Prabhupada clearly wanted all his students to become "Spiritual Masters".

Before making the above assertion perhaps the author should have read the following:

"There are two kinds of instructing spiritual masters. One is the liberated person fully absorbed in meditation in devotional service, and the other is he who invokes the disciple's spiritual consciousness by means of relevant instructions."

(Adi, 1:47)

Does the author seriously think that in the above quote the phrase '*spiritual master*' does not apply to *siksa* guru! Let us see how the author's fine mastery of hermeneutics gets him out of this pickle.

I really had no intention or desire to write such a technical article about *The Final Order*.

Then you have acted consistent with your desire. There is nothing technical here, it is just drivel from start to finish, with all due respect. Full of 'S & A' ('straw man' and 'already answered' arguments), and a complete lack of familiarisation with Srila Prabhupada's teachings.

Certainly it is hard to believe that the author has read TFO 3 times.

I have been challenged many times by devotees I have great respect for with the question. "Where is the Flaw? If you can not say what it is you object to, you must admit defeat!" So I have accepted the challenge knowing full well that no matter what evidence I present there are some who will never acknowledge the conclusions it points to.

Yet any flaws exposed are only in the authors paper, not in TFO.

- Where is the evidence for **modifications A & B**?

The evidence presented here does not in any way contradict TFO, it supports it. The author does not even quote directly from TFO to show the alleged flaws, except once where he childishy inserts his own nonsense.

The only challenge the author has met is writing a worse paper than the GBC. In that he deserves proper recognition.

I expect the defenders of *Rtvik* philosophy will send out their damage control pundits to strategize on how they can obfuscate the simple observations I have made in one short article.

The only damage is to the author's reputation since he has exposed his deep ignorance, not just of this subject, but of Srila Prabhupada's teachings in general. And it is for this reason I have ignored the following advice given by the author:

"There are so many anomalies, contradictions and misleading statements in the FO-Sastra that I am overwhelmed with the task of feeling obliged to offer it all to the greater public for their perusal. So I suggest that the die-hard FO-Pundits consider waiting until I have had an opportunity to present the rest of my findings before they make the wrong assumption that this is the only material they will have to dream up ways to refute."

We felt it only fair to give the author some guidance before he sets off to embarrass himself even further. As the analysis of what the author has written thus far demonstrates, in future the author should:

1. Read the TFO and check that he is addressing **ONLY** what we do say.

Quoting us as proof of this will assist in this simple task. This will eliminate 'straw man' arguments.

2. Check that any points he makes have not already been answered in either '*The Final Order*' or one of the other IRM replies to the GBC.
3. Check Srila Prabhupada's teachings with care before rushing to make pronouncements which are just plain wrong

Of course if he had followed 1, 2 and 3 here, the author would not have been able say virtually anything. Let us see next time how many **VALID** points he can make. Furthermore as well as making valid points, the author must also make relevant points:

4. Deal with the actual challenge of the FO - **Modifications A & B**.

We await with interest to see if the author will indeed be able to write anything on TFO, which follows these 4 simple guidelines.

Despite what others will accuse me of I did not set out to prove the *Rtviks* wrong.

Don't worry, you haven't. We do hope the author will think very carefully before he writes any more papers, and in particular follow the 4 guidelines above. But that may truly prove too big a challenge.

Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupada.

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