

The example and necessity of spiritual models is prevalent in all revealed scriptures of the world. Not only is it expansive in sastra, or revealed scripture, it is specifically mentioned throughout the Puranas, the Bhagavada-gita, and of course the Srimad Bhagavatam. Living models always facilitate spiritual growth and live their lives for example and purpose. Throughout the history of Earth, different people have come to testify of their transcendental faith and have shown by their direct association and example that spiritual life is a factual truth.

As followers of His Divine Grace Srila Prabhupada, we are very fortunate to have a real and living example of transcendence. We can all testify of how we have been benefiting from his association, and many people can give personal experience of being in his personal presence. Prabhupada's legacy is already historical fact and is a self evident example of living in transcendental consciousness. Many people, throughout the world, can give accounts of how they experienced God Consciousness being in his personal presence. This is the power of the devotee of the Lord; they can show us the personal example of what being a devotee of God is. Their main objective is that we are all servants of God and must surrender to His will. By convincing us to take shelter of the will of God, the servants of God then bring us into the direct presence of the Lord. Once we are convinced to take shelter of God, that very sentiment brings us into God's presence.

Srila Prabhupada instructed us that Krishna Consciousness is not an artificial imposition of the mind. God consciousness, according to Srila Prabhupada, is the natural innate state of the living entity beyond the body and mind. We are all part and parcel of the Lord and God also exists within each fragmentary personal structure. The functional essence of the spiritual platform, according to scripture, is to act as a part and parcel in devotional service. The natural spiritual state of the living entity is its real and inherent identity. Attaining God Consciousness is actually an awaking of the primordial character of the living entity. The conversion of a person to this awakening of spiritual life is just the reactivation of a process that is already there. And this begins with the association of someone who is in already in that reactivated state.

The spiritual model is the person who shows the living example of what transcendental life is. They are able to show the real underlying consciousness of a person. Once we are able to associate with a transcendental model, we will be able to see, with our own eyes, that spiritual life is real. This is because they are showing the clear possibility of our own inherent spiritual potential. Without the example of this possibility, it is very hard to even imagine believing that such a potential exists. The great teachers and Acharyas teach by personal example and deed more than by word. Living their lives as a pure servant of God, they are able to show how to act in the devotional state. Following their devotional example is what turns the possibility into actuality. Causing us to perform devotional service, we are then able to invoke the presence of God in our own life. The Spiritual Master, therefore, shows the real human potential: the ability to perceive God both inside and outside everything.

The intelligence of the Creator is pervading all of the creation. The order and balance of the Universe and this physical body are a clear testament to His handiwork. That direct and personal intelligence is evidenced in every nook and cranny of existence. From the atomic to cosmic, the creation is an infinite set of components with infinitely complex parts. As far as modern science is concerned, the only thing that is certain is that things keep getting smaller and more complicated on the quantum level and time-space seems to go on forever. It is infinity in each direction, of course, because it is the Lord's creation. And His underlying intelligence is the cause and direction all things great and small. This body, at latest estimate, is about 70-100 trillion cells. All of them have very complex structures, and all of them communicate and coordinate with each other on an almost instantaneous level. And all of it primarily happens below the locus of awareness. It happens automatically under a higher direction that we are neither conscious nor in control of. This is unarguable. That is the intelligence of God and it is directing all levels of universal affairs. That same intelligence, of course, is totally within us. It is acting on a mostly subconscious level, at all times, and life would not be possible without it. That intelligence is ultimately waiting to guide the development of the transcendental realization of It's own presence within.

The spiritual models are accessing the awareness of the Lord's presence by the process of devotional service. Because they are experiencing being in the presence of God, we are then able to associate with the Lord through their personal presence. This activates this intelligence within ourselves and their personal devotional example shows us how to act on that knowledge and realization.

The development of all abilities and potentials are dependent on real life models. Human developmental science has many examples with language development being one of the best. Human embryos actually respond to phonemes, or basic language sound structure, while in the womb. Phonemes are sound structure components that are found within all language. Basically, embryos elicit specific muscular responses, or twitches, to specific phonemes. For every individual embryo, there is a unique response to each specific phoneme, but they are always consistent with their particular responses. This supports the concept that language is innate potential ability. That ability is only waiting for living examples and specific languages to unlock the dormant language potential. The child can be offered any language or multiple languages because the inner language blueprint is generic and is waiting for specific language content. Nature, however, in all of its design, cannot plan for our failure. If an example of language is not offered, that potential will not be developed. And with particular abilities such as language, it is a stage specific affair. Human abilities develop in clear succeeding levels, and each stage is built firmly upon the previous stage. About eighty percent of all language skills, according to research, are generally acquired by age two. If a child somehow is not offered language development in the first several years, as evidenced by many tragic cases, it is very difficult if not almost impossible for them to learn language.

This basic formula holds true for the development of most of our abilities and potentials: inner blueprint plus outward model equals structure of knowledge. This is called Nature's Model Imperative. At all of the stages of our biological development, concrete external models are required to unlock those potentials that are unfolding at that time. Walking is another simple example. We are obviously physically and mechanically equipped to walk. But, as any parent knows, a child has to learn how to walk and be taught by both instruction and example. Our real spiritual potential is no different in its development especially because the spiritual situation is our most innate potential. But it will remain in a dormant like state without being unlocked by the example and instruction of outside models. This is the stage of post-biological development and it is meant to move us beyond the physical and psychological situations all together.

Of course, we can become very limited by the level of models culturally available. Unfortunately, we usually can't develop beyond the potential of our models. As they say, the apple usually doesn't fall too far from the tree. And look around in society at large; the models are all pretty lousy. Society gets stuck in a rut and it becomes difficult to move beyond those potentials, both personally and collectively. The other major research in developmental science is that 95% of all learning seems to be below cognitive awareness. How the mind processes and absorbs information is still mostly a mystery. It is acting on a very deep intelligence, of course, because it is created by God. Everyone, especially children, absorb the attitudes, emotions and intent of their models. We mirror our models and the world suffers because of this. This is why it is so important to have good leaders and teachers in society. What to speak of spiritual leaders?

Spiritual Leaders have to represent the essence of spirituality, which is to be a humble servant of God. Entitlement and elitism is plaguing all organized religions of the world including our ISKCON. These qualities are the antithesis of all religious and ethical knowledge and it is clearly against the culture of devotion. I have given specific and general examples in my previous article, "[The Servant Leader](#)", of how this is presently happening in our society of devotees. Our inner spiritual blueprint requires real models of devotion that are strong in their servitorship. Our innate spiritual nature rests upon the fact that we have to act as spirit souls whose ontological identity is being a servant. Entitlement and elitism effectively destroy that potential for development. The only thing we can do with these types of leaders is to learn what not to do from their example. In our religious society, especially since Srila Prabhupada's departure, different leaders have chosen to be extreme examples of this case. It is a self-evident truth that Krishna in His form of time has shown us. We have all, unfortunately, bore witness to the terrible fate of leaders who decided to act as masters instead of servants. It is of extreme importance, therefore, to accept these lessons with all gravity and sobriety.

The Spiritual Model is not a go-between, or by-proxy, standing between us and God, but shows us, by personal example, how to approach the Lord and access His association directly. The

devotee of God's main business is to bring a person into the Lord's association and convince a person to take shelter of God. They never try to get a person to surrender to them, but are actively trying to convince a person to surrender to the Lord. By engaging a person in the science of devotional service, their inner spiritual blueprint is activated and their spiritual life then begins. The Lord will then direct them from within their heart and enlighten them with all knowledge and reveal their true purpose and consciousness. We are mainly not trying to convert people to a belief system with our preaching, but instead are just reactivating their normal existence.

The transcendental platform is not a super natural state, but is actually the natural normal life of the living entity. The ability to see God inside the heart, and outside as the deity and intelligence pervading the creation, is what being a devotee really is. And as followers of Srila Prabhupada, we know that this is fully possible and attainable. This is the life of a transcendentalist and is totally the reality that we all signed up for. It is absolutely essential that we have been fully reactivated ourselves, so we will be able to show our own example of how to live in God's presence.

We are so blessed to have Srila Prabhupada's perfect and complete model of spiritual life. He is bringing so many people into the direct presence of God through his own personal charity, instruction, and example. The followers of Srila Prabhupada have to be a personal living testament of how this instruction and example work. We have to always look to those devotees who are living their lives as servants of God, following Srila Prabhupada's powerful model. These spiritual models in society are always self evident, humble servants, who always direct everyone towards the Lord, not themselves. We must follow their example, have humility and contrition, and use our lives as a personal example of how the Lord can save anyone. In this way, we may be fortunate enough to be able to show another person in this world that spiritual life is a real possibility and reality. I believe that this is Srila Prabhupada's real desire and hope.

