

# KARTIK INSPIRATIONS 2024

## RESPECT, MEDITATE, CHANT

Welcome to our *Kartik Inspiration*.

Today, we will look at the phenomenon of taste. Here in Vrindavan—and also outside, but especially here—the holy name has a naturally sweet taste. Chanting it brings a loving feeling and great excitement. But this sweetness can only be experienced by those who have the necessary qualification to taste it.

An example is often given: although sugar cane is naturally sweet, its sweetness can only be relished when it's squeezed out by chewing. A toothless child or an elderly person without teeth can't extract the juice; only someone with strong teeth can fully savor it.

In our spiritual practice, the goal is to become absorbed, immersed, and flooded with a sense of the Lord's presence. And to reach this state of absorption requires a certain spiritual qualification.

Srila Visvanatha Chakravarti Thakura gives three amazing practices that help us relish the sweetness of the holy name, Krishna's pastimes, and Vrindavan *dhama*.

He says:

- 1) Offer respect,
- 2) Meditate, and
- 3) Chant.

Looking closely, we see that offering respect involves our physical body, meditating involves the mind, and chanting involves the voice. By bringing body, mind, and voice into our spiritual practice, we create a complete practice of chanting.

How can we offer respect? By bowing down.

How can we meditate? First, we need to find out about Krishna's beauty from the scriptures like the *Bhagavatam*, and then we can recall or recollect His beautiful smiling image and His activities in our mind.

And then chanting? The main principle is one you already know: to be absolutely present, or immersed in the sound vibration, which is possible after you have collected your scattered mind and focused it on this one activity: *Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna*.

Try it out: *respect, meditate, chant*.

*Śācinandana Swami*

ŚACINANDANA SWAMI

OFFER RESPECT BY BOWING  
DOWN, MEDITATE BY  
RECOLLECTING KRISHNA'S  
BEAUTIFUL IMAGE, AND CHANT  
BY IMMERSING YOURSELF FULLY  
IN THE SOUND VIBRATION OF THE  
HOLY NAME.