

KARTIK INSPIRATIONS 2024

NOW BECOMES LATER

Welcome to our *Kartik Inspirations*.

There are only three more days to go, and I am very glad to be on this journey with you.

So, let's ask today: What is really important in a spiritual practice? What is the essence, the point of it all?

Narottama Dasa Thakura answers this, saying, "Whatever you practice now, that is what you become later." Or, in his words, whatever I aspire to as a practitioner, I will surely attain it in my spiritual perfection. It is only a question of maturity.

Take an unripe mango as an example. It's already a mango, and with sunshine, time, and water, it will mature into a sweet, relishable fruit. So, if you're practicing but haven't yet attained the goal or fruit of your practice, don't despair. It's only a matter of time—your aspiration and your hope will become a tangible reality.

There is a beautiful song about this principle by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, and I think it's worthwhile reflecting on. See, so much of our time goes toward caring for the body and our projects. But we miss our essential purpose, the goal of this human life.

Bhaktivinoda Thakura sings, "Have you thought about what you are doing, now that you have received this rare human body? If you do not worship Krishna now, you will fall into a shameful condition at the time of death. Don't you know that with each rising and setting of the sun, your days are passing? Why remain idle instead of worshiping the Lord of the heart? Understand this essential truth—material life is temporary and filled with troubles and burdens. Now, earnestly take shelter of the Holy Name and remain engaged in your spiritual duties."

So, yes, whatever we practice now, even if it's in an early, immature stage, will bring us to the mature realization. That is why the holy name should be practiced with patience and determination as a lifelong *sadhana*.

WHATEVER YOU PRACTICE NOW,
THAT IS WHAT YOU
BECOME LATER.

Śacīnandana Prasāda
ŚACĪNANDANA SWAMI