

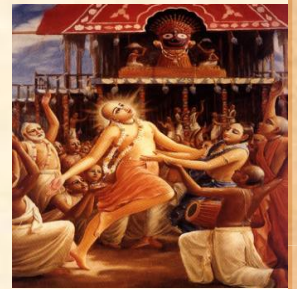
## Why Most People Miss Spiritual Bliss?

The Bhagavad-gita (15.11) states, “The transcendentalists who strive to situate themselves on the spiritual platform can see the soul clearly. But others who are not spiritually situated cannot see the soul, even if they try, because their consciousness is misdirected.”

Let's understand the blinding effect of misdirected vision with an example. If somebody stares at the back side of a canvas, he will never be able to appreciate the painting, no matter how long he scrutinizes it. Nor will he understand why connoisseurs of art are delighting over the painting; indeed he will call them crazy. Suppose the art connoisseurs are in minority; how will they communicate the beauty of the painting to the unsympathetic majority?



Like the art connoisseurs in our hypothetical example, the spiritual connoisseurs – the devotees who delight in remembering their beloved Lord, Sri Krishna – are considered strange, even crazy, by others. The joy they derive in singing the praises of their Lord – often in public kirtans – is, for the onlookers, interesting but incomprehensible. Even scholars who do doctorates in religion fail to experience, despite their years of scrutinizing study, a drop of the ocean of joy that the devotees experience in a few moments of devotional-musical festivity. Why this difference?



This mystery of the simultaneous accessibility and inaccessibility of the spiritual realm is unraveled in the above Gita verse. For those situated on the material platform, pursuing worldly pleasures and possessions, their infatuation with matter blinds them to spiritual reality. Even if they study spiritual literature, their minds being filled with dreams and schemes for materialistic enjoyment, they are unable to see anything higher. Their endeavors to understand spirituality are in vain like the attempts of a blind man to see by squinting and straining his eyes.

But the blind man can see, if he follows the doctor's process. Similarly aspiring spiritualist can experience spiritual bliss by redirecting their consciousness from matter to spirit. This redirection entails:

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## 1. Avoiding materially entangling activities:



Four activities that especially entangle our minds in matter, as mentioned in the Srimad Bhagavatam, are gambling, intoxication, meat-eating and illicit sex. By eschewing these activities, we will find our consciousness becoming clearer and sharper to perceive spiritual truths.

## 2. Maximizing spiritually absorbing activities:

Mantra meditation – especially attentive, devotional contemplation on the sound of the mantras comprised of the names of God like the Hare Krishna mahamantra – connects us practically and joyfully with God, the reservoir of all spiritual bliss.

By regularly following this process, we can, figuratively speaking, turn our vision from the back of the canvas to the front.

Are we ready for the new experience?



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