

## **Ignorance of the Obvious**

*Truth is by nature self-evident. As soon as you remove the cobwebs of ignorance that surround it, it shines clear. ~*

Mahatma Gandhi

Srila Prabhupada said that "Krsna consciousness (spiritual truth) is so simple you can miss it."

I have noticed that what researchers often discover after half a decade of research are simple truths missed by modern man, yet well known in the past. Truth may be profound, but it is usually simple.

One of the biggest selling books on marriage is **Men Are From Mars, Women are From Venus**. Yet your average village family in India already understands this stuff. They learn it from their grandmothers. How did modern man end up so dumbed down?

In our over educated, research driven, statistical world, we can lose sight of simple truths in our attempt to find complex solutions. Why? Because we think we need over educated geniuses, experts in their field, to find solutions to perplexing and persistent problems. We are trained to avoid the obvious and find the complex, thinking if it is simple it is either not true or not profound. Some of the best-selling books in the world are only explaining either what people have always known or what they should have always known (if they care to think a little bit). But somehow these common sense ideas have passed recent generations by.

*The paradox of our time in history is that we have... more degrees but less sense, more knowledge, but less judgment, more experts, yet more problems, more medicine, but less wellness. Bob Moorehead*

I find it strange that we need to read a book or attend a workshop to learn how men and women are different, or that the key to a successful marriage is to be nice to another person. How did we miss this? Is it that we have become so sophisticated and complex that the obvious is anything but obvious?

Srila Prabhupada had amazing success teaching and living simple truths. Yet, his simple truths profoundly impacted people because our present world is steeped in ignorance of the obvious. Prabhupada taught that we are not going to live forever. Isn't this obvious? But the reality is that our materialistic life and culture have everyone believing in an alternate reality, a reality in which we somehow think we are not really going to die - at least not soon.

Prabhupada taught that we are not the body, we are the soul within body. When I first heard this teaching I felt enlightened. But wasn't this obvious. After all, I was 19 at the time, and my 19 year old body was a lot different from the body I had as a baby. And wasn't it obvious that since I had thoughts (rather than were those thoughts) I was not the mind? So why was the knowledge that I am different from the body and mind so impactful, even though obvious? After all, every village kid in India understands this.

The answer is that I was trained at one of the "best" universities in America that the body was everything, that happiness meant satisfying the body, and success meant having more things for the body. These lies put me to sleep. When someone awakened me by exposing these myths, I felt like some enlightened sage. But these truths were so simple that if I were not so well programmed to believe otherwise, I would have intuitively understood them.

We need to become more simple. We over think, over analyze, over research, over talk, over create, over produce, over everything. Yet in spite of this sophistication and advancement, we are creating a civilization that is more overweight, depressed and chemically addicted than at any time in our history.

Were we not better off in many ways a few hundred years ago? Yet few propose to turn back the clocks. Why? Gandhi proposed "Simple living and high thinking?" But India wanted to move "forward" and Gandhi's thinking seemed "backward." We have moved forward into some of the most crowded, polluted and miserable cities in the world. And the icing on the cake? Kids are being plagued with the innumerable vices that "advancement" brings.

Actually, your average modern city is a catastrophe of pollution, depression, crime, divorce, ill health and a plethora of other problems, physical, emotional, and spiritual, problems virtually unknown to traditional societies. And these problems are just the tip of the iceberg.

Unknown to many, one of the most fundamental problems we face today is food. Most of the food we eat lacks enough nutrition to keep us healthy. Plus this food is filled with chemicals and hormones that are making us sick. What could be more ironical than eating food that makes you sick?

We sit in front of computers, getting little exercise while absorbing dangerous electromagnetic frequencies that are being emitted from our computer screens. If that's not bad enough, we damage our brains with more electromagnetic radiation by using mobile phones. And to use

these phones, we build cell towers that generate even more harmful electromagnetic frequencies.

Why isn't it obvious that forward is becoming backward? This understanding is only sinking in with a few modern thinkers. India is mesmerized by material advancement to its own peril. We are somehow okay with living in polluted crowded cities, eating depleted and chemically sprayed food, and both parents working harder and longer hours than ever before.

I fear that Prabhupada's call for a simpler, more natural way of life, is still falling on too many deaf ears, even though we are creating a hell of such proportion that future generations will find it inconceivable, (and unconscionable) that the human race allowed such things to happen.

How is it that the craze for the latest gadget dominates the lives of billions. Must we destroy our planet - and our sanity - to such a degree that our madness finally becomes obvious?

The sadhu has always lived simply, and he has always taught simple truths that both prevent problems and provide solutions to existing ones. Like the sadhu, we should do the same. The planet will then be a better place, both for ourselves and everyone else.

The obvious is still obvious. You just have to look.

*It is a simple task to make things complex, but a complex task to make them simple.* ~MEYER'S LAW