

Qualifications of a Bone Fide Disciple

The Hari-bhakti-vilasa lists the following qualifications for a bona fide disciple, who may be trained and engaged in Deity worship:

- He should be devoted to the lotus feet of the spiritual master.
- He should be fully capable of upholding the vows made to the spiritual master.
- He should be engaged day and night in the Lord's service with body, mind and words.
- He should be desirous of knowing the Absolute Truth.
- He should be spotless in character, truthful, gentle and polite, pleasing in appearance and intelligent.
- He should show proper respect to elders, to initiated Vaisnavas and to the Lord; he should observe silence concerning material subjects and should have control of his senses.
- He should have no attraction for committing sinful activities.

The bona fide disciple should not possess the following characteristics:

- He should not be lazy, dirty, sickly, continually afflicted or lamenting, angry, proud, lusty or coveting material desires.
- He should not show the enjoying mood; he should not indulge in sinful activities such as taking meat, intoxication, gambling or illicit sex; he should not earn a living by unjust means.
- He should not use vulgar or coarse language, should not be critical of others, and should not be miserly, malicious, devious or envious; he should not give pain to others or be addicted to cruel activities.
- He should not be ignorant, nor should he be proud of material learning; he should not indulge in non-Vaisnava philosophies; he should not be addicted to over-eating.

- From the GBC Book on Deity Worship