

**SB 1.2.11:** Learned transcendentalists who know the Absolute Truth call this nondual substance Brahman, Paramatma or Bhagavan.

	<b>Brahman</b>	<b>Paramatma</b>	<b>Bhagavan</b>
<b>Realized by</b>	Students of the Upanisads	Hiranyagarbhas or the yogis	Devotees
<b>What is it?</b>	Is the glowing effulgence of the Personality of Godhead	Is the partial representation of the Personality of Godhead	Is the last word of the Absolute Truth.
<b>Analogy (BG 2.2)</b>	Sun rays	Sun planet	Sun-god

1. The Absolute Truth is both subject and object, and there is no qualitative difference there.
  1. Brahman, Paramatma and Bhagavan are qualitatively one and the same.
  2. The three features of the Absolute Truth are different perspective views seen from different angles of vision.
    - **Analogy:** Sun rays, Sun planet/disc and Sun-God (BG 2.2).
    - **Analogy:** Someone watches the train from a distance, watches it as it passes by, actually enters into the train. (*I saw the train*)
    - **Analogy:** Seeing a mountain from far vs near and actually being on top of the mountain. (*Complete conception of God*)
2. The Supreme Truth is self-sufficient, cognizant and free from the illusion of relativity (SB 1.1.1).

<b>Relative world</b>	<b>Absolute realm</b>
The knower is different from the known	The knower and the known are one and the same thing
The knower is the living spirit or superior energy, whereas the known is inert matter or inferior energy	Both the knower and the known are of the same superior energy
There is a duality of inferior and superior energy	There is no duality, everything is superior energy
Material world is of inferior energy	The Absolute realm is of superior energy
There is the sense of relativity	Everything is absolute

**SB 1.2.12:** The seriously inquisitive student or sage, well equipped with knowledge and detachment, realizes that Absolute Truth by rendering devotional service in terms of what he has heard from the Vedanta-sruti.

1. The Absolute Truth is realized in full by the process of devotional service to the Lord.
  1. Vasudeva, or the Personality of Godhead, is the full-fledged Absolute Truth.
  2. Brahman, His transcendental bodily effulgence, and Paramatma, His partial representation are partial/imperfect realizations of the Absolute Truth.
2. The paths of jñana and yoga are imperfect means of realizing the Absolute Truth.
  1. There are four different types of human beings — the karmis, the jñanis, the yogis and the devotees.
    - The karmis are materialistic, whereas the other three are transcendental.
    - Devotees are the first-class transcendentalists who have realized the Supreme Person.

- Yogis are the second-class transcendentalists who have partially realized the plenary portion of the Absolute Person.
  - Jnanis are the third-class transcendentalists who have barely realized the spiritual focus of the Absolute Person.
3. Of the three classes of devotees, one has to raise himself at least to the stage of a second-class devotee to become eligible to know the Absolute Truth.
    1. The third-class devotees or the neophytes are called material devotees.
      - They have no knowledge
      - They are not detached from material association
      - They are simply attracted by the preliminary process of worshipping the Deity in the temple.
      - They are more attached to material benefits than transcendental profit.
      - They have very little taste for hearing from the authorities.
      - They make a show of hearing from the professional man to satisfy his senses.
    2. In the second-class position, the devotee can see four principles in the devotional line, namely the Personality of Godhead, His devotees, the ignorant and the envious.
    3. How a third-class devotee can be elevated to second class position -
      - By receiving instructions of devotional service from the two types of Bhagavata - devotee bhagavata and the book bhagavatam. A devotee bhagavata:
        - Is not a professional man who earns his livelihood by the business of Bhagavatam
          - Professional man spoils the transcendental matter as the serpent spoils milk simply by the touch of his tongue
        - Must be a representative of Sukadeva Gosvami, like Suta Gosvami
        - Must preach the cult of devotional service for the all-round benefit of all people.
      - Srila Sanatana Gosvami says – “As one can transform kamsa, or bell metal, into gold by treating it with mercury, one can also turn a lowborn man into a brahmana by initiating him properly into Vaisnava activities.” ([\*Transforming bell metal into gold\*](#))
  4. Devotional service, which is based on the foreground of full knowledge combined with detachment from material association and which is, fixed by the aural reception of the Vedanta-sruti, is the only perfect method by which the seriously inquisitive student can realize the Absolute Truth. A sincere devotee must:
    1. Be prepared to hear the Vedic literature like the Upanishads, Vedanta and other literatures left by the previous authorities or Gosvamis.
      - **My incident:** In the beginning days of my Krsna consciousness, I read an elevated book and became more disturbed.
    2. Hear and follow else it is just a show, is worthless and is a sort of disturbance in the path of devotional service.
      - **Example:** Sahajiya Sampradaya creates disturbance in the society.
    3. Reject fake-show of devotional service which is not established based on the principles of sruti, smṛti, purana or pañcaratra authorities. (*śruti-smṛti-purāṇādi, BRS 1.2.101*)
      - **My incident:** Met with the father-in-law of a friend at her house-warming ceremony who says, his guru, who is God himself, speaks to him and is with him wherever he goes.

**SB 1.2.13: O best among the twice-born, it is therefore concluded that the highest perfection one can achieve by discharging the duties prescribed for one's own occupation according to caste divisions and orders of life is to please the Personality of Godhead.**

1. Human society all over the world is divided into four castes and four orders of life known as Varnasrama-dharma.
  1. The four castes classified in terms of one's work and qualification and not by birth are: the intelligent caste, the martial caste, the productive caste and the laborer caste.
  2. The four orders of life are: the student life, the householder's life, the retired and the devotional life.
  3. What is the purpose of varnasrama-dharma?
    - Such divisions of life are required for a healthy growth of the state.
    - The aim is to please the Personality of Godhead.
      - When the aim is missed by too much sense gratification, selfish men misuse it to create an artificial predominance over the weaker section.
      - **Example:** Srila Bhaktisiddhanta defeated smārtha brahmanas who wanted monopoly over salagrama worship. (*[Only a Vaiṣṇava is a true brāhmaṇa](#)*)
      - **Example:** Smārtha brahmanas meeting with devotees of Srila Prabhupada. (*[Worship the deity to take birth in America](#)*)
    - Is quite natural for the civilized life.
    - Is constructed to enable one to realize the Absolute Truth.
    - Is not for artificial domination of one division over another.
    - Is meant for smooth social intercourse and high-thinking for self-realization.
2. The highest perfection of the institution of the varnasrama-dharma is to cooperate jointly for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord. (*[cātur-varṇyam mayā sṛṣṭam](#)*, [BG 4.13](#))