Scholar and Boatman

Instructive Stories from teachings of
His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada
Founder Acharya of International Society for Krishna Consciousness
One day, a man, who was very scholarly was returning from the city and he wanted to cross the river.
Hey! Boatman, will you take me to the other side of the river to my village?
Yes, sure, I am waiting here for taking passengers to the other side only.
The scholar gets into the boat and the boatman starts rowing the boat.
The scholar was very happy returning after a long time and he starts talking with the boatman.

My dear boatman, do you know what is astronomy, how these stars are moving?
None at all, sir. I just row this boat across the river.
They proceed on for a few moments
Oh! Your life is twenty five percent wasted. You do not know anything.
“You know the meteorology, do you know standard temperature and pressure - to forecast wind velocity in a storm center?”
No, sir, I am poor man. I don't know what you mean.
Oh, fifty percent of your life is lost.
You know the advanced mathematics. With all these dark clouds coming in over us, do you have any idea what a graph of storm probability would look like?
None at all, sir. I just row this boat across the river.
Oh, seventy five percent of your life is lost.
Then all of a sudden there was a cloud, black clouds on the sky, and there was storm.

Sir, do you know how to swim?
No, I don’t know how to swim.
The boatman jumped in the water to save his life.

Then you have lost your life hundred percent. You are going to be drowned.
Sir! We'll have to swim the rest of the way to save our lives!
The scholar started drowning and shouted for help.
The boatman swam across to the river bank.
MORAL:
Whatever else we may learn in our life's journey, there's one thing we all need to know: how to cross safely to the spiritual world when our material body "capsizes."
Therefore, while the West's technological science can analyze things and perhaps make our voyage more comfortable, we need the East's spiritual science to make it more successful.