

The Secrets of Perfect Life - Swami Omkarananda

We are the Seeds of the Perfections of the Divine

We see a little plant. It has beautiful leaves and fragrant flowers. From where did all those leaves of fascinating colour and those tender, delicate petals of fragrance emerge? They were latent in the seed. We are the seeds of God's Love, Beauty, Goodness, Knowledge, Power, Happiness.

Love and Beauty, Goodness and Knowledge, Power and Happiness - these are natural to us. As seeds of God's infinite Splendour, we bear in ourselves the unlimited Love, the absolute Beauty, the unconditioned and eternal Happiness.

Absolute Love is one perfection; absolute Beauty is another perfection; absolute Goodness is the third perfection; absolute Knowledge is the fourth perfection; absolute Power is the fifth perfection; and absolute Happiness is yet another perfection. These are to be unfolded.

As the mind in man unfolds an entire epic of experiences in the dream-state, so does the higher Consciousness unfold unending beauties, qualities, experiences of the supreme divine Being. The "within" becomes the "without". If the "within" were not pre-existent, there could be no "without". The patent is the self-expression of what was latent. The inner essence manifests itself in the outer substance. The "hidden" infinite divine Essence presents itself to the active realization in the daily life of the individual.

However, the seed of the divine qualities, beauties, perfections in each of us, is covered over by a hard shell of the limiting ego, the distorting ego, the limiting selfishness, impurities, errors, pride, ignorance, imperfections. This shell has to be split, grown over and transcended.

Life is the Field wherein the Qualities of the
Divine Struggle against Brute Matter and Physical Veils,
Mental Limitations, for Self-Expression

All life is a struggle to discover, express, manifest and experience the treasures that are resident in the higher Being, the Breath of God in us - Love, Happiness, Beauty. Everything that the people do in the world is, in fact, and ultimately, directed towards the procurement of happiness, love, fulfilment; but, as they do not experience in daily life these treasures which are distinctively divine, the methods they adopt are faulty. True happiness, true love, true beauty can be experienced only by the increasing manifestation of these very qualities that are latent within us.

The admiration a plant wins, and the value it acquires, rest upon the extent to which it can unfold all the wealth of colour, fragrance, beauty in itself. Inexhaustible and imperishable

is the wealth of the highest qualities and attributes that man bears in himself. What is visible presently are only the first distortions of his perfect Knowledge, complete Love, lasting Happiness, real Power.

The more we express these qualities from within our inner heart, the more our outer life becomes a vitalising, dynamic and glorious commentary upon the holy Scriptures. A life that is lived in harmony with their spirit, is the real life, a life of true power, true strength, true peace and true happiness. It is the most blessed life.

Requisites for Commenting upon the Holy Scriptures,
by Daily Living

It needs a lot of understanding, wisdom, goodness of heart, the capacity to adjust and accommodate in human and social situations, a strong, central background awareness of the Divine and its inseparable Presence in our daily life and consciousness, to practise the teachings of the holy Scriptures.

Blessed are the peacemakers. How can we make peace, if we have no love in our heart, if there is no understanding in our mind, if we are not good? Therefore, in order to make peace, to experience peace, to express peace, we should have a blameless heart of love, all-inclusive love, a love that is patient, a love that understands, a love that excludes no-one, a love that can make any sacrifices, a love that is sweet and gentle, that does not react, that does not condemn, that does not judge, that is all-wonderful. In such a love, the Presence of God can be felt. It is such a love that can make peace, experience peace.

We have to develop more and more of understanding and love in order to be true peacemakers. All the latent divine qualities of our inner nature have to come into increasing self-expression.

We are children of God, formed of Love, shaped by the all-sweet, all-beautiful Hand of God. Hatred in any form, injustice of any kind, violence of any type, should be altogether unknown to our inner nature. They are not necessary. Life can be enjoyed, enriched, and all its potentialities expressed without their need, without these negative qualities.

Perpetual Blessings from the Gift of an
Understanding Heart

An understanding heart is a perpetual blessing in daily life. The Grace of the Divine stimulates the rapid unfolding of the understanding heart. Understanding always emerges from within, more and more, as we use whatever degree of understanding is already visible on the surface. Understanding is always a gift of the inner divine Nature in us which is absolute understanding, infinite Knowledge, and can go on manifesting itself until the understanding within and without are equally boundless and are one without any distinction of inside and outside.

Understanding unfolds itself from the growing heart of love.

Supposing you are cutting an apple. By mistake, you cut a little of your finger too. Are you perturbed by that? Do you make a big alarm about it? Do you go about shouting at someone as a bad person? Certainly not. Quietly, calmly you try to doctor it a little and make the situation good. Supposing, by some error, or involuntarily, or by accident, or by some perverse feeling, thought, idea, someone harms us. If we are perturbed, if we make an alarm and shout at that person as a bad person, we lack understanding and love, we are reacting in a very human way, and the result is much harm to ourselves and to the other person. We cease to be peace-makers. But, if we are to be true to our essential nature which is infinite peace, if we are to be the peace-makers, then we should be full of understanding and should not react to situations and persons in the way an unregenerate common human nature does. Understanding dissolves the problem. We understand, we forgive, we adjust, we accommodate, and we make good everything in peace.

As we walk along in a big garden, we find an apple suddenly falls right on our head. We at once understand, and accommodate ourselves to the situation. Supposing the same apple falls on our head from someone's hand, we are bound to be angry. This is purely due to lack of understanding.

Even as when a little of our finger was cut through an error, we attended to it with great calmness and silence, the good person who is trying to practise the teachings of the holy Scriptures will be full of understanding, calmness and sweetness, though harmed, or injured, by others.

Life is No More Difficult when One is a Master of the Art It Is

Life is a grand art. Not all know this art; and therefore, they find life so difficult, so full of problems, discordances, disharmonies.

Supposing Joseph is walking in the forest. He has no umbrella. He is caught by heavy rain. He is completely drenched. Does he become angry, does he make an alarm? Does he shout at someone as a bad person? Certainly not. He understands the situation, returns to his home, changes his clothes. All is in order. Supposing Joseph is walking by a street. By some error, some lady from the third storey pours down water, and by accident, it falls right on Joseph. If Joseph has no understanding, no love, no goodness, he will be a great discord in himself, a sorrow to himself and others - he will shout at the third storey, and he would say, "You dirty person, why did you throw water on me?" He makes no peace, but only a war or a battle. But if he has some understanding, some love, some good intentions of making his life a song of true peace, power and happiness, he would certainly understand the situation and come back, change his clothes calmly, without complaining, without being disturbed. He would do just the same that he did when he was caught in the rains in the forest.

Life requires the constant employment of that power of understanding which resolves every difficult or challenging situation, even without touching it: dispels the darkness

from the events of life without wrestling or acting against it. However complex or baffling, or potentially painful the situation or the field of experience be, the experienter masters it with a little of understanding. Understanding presents the power of another point of view. It gives the strength that comes from seeing the situation from other angles, or integrally, or impersonally. By presenting other perspectives, understanding exalts man above all tumult, failure, resistance, distress, trials, ordeals and challenges. Even the greatest difficulty falls in its place of no-power, - or sometimes, usable consequence, - the moment understanding arises.

Problems emerge only when the understanding is blurred, or blocked in action, by a sudden outburst of negative emotions, the rise of pride, the assault from vanity, the attack of an overpowering jealousy, the distorting prejudice, the errors of quick judgement and impatience. Difficulties and the not unoften consequence of frustration, defeat and despair, are offshoots of an uncontrolled human nature, the lower urges and tendencies not yet uplifted and transformed by the pursuit of some noble aim, some liberating virtue, some illuminating ideal, some integrating and joy-giving goal, some all-inclusive Value.

Specially in these days of excessive noise, too many distractions, nerve-breaking activities and pleasures, life demands, at every turn, much understanding. Where there is understanding, there we rule life and remain the peace-makers, and also a source of lasting happiness to ourselves and to others. Through such an understanding that colours, touches and transforms all aspects of life, the divine nature which is deep in the Image of God in us, seeks to express itself more and more.

Yes, it is difficult in the beginning stages of our growth in understanding, to practise the teachings of the holy Scriptures literally. But, try from where you are, to proceed further on. Persevere in your onward movement. A day will arrive when you will be a glorious fulfilment of the teachings of the holy Scriptures.

Begin the journey to increasing and lasting happiness,
right from where you are, and with whatever equipment
you already have, however little that be

A child cannot be expected to read a big book on science and understand everything. It has to begin right from the place it occupies on the scale of learning. It must begin from the alphabet. One day, it arrives at a stage of educational training where it is in a position to understand this great book of science. Therefore, let us begin living the teachings of the holy Scriptures, right from the stage of inner growth we are in, and to the extent possible. This will lead us to a higher stage, and widen and deepen the extent of our practice of the teachings of the holy Scriptures.

Whatever goodness, understanding, patience, inner light we have, could be constantly brought into operation. Whatever be the degree to which we possess virtues, we can start constantly exercising them, at every point of our complex daily life. One day, we become the living embodiments of the spirit and the light treasured in the holy Scriptures.

No Place in our Life for Hatred and Dislike

Love is natural to us. However much we may cover it by our outer psychological and emotional imperfections, it emerges again and again. Instinctively we choose love above other things, we admire it, enjoy its blessings, perceive its power and value. Even those who think that they have killed all love from their hearts and are totally covered over with a persistingly cruel or wrong nature, have their moments when love makes insistent demands on their better nature, and seeks to alter the individual. Hatred and dislike are unnatural to us. They are foreign to us and quite unnecessary for an efficient conducting of life's daily business and affairs. They do not belong to us; they should have no place in our nature, thought, conduct, life.

Love does not need to conquer anything by any means, in any circumstances; for, in itself it is its own reward, ever-triumphant success, perpetual fulfilment. It is master of itself, and therefore, of everything. It does not impose on anyone its own will, nor does it command things. Royal by its very nature, it rules everything, silently, unnoticed, and by enriching, exalting, ennobling everything.

The sun does not hate darkness. It just is, and the darkness disappears under the weight of its own strength, automatically. Love does not need to hate or dislike anything. It has only to be, and everything that is discordant, ugly, bad or unhappy stands back, or moves away from Love automatically. Sometimes, the Love has not yet grown mature and strong, and is not adequate, and therefore, ugliness, badness, unhappy situations, persist for a longer period. Calmly, gently, go on growing in Love, and everything that is not in harmony with all that is noble, great, divine, of Love and of Light, moves away from you, and you shine without obstacles, obstructions, oppositions. The atmosphere around you, the very air you carry, should be always unassailably rooted in Love, understanding, peace.

A mother who loves her little children, does not seek to impose herself upon them, does not try to rule them, does not expect something from them. She loves them because she is overcome by love. That love is a joy in itself. It is never begging. It is wonderful. There is God in it. But the moment the cloud of any kind of limitations comes in, the troubles start; there is no peace, no happiness, no beauty, no harmony. Therefore, let us try to live the teachings of the holy Scriptures right from the stage of development in which we are.

In order to be peace-makers, we have to possess peace, we have to have peace in ourselves; and we cannot have peace in ourselves unless there is love and understanding in us, unless there is trust and faith in the infinite Power, Grace, Beauty, Joy that God is.

In the above instances, it was shown how we could develop understanding, and conquer life's difficult situations. Joseph's boss in the office shouts at him, "You are an unwise man!" Joseph is furious. He talks nonsense about his boss all over the city. He makes great alarm. To anyone he can converse with, he speaks of the faults of his boss that are non-existent. He makes too much discord and disharmony.

Supposing Joseph is full of understanding, and has some love in his heart. He, at once, understands the situation, and that understanding makes him calm, and that calmness gives him a new light, a light in which he sees that his own mind has a thousand times told him that he is not only unwise, but most of the time a foolish person. When his own mind accused him a thousand times, by the statement that he is unwise and foolish, he kept quiet, he was peaceful, he did not blame anyone, he made no discord anywhere, he did not go about shouting. But the moment the boss says, "You are an unwise person", he is furious. This is characteristic of a man who lacks understanding and love. Such a person cannot make peace in the world.

People are easily hurt by the unkind words from others,
but are not offended when their own mind addresses them
with far more unkind words

Joseph knows himself to be an unkind person. His own better self has told him a thousand times that he is a very unkind person, and every time the better self in him accused him, he did not scold himself, reproach himself, he did not go about making a discordance and a noise. But, if his wife says that he is an unkind person, he is furious, he loses his temperament, he makes an unhappy scene.

Supposing he has understanding. There would be peace, and if he were peaceful, he would see that his own mind has said a thousand times that he is an unkind person, and therefore, there is no need to be annoyed about it when it comes from someone else's mind. There should be only thankfulness and gratitude.

In this manner, we find in life many situations which are fraught with discord, but there is no reason for the existence of such discord there.

Life is a wonderful art. Where there is love and understanding, this art grows visible, and is automatically, naturally, used.

Reflecting upon the examples so far given, let us try to see that our life blooms everyday more and more in love, understanding, and thus qualifies us for a practice of the teachings of the holy Scriptures which results in the experience of the Perfections of God.

There is no reason, in any difficult circumstance, to lose temper, or to be violent, or to be unjust, or to judge. Everything resolves itself the moment we are calm under the impact of love and understanding. Order things with almost boundless, unseen, inner calmness, even if you have to preserve on the surface a show of anger or a scene of harmless, non-injurious judgement.

To the problem of life, a true practice of the teachings of the holy Scriptures is a solution. Wisdom which is another name for understanding and love, resolves many problems, makes life peaceful, happy, beautiful, blessed, - and we are living on earth in order to enjoy happiness, peace, love, light, beauty. These qualities in their infinitude, are resident in us. Like the plant emerging from the seed with all its beautiful leaves and flowers, so

the Divinity with all its grand qualities will emerge from us. Our life finds its happiness in the boundless Light, Love and Grace of God.

In spirit and truth, and from the deeps of our heart, let us pour upon earth, upon mankind, Love, Honey, Light. Let this be our central inner activity, and all our other outer activities will adjust themselves, will be ordered by the Hand of God. Let us breathe peace in all directions. There is no need, no cause, no condition requiring or demanding fear from us. Fear, anxiety, restlessness are signs or indications of an imperfect inner state. They are unknown to a nature uplifted by a strong sense of God's Omnipotence, Love, Abundance, surrounding it. They are present where there is no love, no faith, no understanding, no wisdom, no goodness; or, in other words, they are present where there is less love, less understanding, less faith, less goodness.

The best way of dispelling these dark factors would be to develop the positive qualities. Let us give ourselves the happiness of being the peace-makers in the world. No matter who the other person is, let our heart bless him. Enter no house without wishing it peace. Take no breath in, without at the same time inhaling the Presence and Blessings of God.

You are made, formed, by God. All around you, within you, above you He is present with His Grace and Love. There is no need for disturbance, or fear, or anxiety. Everything is working in your favour. Everything will be wonderful. Keep yourself in love, peace, understanding, wisdom, and you will witness God expressing Himself through your daily life, more and more.

There is already the mind of a Sage in each of you. It must express itself. The measure to which it manifests itself depends upon your sincerity and earnestness to allow it to express itself.

Let us try our best to manifest our strength, our light, and whatever is positive in us in an ever-increasing measure. Let our presence be a joy and an inspiration, a peace and a blessing to the very earth we tread on.

In the world there are no enemies, there are no troubles, no disturbances, if only you have understanding, if you have love, wisdom, faith, trust - trust in the Reality, trust in the Truth, trust that is Love, that is Peace, that is Happiness, that is Fulfilment, that is eternal Life. All are ours, all are good, and will be good to you. Wait and see. Order your house first. See that there is goodness in yourself. If there is, and if it is growing more and more, all the world is yours. If there is love in you, all the world is lovable, and all will come to you loving. And if someone continues hating you, denouncing you and scandalizing you, wait and see, be patient and understanding. Withdraw not from them your love and your goodness. Wonders will happen. Preserve yourself in this state of consciousness. You are a light of God. Let your life be in harmony with this truth that there is in you the Breath, the Image, the Spirit of God.

Conquest of Death

Death can neither be postponed, nor avoided by the search for the philosopher's stone, or by the obtainment of elixir from the alchemists, or by the possession of mightiest armies without, or by the obtainment of many inner psychic powers. It is fully conquered only by a dynamic and dominating knowledge of the imperishable Truth within. This Truth is the infinite Life, Peace, Joy, Power, Perfection. They are masters of death who know and experience this Truth.

- Swami Omkarananda