

How to Divinise all Our Daily Work - Swami Omkarananda

Before we consider the possibilities of turning all our daily work into a divine activity, let us gain a better idea and a deeper knowledge of Godhead, and of our relations to It.

The Nature of God and the Character of our Relations to Him

The world of infinite Perfection, Power, Light and Peace, named God, is not far away. It is interpenetrating this world of our everyday experience. The very chair whereon I am seated, is full of the perfections and the splendours of the Divine. Time, space, the many things that we experience through the senses, are non-existent in the internal divine experience. The dimensionless Dimension of infinite divine Consciousness into which we can at any time rise is the only Reality; it is the only Perfection, the only real, unlimited and everlasting Peace. It is there that there is all knowledge. It is there that all power is present. The powers, the energies and the play of all forms of force that we see in the physical world, in relation to God, the Supreme Power, are like the fire painted in a picture, ineffective and inconsequential.

This Being of infinite Perfection encountered by our inner Intelligence everywhere in the universe, is the foundation of all our thinking and experience. Experience of any kind is posterior to Consciousness. Without Consciousness, no experience is possible. Wherever we may be, if only our active consciousness is liberated from the limitations of the mind and the space-time experiences, then we are suddenly released into the experience of the timeless, spaceless, all-perfect Divinity, here and now.

Since the whole world, this entire physical universe open to our sense-experience, is interpenetrated by the Divine, right here and now, we can melt our inner being into an experience of the infinite divine Consciousness.

God is an all-perfect, all-seeing, all-conscious Reality. He is the source and the ground of all forms of life, knowledge, perfection. An unlimited and all-encompassing ecstasy and peace possess us the moment we contact this Godhead in our inner Consciousness.

A state of inner illuminated Consciousness within us is the basis from which we have to touch, know, experience Godhead. Build up this state of inner Consciousness by growth in love, in wisdom, in the disciplines of mind, heart, will, senses and other faculties of knowing and experiencing.

God is not one of the physical objects among millions of physical objects that can be seen with the physical eyes and touched with the physical hands. He is more than all these physical objects. He is infinitely more than everything that we can think, feel, know and experience. In fact, it is with the aid of His Light that our physical eyes see. It is with the aid of His Consciousness that our internal intelligence operates. It is the fact of the Presence of His infinite Delight in our inner being, that is the cause for our restless search

for happiness externally. It is because His infinite Perfection is lodged in our inner Consciousness, that there is a restless search in our hearts for Perfection. It is because His immortal Life is enshrined in the hearts of all, that there is in all beings a shrinking away from death, a longing for immortality.

It is His Presence that accounts for human excellences. It is His Presence in a woman that expresses itself as her charm, grace, beauty. If this divine Consciousness is withdrawn from her, she is no more than a corpse. It is His Presence in all beings that is responsible for, and is the basis of, all intelligent activity. The highest perceptions of the philosophers, the artistic intuitions of the great artists, the intellectual activity in the greatest scientists, are the faint expressions of this all-knowing Consciousness dwelling in all beings.

This Consciousness is intensely present at every point of the universe, and in everything. This physical table, these physical objects, and the many beings around, are purely objects of mental experience in a space-time universe. These experiences are absent in the state of inner divine Consciousness.

When we elevate our mind into higher states and conditions of inner spiritual consciousness, either under the pressure of an uncontrollable and all-consuming love for God or by a fiery knowledge of the Divine, or under the stress and force of special meditation and contemplation, it is dissolved into the divine Consciousness, and we have a direct knowledge of things.

We become identical with the consciousness in the flower and in the table, in the stone and in the stars. We achieve and effectuate an inner identity with the divine Consciousness in all beings. This is Godhead, an infinite, unlimited, all-perfect Consciousness. It is transcendent yet immanent in all beings; it is not only the supra-cosmic Entity, but also the cosmic Being.

The perfection of this Godhead is absolute and therefore the rise and fall, the birth and death of the worlds make no impression upon, and do not affect, it. Even a little reflection everyday upon the nature of this Godhead exerts upon us a very purifying and chastening influence. It liberates and illuminates our mind; it pours into us a rare strength and grants us a new peace. It gives us the widest perspective on life. The horizons of our living recede and we have a sense of freedom, peace, joy.

In order that we may better understand our relations with this Godhead, let us take an example. There is a nine-months old baby in the womb of a mother. This baby has life; in the womb it grows; it draws its nourishment through the umbilical cord from the mother. The baby in the womb of its mother has an organic, intimate, immediate relationship with its mother. An inseparable and complete relation subsists between them. Exactly so, we are all in the womb of God. Everywhere, within us, around us, it is all God's infinite and all-sustaining Energy and Consciousness, and the umbilical cord that sustains and nourishes us and that connects us with the Godhead is, at no time, under no circumstances, cut off. We are in the Godhead; we are being maintained by His immortal

Breath and timeless Spirit; and our relations with God are as organic, as intimate, as immediate, as direct, as complete, as the relation of the baby to its mother in whose womb it is.

If we can only bear this idea in our mind, and never forget this truth of truths concerning our relations with God and the immediacy with which we are related to Him, then, not only all of our work but the whole of our life become uplifted, energised and illuminated. We begin to express something of the peace of Godhead, something of the Power of Godhead, something of the fearlessness which can belong only to the omnipotent Being, something of that calm dignity and inner power of Love that could be attributed only to the omniscient and omnipresent Being.

This dynamic, though concealed, intimate and organic relationship between man and God which I have sought to present to you with the aid of an illustration, is an exact picture and constitutes the central truth of truths; this inner spiritual connection between man and God is infinitely more real than the world that we experience through the senses here on earth. In fact we could say, from a higher standpoint, that this is the only truth, and all other truths do not subsist.

Therefore, remember, we are in the infinite all-powerful, all-creative, all-sustaining womb of the Supreme Godhead. So are the stars, the birds, the beasts, the trees and the plants in the womb of the Godhead. Nothing has any existence outside this central Reality.

Since the whole world - that is the field of our striving and empirical experience - is in God, and since all of us are in God, and God is in all of us, the attainment of divine Perfection by the experience of God becomes possible for each of us; peace, joy, perfection, in their absoluteness, are attainable; immortality can be gained; and the possibility of being as perfect as God does not only subsist but is inescapable.

With this little introduction, treating of the nature of God, and our relations to Him, we shall now explore the many possibilities of making our work divine.

Divinisation of Work, by a Knowledge of God,
in the Background of our Thinking and Feeling

When, in the background of our thinking and feeling, there is a constant knowledge or memory of the nature of God and a constant awareness of our inalienable and inseparable relations with Him, naturally, all our work becomes divine.

When we go to work with the thought of God and draw that work into our thought of God, into our consciousness of God, it becomes divine.

Divinisation of Work by Mantra-Repetition

When all our manual work is accomplished by a practice like the Mantra repetition, or a constant mental repetition of the names of God, or something that could put us in relations, or touch, with God, then this work becomes divine.

Divinisation of Work by Acquisition of Divine Knowledge

When we are conscious that the energies that execute the work through our hands are not our energies, do not belong to us but to God, our work becomes divine.

We must not forget the truth that these energies are energies of the universal, divine Being. They are universally distributed to all beings. They are not restricted to us. They are not personal and peculiar to us alone.

The hand that moves here and the hand that writes elsewhere share a common energy and are moved by a common energy. This common energy is an emanation of Godhead. It belongs to God; God is in it.

It is purely by the egoistic feeling, and by the sense of separateness that we identify ourselves with these universal, extra-personal, independent energies in our hands. This is ignorance. This is the cause of our limitations. This cuts us off from God in our mental and sense experience. This must go. A right knowledge must come, the knowledge that the energies which we use through our physical limbs are not ours, but are of God. And so long as these energies are working in us and working through our limbs, God is present in them.

Divinisation of Work by Recognition of God as the real Doer of all Works

The real Doer is God, not we. We are empty, dry, feeble reeds; God's energising Consciousness renders us vibrant and active; our ego deceives us into thinking that we are vibrant and active in our own right and with an independent, individual strength which, in truth, is nonexistent.

When we are conscious of the fact that the real Doer is God, then ego recedes; the little self is dissolved; the petty self-arrogating intelligence is put aside; we become wonderful channels for God's work

Whatever may be the work we are called to execute let us remember, the executing energies are from God, are of God and therefore the moment we are conscious of this fact, our work is divinised. In this way we have to grow conscious of God's Presence through His own energies that constitute and execute all our outer activities, as also all our internal activities.

The Phenomenon of Any Activity in the Universe is a Function of God's Universal Forces

The beats of our heart are kept up by His energies; the circulation of the blood in us is an unceasing work of His energies; the functions of intelligence in us are the functions of His energies. There is nothing that really belongs to us.

If we are reflective and thoughtful, if we are sensible and wise, we discover the truth that God is active everywhere. Purify and sharpen the mental powers that perceive the operations of God's Energies everywhere in creation.

Be just a little reflective, calm, wise, perceptive, and you will clearly see that you are not breathing of your own free choice, but breathing is happening to you, and that you did not choose the time and the first breath, nor will you be able to draw just another breath when the time of your life fixed by the Hand of God is over. You have no independence even in so simple an act as breathing. If you do not want to breathe, you will be compelled to breathe. Your attempt to gain independence of breathing is instantly punishable by the death of the physical body.

Let us not boast we have freedom on every side; we have not. God alone has true and complete freedom and we have it only to the extent we establish conscious relations with God. It is God's Breath we breathe. Let us recognize this.

When you were born, you did not choose the size and shape of your nose, nor did your mother select your face and sex. And you have no power to postpone your aging process and the hour of physical death. It is not by your choosing and at your command that the most intricate mechanism of your body is functioning.

At every turn we see God's marvelous Energies and Laws operative. All that man can do is not to interfere with their fine and automatic operatives and thus cause himself harm.

Divinisation of Work by Dynamic Philosophical Reflection

When Thomas kicks a football, it would, if it had consciousness and ego, delude itself into thinking that it is flying of its own force or moving by its own free volition. The truth is that it has been set in fast motion by Thomas' kick. In the same way, all the energies that are operative in and through the universe and our own bodies, are set in action and movement by the all-creative and all-sustaining Being of God. It requires a disciplined scientific intelligence to discern this fact. It needs calming the mind and allowing the higher powers of perception to act in order that we may clearly see this truth, this phenomenon.

That truth we do not perceive on account of our egoistic sense, the separative tendency in us, the ignorance which deceives us into feeling that we are separated from all other beings, from the universe, from God, the ignorance that hypnotises us into thinking that we are the body we dwell in, the mind we use, the will-power we exercise, and nothing more. This ignorance must go if we are to grow conscious of God's self-expression through us. If we are to be the conscious channels for the perfect workings of God's

Consciousness and Energy, we should conquer the ignorance that is interfering with, and introducing imperfections into, His workings.

This knowledge is very essential for divinisation of all our activities. The moment we have this knowledge, this most disturbing factor that the ego is, is silenced and we begin to work with a sense of freedom, with untiring energies that pour themselves into us as we are more and more deeply conscious of God's Presence and Activity.

Factors that Determine the Divine or Undivine Nature of our Work

Behind all our works, it is the Love or its absence, the Wisdom or its absence, the Faith or its absence, the spirit of dedication to the Omnipresent Godhead or its absence, the cheerful and noble disposition of mind or its absence, that makes our works divine or undivine.

Therefore, actions as such are neither divine nor undivine. It is the divine or the undivine spirit and intention behind them, that renders them divine or undivine. It is the way in which we react to works that makes works or the way of working, divine or undivine.

A pessimistic philosopher like Schopenhauer might look at the wondrous starlit sky and dismiss it as a sad sight. Another philosopher like Immanuel Kant might find in it the presence, or the evidence for the existence, of God. Therefore, it is in the attitude that everything rests. Our vision, our spirit, our outlook, our view, our motive, our intention, - these settle the nature of our work.

Divinisation of Work by a Divine Attitude

The nature of our work depends on the nature of our inner attitude. If we take a divine attitude then all our activities are rendered divine. If we are conscious of God, if we feel convinced of the truth that all our energies, our abilities, our capacities, belong to God, and if we discern the truth that, in our activity, it is His activity that is taking place, then, naturally, our action becomes divine. We begin to perform the action without personal preference, without being affected by the conditions in which it has to be executed and without being troubled by eagerness for the better results of that work. This way of doing all works is a grand art in itself. This way is vivified and illuminated by the knowledge of God. Our actions must be governed by divine knowledge, prompted by divine love, impelled by our faith in God. When we work with Knowledge, with Love, with Faith, our Work becomes divine.

Divinisation of Work by a Preliminary Prayer and Meditation

In moments of real prayer and meditation our mind is exalted into planes of peace and light. After that if we engage ourselves in some work the peace and the light that we experienced and possessed during the moments of prayer and meditation is infused into that work. Therefore, that work becomes divine.

A persisting sense of God's omnipresence, a living conviction that God is omniscient and knows everything about us, a powerful inner acknowledgment that God is omnipotent, all-merciful, all-protecting, and therefore, our concern, our anxiety, our worry about anything and any work are unnecessary - these are essential conditions for divinisation of our daily work.

Divinisation of Activities Pertaining to our Personal Wellbeing

Whatever may be our work, whether it be dressing ourselves or having a bath or sweeping the carpets or typing something, - it must be done in the name of God, for the glory of God, with the feeling and conviction that it is being done for God, as an adoration of God, with the energies that belong to God and over which we have no right, no ownership, no claim, except in our total ignorance, in our self-conceit, and in our self-arrogating consciousness.

If this divine manner of doing all our works continues and persists for several years, we will be divine personalities.

When we take food, if we do so with a feeling that we are giving it to God within our inner heart, and that this is a delightful duty given us, in order that we may sustain and maintain these temples of God that our bodies are, then the act of eating which we share in common with all the animals becomes a sacrament, and would be a means of our adoration of God. It ceases to be an animal function, becomes more than human, a divine service.

When all the works of our daily life are done in the same way, then naturally they will be completely divine, and not only be a means of our approach to increasing God-experience, but also a way of our expressing God's Presence, Peace, Joy, Consciousness.

Divinisation of Household-Work

It is not difficult to divinise even so simple an act as sweeping the carpet. When we sweep the carpet, let us do so with the feeling that it belongs to God, that our sweeping is a joy we give to ourselves for the sake of God, that by that sweeping we are executing a duty we owe to God, in cleanliness that is next to godliness, that, in truth, we are not the users of the carpet, but God Himself uses it through us. When there is such an inner knowledge and understanding, all our works become divine.

Divinisation of Business Work

When you go to your shop for managing the business there, if you do so in the name of God, for the sake of God, for the glory of God, and as a divine duty that you execute in order to maintain your family, or yourself and to keep the business world going and use the intervals between business for withdrawing into yourself for a few moments prayer or

meditation, then that business becomes divine and a means of your worship of God. In this manner there are a number of ways by which we could divinise all the activities of our everyday life.

All Works are Equally Divine

The work of cutting wood in the forest, or sweeping streets in the town, is in no way less dignified, noble, and divine, than the work of an immortal poet. Both are works, and either of them could therefore be done with that spirit, that background knowledge, that faith and love, that inner awareness which makes of it a real worship, a way of the growth of the higher nature in us, a method for the manifestation of the higher qualities in our being, an exercise for the expansion of our inner consciousness. The former work could be as good a channel for our rapid spiritual evolution, our experience of God, as the latter one.

Divinisation of Work by Cultivation of our Spiritual Nature

Whatever may be the work that is assigned to us, if we accept it without complaint, without any kind of bitterness or perverse feeling, without excitement or passionate interest, with that calmness and that dignity that are in consonance with a noble nature, if we accept it for the glory of God and execute it, perform it from states of inner inspiration and enthusiasm, with no respect to the consequences and results, with no anxiety over the possible failures, with no attacks from the ever-disturbing and perverting ego, with no disturbances, or interference, from the little self, we are bound to find that work a source of joy and strength and a means of spiritual unfoldment and perfection.

Whatever may be the work, if we do it with the feeling that we are not the real actors, but the universal energies of God in us, and therefore God is the real actor and we are only channels for the workings of His energies - and with an inner vigilance and alertness that keeps out any egoistic or selfish factor, any self-arrogating principle, it becomes divine and a means of our inner Enlightenment and Liberation.

Therefore, constantly, we have to keep our intelligence vigilant, our discriminative power sharp, our spirit bright, and our being illuminated by divine knowledge. It is by such disciplines that we can escape from being trapped by the snares of the ego and the little self, and perform our works neither under the influence of gloom and half-heartedness, nor under passion, nor pride, nor greed, nor any such dark human force. The attitude that governs us, the motives and knowledge that animate our being, form the character of our actions.

Divinisation of Breathing and Sleeping

Even breathing can be made divine and a way of worshipping God. Our inhalation becomes divine when we inhale with the mental repetition of a Mantra, or a divine name, such as Krishna, or Om. Our retention of breath becomes divine when accompanied by mental repetition of the Mantra. Our exhalation becomes divine when we release the

breath with the mental repetition of a Mantra. When we know that breathing is a universal phenomenon, a function shared by all living beings around the world, and therefore a divine function, a function sustained by the Will of God, our act of breathing becomes divine.

Sleeping becomes divine, when we feel that sleep is a gift of God and that we are sleeping not so much on the bed as upon the lap of God's all-merciful, all-powerful, all-loving Presence. Feeling is everything; feel aright, divinely. Thinking is everything; think aright, divinely. Sleep aright, divinely.

Divinisation of Social Works and Medical Service

Now the question is, are those people who are devoted to great social work and those others who are working, day and night, in hospitals, doing divine work? Are those people engaged in benevolent, philanthropic and charitable works, doing divine work? The answer is in the negative. All these works are in themselves not divine, but can be made divine. They can be given the right foundation in divine knowledge and executed with that spirit which renders them divine.

Our work in the hospital can become divine only when we are conscious of God in the patients, of God's Presence in ourselves, of God's executive powers functioning through the intelligence and energies entrusted to us. It becomes divine only when it proceeds from our self-surrender to God's immediate Presence, Power, Perfection, when our work is not burdened by an egoistic sense, not rendered impure by our pride in our intelligence, strength, capacities, skill, equipment. That work in the hospital becomes divine when we do it in our love of God, with joy in our eyes, with peace in our mind, with the faith in our heart that we are doing it for God, and that God is doing the work through us. In the absence of the fulfillment of these conditions, whether it is our hospital work or social work, or any kind of philanthropic work, it will be nothing more than a soulless moral or ethical work. Therefore, the conditions under which our work becomes divine should always be borne in mind.

God is All-Seeing and All-Knowing - Every Thought and Every Act of our Life is Immediately Known to Him.

It is a common deception and a common illusion with man to think that God is not seeing him at all times, and in all circumstances, because he is himself unable to see God. It is an ignorance and a delusion on the part of man to think that God is not hearing him always just because his own limitations do not permit him to hear God. Around each of us there are millions of eyes of God, watching each of us. Millions of television-pictures concerning us are flashed across the universe. That supra-scientific Being that is God, flashes knowledge concerning us all over the cosmos, and in all planes of existence. We can do no action without being noticed by God; in fact, God is right in the energies ensouling that action and is Himself that which is beyond and above those energies. We can think no thought without God registering it; in fact, God is right in the Consciousness behind the mind that thinks, and is yet Himself all-transcending.

He is the timeless, yet every moment Witness of everything that is happening in our mind, heart and in the field of our experience. Let us recognize this. Let us live in the light of this knowledge which is the Knowledge of, and above, all knowledge. It is then that our lives become points of divine perfection. It is then that we would find that we become wonderful expressions of God's Consciousness. It is then that, though living in the imperfections of the human bodies, we will, in truth, be living in the perfections of God's infinite Nature and Consciousness.

While Living and Working in the World,
Something of our Inner Being Can Be in God - Consciousness

In this group one person may be mentally now living in his house; another person may be mentally absent from this place and walking in the streets; so, internally, in thought, they are elsewhere, though their bodies are present here. In the same way, though our bodies are living, moving here on earth, our inner being will be in the world of God-Consciousness. This blessed state has to be attained. It is then that our lives would be on the road to perfect and absolute fulfillment.

Conditions in which our Works and our
Life Become Divine

All our works and all our life become divine when our heart is afire with Devotion, when our nature is enlivened by Love and Faith, when our intelligence is rendered radiant with aspiration, and there is something in our consciousness, in our heart, that constantly longs for a richer and richer knowledge of God, a closer and yet closer experience of the perfection of God. From our inner being telegrams must be constantly issued to God; all in us must constantly long to put itself in touch with His Powers and His Perfections.

Attainment of Final Beatitude through the Persistent
Practice of the Disciplines for the Divinisation of all our
Works and our Being

If we persist in these inner spiritual activities for a long time, for months and years, all those impulses and impurities, all those ignorant feelings and imperfections which tie us to the pettiness of the earth and the body, which completely trap us in a thousand errors and limitations, - will be broken, and the energies in them, along with the being within us, would be liberated into the infinity of God's Peace, Joy, Power. And the supra-intellectual, super-aesthetic and entirely spiritual qualities of the supreme Divinity would be, for us, the sole and living realities in our daily life.

- Swami Omkarananda