

Swami Omkarananda

Cosmic Consciousness



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All is God

The truth of truths consists in the fact that everywhere whatever we see, whatever we experience, whatever we feel is nothing but God Himself. Seen from the standpoint of spiritual experience, even those conditions, things, which seem to be diametrically opposed to the nature of God, are God Himself. From the standpoint of the experience of God as the Infinite, the world does not consist of a diversity of things. There is only one Thing, the marvellous, indescribable, all-creative, all-beautiful Consciousness. This infinite, absolute Consciousness called God, who alone is the One without a second, can be experienced, but not by the physical senses.



Instruments of Knowledge

Physical senses are capacitated to experience a physical world. Can we touch the feelings of any person with our hand? Can we see the thoughts in the mind of someone else, through the physical eyes? Certainly not. Physical senses experience purely a physical and material world. In order to know the feelings in another heart, we have to use the capacities of our emotional being and the heart within us. In order to know the kind of thoughts that would be crossing another individual, we have to use the psychological capacities in us. In order to experience God everywhere, or in order to experience the world and the many things as they are in themselves, in their essential being, the physical senses and capacities are of no avail, nor will our psychological and emotional capacities and powers be in a position to assist us experience it. Mind is helpless to behold the face of God, and any power that is in the mind is therefore also incapable of helping us either seeing God or seeing the world and the universe as they are in themselves.



The Capacity in us for God-Experience

Therefore, the only capacity that could help us experience God everywhere, is the higher Consciousness in us. By Consciousness, we have to see God. With the Consciousness that is liberated from the limitations of the physical senses and the mind, we have to behold, experience, God everywhere. By the Self in us, by the Consciousness in us, by the God in us, we see God everywhere, the Self everywhere, the Consciousness everywhere.

God, who is absolute, can be seen in His absoluteness only by God in us. God can be known only by God in us. God is to be known by experience of God, and God can be experienced only by God in us.

A limited sense, an instrument of knowledge that is limited in its power, cannot have an experience of the Unlimited. Our five senses are limited. Our mind is limited. Therefore, the senses and the mind can report to us only of a world which is itself limited. All the realities that lie beyond the means and the capacities of these physical and mental senses in us, escape our notice and our experience.



The Saints who Saw God with their Physical Eyes

The question then is, „How about saints who have seen God through their physical eyes?" Before they could see God in that manner, they had, by discipline day after day, month after month, year after year, life after life, broken the limitations of the sense-experiences, rendered their whole psychological and emotional being so pure, so radiant, that the divine Consciousness within could burst into self-expression. Before they could see God outside,

they had already seen God in themselves, put God inside themselves. They have taken the Image of God into themselves. Their hearts have become playgrounds for the feet of God. Their minds had for years constantly exercised themselves on the phenomena and the reality of God.

By a total and radical transformation of their inner nature, by killing the mind, that is to say, by exceeding its limitations, by making the mind no more a mind, by making the heart no more a heart, - that is, no more a playground of earthly emotions, anger and passion, jealousy and limited love, - they had made the inner conditions ready for the operation of, the working of the higher Consciousness, with the result the unlimited Love in their higher divine spiritual Consciousness, the unlimited and unconditioned Light in their inner divine Consciousness, these two powers peeped through their physical eyes, and experienced God without. Therefore, it was not their physical eyes as such that could see God. It is the unlimited love for God, and the unconditioned light within their inner Consciousness, that became the all-sufficient instruments of knowledge and experience, and helped their physical eyes behold God everywhere. The God in them, in fact, saw the God without them. It is an Emperor, not the peasant, who has access to another Emperor.

The limited love in our hearts cannot know God. The limited knowledge in us, the limited purity in us, the limited faith in us, cannot touch God. These have to be rendered unlimited. Limited love, limited faith, limited knowledge, form our first steps. They help us make a beginning.

The Godhead who is everywhere, who discloses Himself to us as being everywhere, at all times, in all places, timelessly, has to be approached through the higher powers of Consciousness in us.



The Steps

1. Inner Purity and Transformation help Manifest the Higher Powers of Consciousness

These higher powers of Consciousness come into self-expression, when the inner nature becomes more and more pure and transformed. The purity and the transformatory process within us can so prepare the inner being in us, that at once the Godhead, the Reality, the Truth, the infinite Consciousness which is concealed in all these universal forms, - in nature, in the world, in all beings, - discloses itself.

There are many ways by which we could arrive at this Consciousness more quickly.

Cosmic Consciousness is one status of divine Experience. Beyond it, there is the Transcendental Consciousness. At the stage of Transcendental Consciousness, we are withdrawn into the Heart and Being of the Supreme Godhead.

At the level of Cosmic Consciousness, we are conscious of the Divine Being in all nature, in the entire cosmos. In Cosmic Consciousness, we have an all-absorbing experience of the Divinity in nature, in the universes, in all things.



2. Training our Capacities to Yield Higher Experiences, a Wider and Larger Field

In order that we may break the limitations of the physical senses, of the mental senses, of the emotional capacities, we have slowly to train every one of these capacities, in a way that they yield wider, greater, and larger experiences. A heart to which it is natural and easy to love its family members, may be slowly trained to love the birds, the beasts and other beings. And from there on, it can be slowly trained to love the sun, the moon, the ocean, the

stars, and nature. Slowly, from there on, it can be further trained to discover the Godhead in all the material universe, in the animal kingdom, in the human kingdom.

The mind which is accustomed to see only what is given it as facts or truths by education, culture, society, must be slowly taught to see that there are hundreds and thousands of truths concerning which the physical senses have no knowledge. And from there, the mind must be slowly trained to perceive that there is one common Life in all things, that there is one common Consciousness in all that is created; that there is one universal divine Light and Life in all that is formed and brought into existence whether it is material or non-material.

From there on, it must be trained to look at itself in relation to the Infinite, the Absolute, the Unconditioned, the supreme Godhead.

These are some of the steps for expansion of the inner being, and the divinisation of the inner nature. This training of the mind and heart is essential because it is by such a training alone that they can be transformed, and the limitations in which they are lodged are exceeded and transcended.

If the children are not taught that the world is round, and not flat, they are bound to mistake the world for a flat surface. In the same way, if our minds are not to mistake the world as a purely material manifestation, they have to be taught the fact that the whole world is aglow with God's Consciousness, is a manifestation of God in God. Even as the children who are taught that the world is round and not flat, will have a confirmation of the truth that the world is round, from their own experience, the minds that are taught to know that the whole world is a manifestation of God in God, will later on by their own experience discover this truth.



3. Illuminating the Mind with Spiritual Truths

Therefore this is another step: constant instruction of the mind, or constant education of the mind, or constant storing of the mind with the spiritual truths discovered and experienced by the greatest philosophers, saints, sages, and others.

Along with these three steps, there is the training of the heart that includes in its love a greater and greater number of persons and things, the disciplines of the mind which enable it to see and recognise and experience higher reality, the storing of our conscious awareness, everyday conscious mind with facts, truths discovered by greatest men of God-Consciousness, Cosmic Consciousness and so on.

These are the three steps out of the many steps which will slowly lead us to Cosmic Consciousness, and from there on to the Transcendental Consciousness.



4. Purification of Nature

In this process of inner growth and spiritual development, one other important step consists in an attempt to purify the nature, so that the higher powers in us can function unimpeded, and unobstructed.

For instance, a Catholic lawyer has to argue a very important case in the court. He is a fanatic who hates all Protestants. He has a big quarrel with his Protestant neighbour. His heart is disturbed and full of resentment and disturbances, and fire of hatred for that person. With such a disturbed heart and mind, he will not be able to argue his case in the court so well as to win it. In order to ensure success in advocating his case, he has to put away from his heart and mind every emotion and thought which is not relevant to this case. This process of keeping away the things, or forgetting everything, and concentrating exclusively on the points related to the case, is a kind of purificatory process. In order that we may evolve rapidly, we have to eliminate from our life whatever is nonessential, useless, and in the nature of an impediment,

an obstruction. The obstructions or obstacles to our spiritual development are not always external. They are there right in ourselves. They emerge from the lower nature, the human nature, and therefore it is here that the transformation has to take place. This transformation is one of the steps.

The more pure is our inner nature, the more brilliant our intelligence, the more sharp the capacities and the powers of our inner Consciousness, the more the sensitiveness to the Divine Presence.



5. Generating a Constant Sense of God's Presence

We move to the fifth discipline. In the fifth discipline, we have to generate a constant sense of God's Presence. Before we qualify ourselves for a direct experience of God as He is in Himself, before all that is limited and all that is obstructing such an experience of God is broken, or exceeded, or transcended, we have to generate or cultivate a feeling, a sense that God is with us, around us, in us. This is the fifth step.



6. The Methods of the Great Men

The sixth step consists in conditioning our lives to those disciplines which have helped the great men, the great philosophers, the great men of Cosmic Consciousness, achieve their higher condition of evolution.



7. Silencing the Mind and Senses

Added to all these steps and disciplines, there is a discipline of silencing the mind and emotions. A disturbed lake does not mirror the moon clearly. The truth of God's Presence does not shine in us when our mind and heart are perturbed, disturbed, in a state of restlessness. A great calmness has to be introduced into ourselves, a great silence must take possession of our whole inner being. It is then that we see things clearly, it is then that higher activity of the Consciousness can come into play. It is in this calmness that we have to live, if we are to proceed and progress on the path of spiritual development, a great calmness which enables us to remain untouched even under the most provoking circumstances. It is in this calmness that we find the right circumstance for standing back from our thoughts, our emotions, our physical experiences. From silence within ourselves, we have better possibilities of meditation.



8. Reflection on the Nature of God as Presented by Those who Have an Experience of God

The next step will consist in a constant reflection upon the real nature of God, as presented by those who have a direct experience of God: a constant reflection upon the nature of God, God as infinite Silence, God as infinite Peace, God as infinite Love, God as infinite Light, God as One without a second, God as the absolute, all-inclusive, all-sufficient, all-creative, all-perfect, timeless Consciousness.



9. Looking at Ourselves in Relation to the Infinite

From this step, we move on to another step. In the next step, we always look at ourselves in relation to God, in relation to infinite Power, in relation to absolute Joy, in relation to the timeless, eternal, spaceless Reality that God is. We begin to look at ourselves as being in God, and God as being in us. By this, we exceed bodily consciousness and world consciousness.

A worldly person who has no knowledge of God, no love for God, no faith in God, looks at himself always in terms of his body. He looks at himself in terms of his money, his friends, his world outside, his possessions, the weather, the sense-pleasures. His whole life is dominated by these and the alterations of these external things.

Therefore, if the worldly person seeks to progress towards divine perfection, he will have to follow slowly all these steps, - and look at his money as a property of God that is entrusted to him, and know that he is only a trustee of it, and that it has to be used nobly, not only for sustaining himself and his family members, but also for aiding his inner mind grow, his heart expand. He best achieves these ends when his wealth is used in the name of God, for beneficiary purposes. When he begins to look upon his family members as bearers of God-Consciousness, and the humanity as the creation of God, and therefore also the bearer of God's Consciousness; when he looks upon his life as a field of growth and development, and conducts all activities in the name of God, for the glory of God, - leads his life in order that he may grow, evolve, - then he begins to become an increasingly spiritual individual.

And when he takes all the other disciplines we have earlier indicated, then he becomes nobler, more cultured, and more of an illuminated personality. His mind expands, his heart expands, and he begins to look at himself also in terms of God, divine Perfection, divine Peace and Joy.



10. A Constant Generation in Ourselves of the Feeling that God is Always with Us

Among the disciplines which lead us to this Cosmic Consciousness, the most important is, apart from meditation, a constant generation in ourselves of the feelings that God is always with us, around us, that God is always watching us, with His thousands of eyes, that He is protecting us, with His millions of Hands. A living, all-powerful, all-governing sense of this God-Presence must be cultivated constantly.

This discipline increases your love for all creation, you begin to be more powerfully conscious of God's Presence in all forms of life. And slowly, the limitations of the physical senses and the mind are exceeded and transcended, and you have a direct knowledge, by consciousness, of Consciousness in all things. You have a direct consciousness of God, by God-Consciousness, in all beings. When you discover God in all nature, in all humanity, in all the universes that are visible to your physical eyes, when your heart experiences Him at any point of space, and in any moment of time, you have Cosmic Consciousness.

Beyond this, there is the Transcendental Consciousness. Say, you are meditating. In deep meditation you go beyond the body-consciousness. As a matter of fact, most artists, scientists, thinkers, writers, generally go above body-consciousness, when they are completely absorbed in their work. But such a transcendence of bodily awareness and consciousness is itself not a spiritual condition of consciousness. However, it is helpful for understanding the fact that there are states of consciousness in which we transcend the bodily awareness and consciousness.

In deep meditation, when our inner consciousness is absorbed in God, we transcend the bodily consciousness. We don't know that we have a body. We transcend also the environmental consciousness. In the environment, if

there are sounds, we hear them not. In the environment, if there are certain special objects, we see them not. In this state we have transcended the environmental consciousness.

This condition of consciousness is free of all thoughts, feelings, objects. It is completely free of all sentiments, sensations, thoughts. To it, there is no time. Even after two hours of meditation, one feels that one has not spent even half a second. It is a timeless consciousness. It is an objectless consciousness. But yet, it could be said, there is an object in it, and that is God.

This condition, where you experience God in yourself, is itself not the highest condition. From here on, the divine Grace conducts you into the transcendental state of Consciousness, where the meditator, the object meditated upon, and the process of meditation, become one.

When that happens, we are in the supreme transcendental Consciousness. What is there in it? No report is possible.

At the state of Cosmic Consciousness, we are conscious of God in us, of the Divine Consciousness in us, and see the same Consciousness and Divinity in all Nature. In whatever we see, whatever we feel, we have an experience of God.



11. Remaining in Objectless Consciousness

The final step consists in constantly trying to preserve ourselves in an objectless Consciousness. This becomes very easy for us, when our whole heart is a great wound of God-Love, of all-absorbing God-Love, when our entire intelligence, by constant, day after day, month after month, year after year reflection upon the nature of God, has been fused into the attributes of the Divine Consciousness.

Before we could hold God in a living experience, we have to express something of God's Nature in our daily life and conduct. Before we could have a direct knowledge and experience of His unlimited Love, the love in our own heart has to be universal, cosmic. The petty thoughts of the body, its worries and its problems, have to be displaced by thoughts of the timeless, deathless Being in us.

If our mind, nature, life are tied to the petty self, the petty individuality, its petty possessions and its petty worries, we cannot be great in heart, great in mind, great in will, great in power, and therefore there would be no possibility of our moving towards Cosmic Consciousness, or God-experience.

Internally, by thoughts, by feelings, by a many-sided discipline of the consciousness, we will have to grow, expand, evolve. Before we pray for ourselves, we should have included all humanity in our prayer. Before we think of praying for ourselves, we should have prayed for the welfare of all Nature, of all beings, animals, entities. Before we eat anything, we should have first mentally offered it to God in our heart and to God in all hearts.

We have to express our inner Consciousness, its light, its knowledge, its nature, through our external action, and the moral impurities in our constitution have to be thrown out as though they were poisonous things in us.

Universal feelings, broad feelings, divine thoughts, noble sentiments, generosity, goodness, faith, patience, perseverance, spirit of sacrifice, spirit of self-discipline, spirit of service - all these have to be developed. Then our heart will teach us more of divine Truth. Then, our mind brings us spontaneous, automatic knowledge from the divine Consciousness within us. Then, we begin to feel the vibrant Presence of God in every bird, and beast, and man.

It is very valuable to assimilate in our knowledge, the truths pertaining to God and God-experience presented by men of God-consciousness.

We have to befriend the earth on which we walk. We have to befriend the very air we breathe, and the very space. We need to develop a kinship, a friendship and a sense of oneness with the stars and with all creation. We must dismiss all thoughts of death of the physical body, throw out our fears and anxieties, and look at ourselves in our relations to God, as we are essentially, as we are in our inner being, - as the indestructible, deathless lights of God, brought into existence by God, maintained by God, and as returning to God's illimitable, all-perfect Consciousness.

The subject is a very big one, but it is not new to your hearts, not new because the divine Consciousness within you already knows all that I am talking to you. But that knowledge is suppressed by the restless activity of your outer minds and outer hearts. But, as you progress in the steps indicated, you will find that inner knowledge comes into automatic self-expression.

Your human consciousness is destined to become Cosmic Consciousness, and rise into transcendental God-Consciousness, Consciousness of the Absolute.

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