

KARMA YOGA & BHAKTHI YOGA

Are Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga and Jnana Yoga separate OR one and the same?

To conclude about them, we should know their meanings and also their references in the scriptures.

Karma means action. Without movement of mind, you cannot do any action. Mind can't move, without the movement of life force (pranam)

“Chit spandanam bhavati karma”
(*Yoga vasishtam*)

When the mind comes out is called Karma, when the same mind goes in is called Karma yoga

“Bandhanam manaso nityam Karmayogassauchchyate”
(*Trisikhi Brahmanopanishad*)

Pravrittincha nivrittincha dwividham karma vaidikam
(*Manusmruthi*)

Outward action is Karma (Pravruthi), Inward action is Karma yoga (Nivruthi). That means the prana sakti, when it becomes motionless by Pranayamam is called Karma yogam. So Pranayamam alone is karma yogam. But unfortunately all outward actions are misinterpreted as karma yogam. Bhakti means love. One will have utmost love and affection towards his life (pranam) only than anything else in this universe. Suppose when his wife or family members (the so called dear ones) fall into the well, he won't jump into the well for rescue.

Initially we will have bahya bhakti towards external deities, but later on we enter into a stage of “Ananya Bhakti” i.e., praying God within ourselves. Finally we will land in “Ekantha Bhakti” where we remain alone with love. This is

“Svasva rupanu sandhanam bhakti rityabhideeyate”
(*Viveka chudamani*)

To go inside, we have to catch hold of our life force (prana vayu) only. So, ultimately Bhakti cannot be achieved without Yogam and hence it is called “Bhakti Yogam”.

Jnanam is of two types. One is theory (Jnanam) and the other practical (Vijnanam). Theoretical knowledge is to know about God, indirectly with this mind. This theory is practical knowledge of somebody else. At this stage we assume that God is apart from us and believe Him as a third person. When we increase our mental energy by yogam, we will practically feel that God is nothing but supreme energy and it is everywhere and practically we will feel that He is in front of us as a second person. But when the mental energy is reached to the maximum level, he experiences that so called God is nothing but myself “Aham Brahmasmi”. So the practical experience about God will be changing according to our mental energy by yogam. So it will be called as Jnana Yogam.

So, a practical yogi is a Karma yogi, Bhakti yogi and Jnana yogi but for a non-yogi these three will be seen as separate entities.

**“Nahi jnanena sadrusam pavitra miha vidyate
Tat svayam yoga samsiddhaha kalenatmani vindati”**
(Bhagavad-Gita 4th chapter)

For the construction of a spiritual house, yogam is the basic foundation only, on which the house called Jnanam will be completed.

**“Yoga-Jnana paro nityam
Sa yogi na pranasyati”**
(Trisikhi Brahmanopanishad)