CHAPTER 6

DHYANA-YOGA

Advancing In yoga through detached work (6.1-4)

While speaking about karma-yoga in Chapter Five Krsna mentioned ashtanga- yoga to set the scene for Chapter Six. In this chapter, Krsna clears the doubt that ashtanga- yoga may be a superior path of self-realization. By discussing ashtanga- yoga Krsna establishes it as an impractical path that one should reject in favor of bhakti yoga.

Main theme:

True renunciation manifests in detachment from possessiveness and enjoying propensities, not necessarily in cessation of activities.

Sub points:

A. Krsna consciousness is the ultimate plane of selflessness, because the devotee only desires the pleasure of Krsna. In contrast, the impersonalist definitely has selfish desire. He or she wants self-gratification by finding peace by merging with the brahmajyoti (6.1).

B. Sannyasa and yoga both entail the giving up fruitive desire; therefore they are nondifferent. However, Krsna consciousness is the most direct path to attaining this goal (6.2,4).

1. Whether active or inactive, fruitive desires to renounce or acquire enjoyment continue to plague one who is not Krsna conscious, for one who is not Krsna conscious does not know who the true Enjoyer is.

C. The two stages of yoga (6.3-4).

1. Yogaruruku - The beginning stage, in which prescribed duties are essential to gradually purify one of fruitive desires.

2. Yogarudha - After achieving freedom from desires that impel fruitive work, one retires from active duties for contemplation and meditation.

D. In Krsna consciousness one can be on the platform of meditation from the very beginning, since a devotee can perform activities in which he meditates on serving and pleasing Krsna.

The yogarudha - giving up work (6.5-9)

Krsna instructs about the importance of mind control for yoga practice. He then describes the stage wherein one is eligible to give up work: the yogarudha. By describing the high requisite qualifications for this stage, Krsna effectively discourages Arjuna from the impractical path of astanga- yoga.

Main theme:

Success in yoga practice comes when one achieves Paramatma connection as a direct result of controlling the mind.

Sub points:

A. Control of the mind is of paramount important in yoga practice. An uncontrolled mind will meditate on sense gratification and stimulate material consciousness (6.5-7).

B. The mind as the friend or enemy.

1. The mind that takes dictation from the senses leads one into miserable fruitive action and is therefore the living being's worst enemy.

2. The mind that takes dictation from Paramatma leads one to self-realization and is therefore the living being's best friend.

C. Realized knowledge of the Supersoul makes one completely detached from sensual conditions (6.8-9).

1. As this realization begins, one becomes equally disposed towards all objects – he or she sees pebbles stones and gold as the same.

2. As the realization of Supersoul deepens, one becomes neutral to all persons - they see friends and enemies, good and bad with an equal mind.

Stages In the practice of yoga (6.10-32)

After describing the perfected state of yoga practice, Krsna explains the procedure to achieve this goal.
Main theme: 

_Yoga_ practice, like any science, entails that one follow a process that bears results if applied correctly.

Sub points:

A. One should make spiritual realization their primary goal, and accept things that are favorable while rejecting things unfavorable. By seeing all things in relationship with Krsna, one naturally possesses an attitude above material mentality (6.10).

B. Preliminarily, the _ashtanga-yogi_ must go to a sacred place and practice celibacy, along with many other restrictions (6.11-14).

1. Such restrictions expose the perspective of modern-day "yoga societies" selling _yoga_ without regulative principles. This kind of _yoga_ will never bear transcendental results. The strict restrictions of _ashtanga yoga_ make clear the necessity for performing _nama sankirtana_ in this age.

2. Celibacy is essential for the transcendentalist. Intense material pleasure complicates their identification with the body, which is the very obstacle the _yogi_ must overcome. Interestingly, the _bhakti_ school is special because it alone can admit householders as candidates for transcendence. This is because of the unique power of _bhakti_ to destroy material desire.

C. The goal of _yoga_ is the Kingdom of God, not bodily exercise or the "void." (6.14-15).

D. Regulation of the body is essential in spiritual life. It provides peaceful senses and a fit body conducive for spiritual life (6.16-17).

1. For eating, taking _prasadam_ is the only way to be free from sinful reactions that disturb _yoga_.

2. Through Krsna consciousness, one can easily regulate all bodily necessities.

E. The perfected stage of _yoga_ comes when the mind is fully controlled. This is fixed _samatthi_, transcendental happiness (6.18-32)

1. The stage of perfect mental-control results from gradual cultivation of mental detachment, continually pulling the mind back from where it may wander. This is a difficult task. For the devotee however, it is easier (6.18-19, 24-26).

   a) Because he can engage all of his senses (including the mind) in the service of Krsna (ex. of Maharaja Ambarisa).

   b) Such personal meditation is not dry, like the forced detachment of the impersonalist.

   c) Most importantly, in his attempt to control the mind, the aspiring devotee is given strength by the Lord Himself.

2. The stage of _samatthi_ entails the communion of the soul and Supersoul through transcendental mind and intelligence. One then experiences the Lord's _cit Sakti_ (knowledge potency), which reveals the true nature of the living entity. At this stage, one can easily maintain detachment from sense objects because of the transcendental happiness that he feels within (5.20-23).

3. The fact that _samatthi_ is transcendental bliss subtly confirms variegatedness in the Absolute, as relish of bliss requires a knower of transcendental bliss and an object of bliss. Subtly, impersonalism is defeated (5.20-23).

4. The culmination of _yoga_ practice is Bhagavan realization - in which the Supersoul-realized _yogi_ understands that Paramatma and Sri Krsna are one, and becomes a devotee of Krsna (6.27-32).

   a) Bhagavan realization automatically entails all other levels of realization.

   b) One in Krsna consciousness can know all things by their connection with Krsna, as they are His energy. He thus achieves equal vision and liberation from material contamination. Such a devotee desires to help others achieve Krsna consciousness, knowing it to be the highest level of happiness.

**The necessity of controlling the mind in yoga practice (6.33-36)**

A main point in the previous section was the importance of mental control to reach perfection in _yoga_. Arjuna, representing the common person, confesses his feelings of inability to achieve perfection in this way. In response, Krsna gives advice on how to practice mental control.
Main theme:

The impetuous mind can be curbed only by strict regulation of yoga practice.

Sub points:

A. The process of inactive ashtanga yoga is not possible to follow today (6.33).
   - Arjuna's rejection of this path is significant. Arjuna was a thoroughly qualified person. If even he could not follow this rigorous path, what to speak of the people of Kali-yuga, who are less qualified in so many ways? Therefore, in this age, the yogic path is not a suitable means to transcendental realization.

B. In Kali-yuga, the "suitable practice" to control the mind is devotional service starting with chanting the holy name. Detachment from matter comes easily when one is attached to spirit: devotional service to Krsna (6.34-37).

The destination of the unsuccessful yogi (6.37-45)

Arjuna confesses his true fear: he may not be able to attain success in the rigors of spiritual life. Thus he will be a failure both spiritually and materially. As Krsna is the ultimate authority on the nature of reality, Arjuna relies on Krsna to destroy his doubt.

Main theme:

There is no loss for one who takes to the path of transcendence.

Sub points:

A. This section expands on the idea first presented text 2.40, where Krsna explained that there is no loss or diminution on the path of spiritual life.

B. What happens to an "unsuccessful" yogi? According to his level of spiritual advancement at death, he or she attains a certain destination in which he may easily rekindle their previous spiritual advancement (6.41-45).

1. One who practices yoga for a short time first goes to the higher planets to fulfill their remaining material desires. They then take birth in an aristocratic and/or pious family wherein they may revive their yoga practice without impediment (6.41).

2. One who has made great advancement in yoga, but is still not completely perfect takes their next birth in a family of spiritualists, becomes automatically attracted to advanced yogic principles, and thus successfully completes their self-realization (6.44-45).

C. The ultimate stage of yoga practice is pure devotion to Krsna (6.46-47).

1. All yogic paths culminate in bhakti. Bhakti yoga is the perfection of yoga. It is not simply a process of purification; it is also the goal of purification, the eternal position of the living entity.

2. The conclusion of Chapter Six clearly reveals its import:
   a) Yoga, which entails inactivity, is impractical for this age. Karma-yoga is more suitable.
   b) Bhakti-yoga to Krsna is the supreme yoga, and the goal of mysticism.