

# Bhagavad Gita Six Essential Topics

## 1. Self-Knowledge

Swami Tadatmananda  
Arsha Bodha Center

न जायते म्रियते वा कदाचिन्

It was never born nor will it ever die,  
na jāyate mriyate vā kadācin

नायं भूत्वा भविता वा न भूयः ।

nor having been born, will it die again.  
nāyaṁ bhūtvā bhavitā vā na bhūyaḥ

अजो नित्यः शाश्वतोऽयं पुराणो

Unborn, eternal, everlasting, and ancient,  
ajo nityaḥ śāśvato 'yaṁ purāṇo

न हन्यते हन्यमाने शरीरे ॥

it does not die when the body is slain.  
na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre 2.20

क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि

Understand Me to be the knower  
kṣetrajñam cāpi mām viddhi

सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत ।

of each field, O Arjuna.  
sarva-kṣetreṣu bhārata

क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोर्ज्ञानं

Knowledge of the field and the knower –  
kṣetra-kṣetrajñayor jñānam

यत्तज्ज्ञानं मतं मम ॥

I consider that to be true knowledge.  
yat taj jñānam mataṁ mama 13.2

विद्याविनयसम्पन्ने

In a wise and humble brahman,  
vidyā-vinaya-sampanne

ब्राह्मणे गवि हस्तिनि ।

or in a cow or elephant,  
brāhmaṇe gavi hastini

शुनि चैव श्वपाके च

or in a dog or a dog-eater,  
śuni caiva śva-pāke ca

पण्डिताः समदर्शिनः ॥

wise ones see the same (atma).  
paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ 5.18

न हि ज्ञानेन सदृशं

Compared with knowledge, there is nothing  
na hi jñānena sadṛśam

पवित्रमिह विद्यते ।

in the world as purifying.  
pavitram iha vidyate

तत् स्वयं योगसंसिद्धः

One perfected through yoga  
tat svayam yoga-samsiddhaḥ

कालेनात्मनि विन्दति ॥

eventually finds that (knowledge) in oneself.  
kālenātmani vindati 4.38

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### 2. Bhakti

Swami Tadatmananda  
Arsha Bodha Center

तद् विद्धि प्रणिपातेन

Understand this through humility,  
tad viddhi praṇipātena

परिप्रश्नेन सेवया ।

through questioning, through service.  
paripraśnena sevayā

उपदेक्ष्यन्ति ते ज्ञानं

They will impart knowledge unto you –  
upadekṣyanti te jñānam

ज्ञानिनस्तत्त्वदर्शिनः ॥

the wise seers of truth.  
jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ 4.34

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभावः

Overcome by the weakness of pity  
kārapaṇya-doṣopahata-svabhāvaḥ

पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मसम्मूढचेताः ।

and confused about dharma, I ask you  
pṛcchāmi tvām dharma-sammūḍha-cetāḥ

यच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे

what is best? Tell me clearly.  
yac chreyaḥ syān niścitaṁ brūhi tan me

शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् ॥

I am your student. Guide me, I beg you.  
śiṣyas te 'haṁ śādhi mām tvām prapannam 2.7

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि

Unto me, all actions  
mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi

संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।

renouncing with discerning mind,  
sannyasyādhyātma-cetasā

निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा

becoming free from desire and possessiveness,  
nirāśīr nirmamo bhūtvā

युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः ॥

you should fight without anger.  
yudhyasva vigata-jvaraḥ 3.30

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां

But those who think only of Me,  
ananyāś cintayanto mām

ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।

people who worship Me,  
ye janāḥ paryupāsate

तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां

for them, always thus engaged,  
teṣāṃ nityābhiyuktānām

योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥

I grant possessions and protection.  
yoga-kṣemaṃ vahāmy aham 9.22

यो मां पश्यति सर्वत्र

One who sees Me everywhere  
yo mām paśyati sarvatra

सर्वं च मयि पश्यति ।

and who sees everything in Me,  
sarvaṃ ca mayi paśyati

तस्याहं न प्रणश्यामि

for him I am never lost,  
tasyāhaṃ na praṇaśyāmi

स च मे न प्रणश्यति ॥

nor is he ever lost to Me.  
sa ca me na praṇaśyati 6.30

मन्मना भव मद्भक्तो

Fix your mind on Me, be devoted to Me,  
man-manā bhava mad-bhakto

मद्याजी मां नमस्कुरु ।

worship Me, bow to Me.  
mad-yājī mām namaskuru

मामेवैष्यसि सत्यं ते

You will certainly reach Me.  
mām evaiṣyasi satyaṃ te

प्रतिजाने प्रियोऽसि मे ॥६५॥

I promise, for you are dear to Me.  
pratijāne priyo 'si me 18.65

# Bhagavad Gita Six Essential Topics

## 3. Karma Yoga

Swami Tadatmananda  
Arsha Bodha Center

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते

You have command over your actions  
karmaṇy evādhikāras te

मा फलेषु कदाचन ।

but never over their results.  
mā phaleṣu kadācana

मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्

Do not consider yourself to be in command of results,  
mā karma-phala-hetur bhūr

मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि ॥

nor should you be attached to inaction.  
mā te saṅgo 'stv akarmaṇi 2.47

चेतसा सर्वकर्माणि

With your mind, renouncing all actions  
cetasā sarva-karmāṇi

मयि संन्यस्य मत्परः ।

unto Me, devoted to Me,  
mayi sannasya mat-parah

बुद्धियोगमुपाश्रित्य

taking refuge in karma yoga,  
buddhi-yogam upāśritya

मच्चित्तः सततं भव ॥

always fix your mind on Me.  
mac-cittaḥ satataṁ bhava 18.57

योगस्थः कुरु कर्माणि

Being steadfast in karma yoga, perform actions  
yoga-sthaḥ kuru karmāṇi

सङ्गं त्यक्त्वा धनञ्जय ।

without attachment, O Arjuna,  
saṅgaṁ tyaktvā dhanañjaya

सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योः समो भूत्वा

treating success and failure alike.  
siddhy-asiddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā

समत्वं योग उच्यते ॥

Karma yoga is called equanimity.  
samatvaṁ yoga ucyate 2.48

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा

Consider pleasure and pain alike,  
sukha-duḥkhe same kṛtvā

लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ ।

so too, gain and loss, victory and defeat.  
lābhālābhau jayājayau

ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व

Then engage yourself in battle.  
tato yuddhāya yujyasva

नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥

Thus, you will incur no sin.  
naivam pāpam avāpsyasi 2.38

## Bhagavad Gita Six Essential Topics

### 4. Meditation

Swami Tadatmananda  
Arsha Bodha Center

तस्मादसक्तः सततं

Therefore, being detached, always  
tasmād asaktaḥ satatam

कार्यं कर्म समाचर ।

perform the required action,  
kāryam karma samācara

असक्तो ह्याचरन् कर्म

because by performing action with detachment,  
asakto hy ācaran karma

परमाप्नोति पूरुषः ॥

a person attains the highest.  
param āpnoti pūruṣaḥ 3.19

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं

One should lift up oneself by oneself  
uddhared ātmanātmānam

नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।

and not let oneself sink down.  
nātmānam avasādayet

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुर्

For oneself is one's friend  
ātmaiva hy ātmano bandhur

आत्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥

and oneself is one's enemy.  
ātmaiva ripur ātmanaḥ 6.5

तत्रैकाग्रं मनः कृत्वा

There, making one's mind one-pointed,  
tatraikāgram manaḥ kṛtvā

यतचित्तेन्द्रियक्रियः ।

restraining the activities of mind and senses,  
yata-cittendriya-kriyaḥ

उपविश्यासने युञ्ज्याद्

sitting on the seat, one should practice  
upaviśyāsane yuñjyād

योगमात्मविशुद्धये ॥

meditation for self-purification.  
yogam ātma-viśuddhaye 6.12

यथा दीपो निवातस्थो

Just as a lamp in a windless place  
yathā dīpo nivātaṣṭho

नेङ्गते सोपमा स्मृता ।

does not flicker, it is the same  
neṅgate sopamā smṛtā

योगिनो यतचित्तस्य

for a yogi whose mind is controlled  
yogino yata-cittasya

युञ्जतो योगमात्मनः ॥

meditating on the self.  
yuñjato yogam ātmanaḥ 6.19

यतो यतो निश्चलति

Whatever pushes astray  
yato yato niścalati

मनश्चञ्चलमस्थिरम् ।

the mind, being fickle and unsteady,  
manaś cañcalam asthiram

ततस्ततो नियम्यैतद्

restraining it from those things,  
tatas tato niyamyaitad

आत्मन्येव वशं नयेत् ॥२६॥

lead it under control of the self.  
ātmany eva vaśam nayet 6.26

यत्रोपरमते चित्तं

When the mind is withdrawn,  
yatroparamate cittam

निरुद्धं योगसेवया ।

restrained by the practice of yoga,  
niruddham yoga-sevayā

यत्र चैवात्मनात्मानं

when one recognizes the self by oneself,  
yatra caivātmanātmānam

पश्यन्नात्मनि तुष्यति ॥२०॥

then one is content in the self.  
paśyann ātmani tuṣyati 6.20

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5. Enlightenment

Swami Tadatmananda  
Arsha Bodha Center

प्रजहाति यदा कामान्

When he casts off all desires  
prajahāti yadā kāmān

सर्वान् पार्थ मनोगतान् ।

emerging from the mind, O Arjuna,  
sarvān pārtha mano-gatān

आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः

content in oneself with oneself,  
ātmany evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ

स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते ॥

then he is called one with firm wisdom.  
sthita-prajñas tadocyate 2.55

यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्याद्

But one who revels in atma alone,  
yas tv ātma-ratir eva syād

आत्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।

a person satisfied with atma  
ātma-tr̥ptaś ca mānavaḥ

आत्मन्येव च सन्तुष्टस्

and contented with atma alone,  
ātmany eva ca santuṣṭas

तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥

for him there is nothing to be done.  
tasya kāryam na vidyate 3.17

यदृच्छलाभसन्तुष्टो

Content with whatever is gained,  
yadṛcchā-lābha-santuṣṭo

द्वन्द्वातीतो विमत्सरः ।

beyond opposites, free from envy,  
dvandvātīto vimatsaraḥ

समः सिद्धावसिद्धौ च

same in success and failure,  
samaḥ siddhāv asiddhau ca

कृत्वापि न निबध्यते ॥

even though acting, he is not bound.  
kṛtvāpi na nibadhyate 4.22

न प्रहृष्येत् प्रियं प्राप्य

Not rejoicing when obtaining the pleasing,  
na prahr̥ṣyet priyaṁ prāpya

नोद्विजेत् प्राप्य चाप्रियम् ।

nor getting upset by the displeasing,  
nodvijet prāpya cāpriyam

स्थिरबुद्धिरसम्मूढो

firm of mind, free from delusion,  
sthira-buddhir asammūḍho

ब्रह्मविद् ब्रह्मणि स्थितः ॥

the knower of brahman is established in brahman.  
brahmavid brahmaṇi sthitaḥ 5.20

## Bhagavad Gita Six Essential Topics

### 6. Who is Lord Krishna?

Swami Tatatmananda  
Arsha Bodha Center

या निशा सर्वभूतानां

What is night for all beings,  
yā niśā sarva-bhūtānām

तस्यां जागर्ति संयमी ।

in that, the restrained one is awake.  
tasyām jāgarti saṁyamī

यस्यां जाग्रति भूतानि

That in which beings are awake  
yasyām jāgrati bhūtāni

सा निशा पश्यतो मुनेः ॥६९॥

is night for a discerning wise person.  
sā niśā paśyato muneḥ 2.69

प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य

Wielding my own material nature,  
prakṛtiṁ svām avaṣṭabhya

विसृजामि पुनः पुनः ।

I create again and again  
visṛjāmi punaḥ punaḥ

भूतग्राममिमं कृत्स्नम्

the entire multitude of beings,  
bhūta-grāmam imaṁ kṛtsnam

अवशं प्रकृतेर्वशात् ॥

due to My material nature.  
avaśaṁ prakṛter vaśāt 9.8



मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्

Compared to Me, nothing else greater  
mattaḥ parataram nānyat

किञ्चिदस्ति धनञ्जय ।

exists, O Arjuna.  
kiñcid asti dhanañjaya

मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं

On Me, this entire world is strung  
mayi sarvam idaṁ protaṁ

सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ॥७॥

like jewels on thread.  
sūtre maṇi-gaṇā iva 7.7

यदादित्यगतं तेजो

That light abiding in the sun,  
yad āditya-gataṁ tejo

जगद् भासयतेऽखिलम् ।

illuminating the whole world,  
jagad bhāsayate 'khilam

यच्चन्द्रमसि यच्चाग्नौ

and the light of the moon and fire,  
yac candramasi yac cāgnau

तत्तेजो विद्धि मामकम् ॥

know that light to be Mine.  
tat tejo viddhi māmakam 15.12

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश

O Arjuna, I am the self  
aham ātmā guḍākeśa

सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।

abiding within all beings.  
sarva-bhūtāśaya-sthitaḥ

अहमादिश्च मध्यं च

I am the beginning, middle,  
aham ādiś ca madhyam ca

भूतानामन्त एव च ॥

and end for all beings.  
bhūtānām anta eva ca 10.20

यद्यद्विभूतिमत् सत्त्वं

Whatever glories exist,  
yad yad vibhūtimat sattvaṁ

श्रीमदूर्जितमेव वा ।

valuable or powerful indeed,  
śrīmad ūrjitam eva vā

तत्तदेवावगच्छ त्वं

you should understand that they  
tat tad evāvagaccha tvam

मम तेजोऽंशसम्भवम् ॥

arise from a fraction of My splendor.  
mama tejo'mśa-sambhavam 10.41

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