

Divinization

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What is divinization? For myself, as it was for early Christian mystics, divinization is the ongoing and ever-deepening incarnation, within my body and mind, of the Energies and Qualities of divinity – a process made possible only by divine grace. Divinization means sinking ever deeper into a calm, ongoing, softly blooming awareness of my rootedness, below the surface, in a divine Source. It is a process during which I increasingly discover, within myself, that sacred touchstone, the resounding and transformative mystical knowledge: I AM THAT. Divinization means that, over and over again, I lean back into that vastness – consciously, intentionally, aligning myself, again and again, with that profound silent spaciousness that surrounds and compassionately holds each thought, each memory, each feeling. Divinization means remembering God and the Goddess with each breath, linking up with that Presence that permeates each moment, that divine Source that is my True Nature, the divine Self that shines from within, illuminating everything. Divinization means affirming, consciously, intentionally, my divine Sonship; it is the heartfelt decision, freely reaffirmed at each moment, to step into my inheritance as a fully mature Son (or Daughter) of God and the Goddess.

I attempt (with the grace of God and the Goddess) to do all of this, even while (like Christ, who is fully human, and fully divine, at the same time), at times I fumble, and fall, and pick myself up; hopefully learning from every mistake; gradually, over time, releasing any harsh self-

condemnation and judgments; and in their place, offering myself the same unconditional love and compassion that God and the Goddess offer to everyone, always.

Swept up in the process of divinization, I discover within myself the ever-increasing ability, made possible by the compassionate blessing of the divine Mother, shining Her Love straight from Her Heart to mine, to open myself, within multiple layers of my experience, to the flux of conscious, living Energy that permeates this universe, the throbbing pulsation of Life itself. Divinization is, at least in part, the ongoing, ever deepening responsiveness to the varying “levels” or “frequencies” of that cosmic Flux. Divinization is the process of creating living links between various dimensions of who I am, and the various dimensions of our multi-leveled universe – a universe of ceaselessly dynamic, ever-new, creativity. Divinization is the recognition, renewed each moment, that right here, right now, is a perfect, ever-new manifestation of the bodying-forth of the Mother, of the divine Matrix, that universal, unstoppable Creativity that is ceaselessly giving birth to each moment of experience, that is manifesting in-and as our own consciousness, in-and-as our own intimate, unrepeatable, incalculable, personal flow of experience, right here, right now.

Sitting in the very Center of that effortless Creativity, I AM THAT. I revel in the joyous unfolding of each unpredictable moment, feeling the divine Bliss coursing through my enfleshed being, as the pulsations prompt my body, infused with Life, to spontaneously move, in joyous celebration of my freedom, of my capacity (given by divine Grace, and received with profound gratitude), to re-orient in each moment to that divine Center – my God-given ability to rest in that divine Heart.

Divinization is when we stumble, and occasionally fall, but we pick ourselves up, each time more and more gracefully. It is when we shake off the dust of the world, and we shift, we re-orient ourselves, we come back. Divinization is learning how to be both fully ordinary and fully extraordinary, at the same time: so utterly natural, at ease in every moment, no false masks, simply being true, free, alive. And in-and-as this “normalness,” we are manifesting our divinity, we are shining forth our Buddha nature. Divinization is the increasing ability to feel deeply; it is honoring and ecstatically affirming the bone-deep knowledge of divinity, shining in-and-through the particular textures of each ongoing, flowing, ever-changing, moment. Divinization is returning, again and again, to my breath as it flows in and out; to my heart, as it surges with love, and gratitude, and wonder; to my body as it sways in delight, responding to the waves of Power and Joy that ripple in-and-through my being – swaying and undulating to the rhythms of that subtle (but oh-so-visceral and impelling) Current that ebbs and flows in my physicality – organic, spontaneous, inherently alive.

Divinization is learning how to respond to every new moment from a place of centered, grounded, Presence and Heart. It is learning how to “Rule every kingdom that you enter”: acknowledging and affirming each moment, especially those that are challenging, with poise, calm, and an open heart. Divinization is radiating our own Majesty, our own inherent Nobility, as Daughters and Sons of God and the Goddess.

Divinization is when, (with God’s grace), we embody, more and more fully, in this world, varying divine Qualities, or Energies. Within the Santo Daime path, we see this thrust towards

divinization most clearly (or at least frequently!) expressed in the words of Padrinho Sebastião's hymn, "I am not God," (#12 in the *Oração*, and #152 in *O Justiceiro*). "I am not God, but I have a hope. I am not God, but I am His likeness. God is fire, God is water, God is everything. I invite my brothers and sisters to begin our studies. I am not God, but I have a hope. I am not God, but I am His likeness. God in heaven, God on earth, God in the sea. I invite my brothers and sisters to remain in their place."

Like the early Christian mystics, I affirm that I am not God the Father. But I have a hope, because I am a Son (or Daughter) of God. And, as such, via the ongoing influx of divine grace, I seek to open myself to the ever-new discovery of how to embody that likeness, that kinship; how to unfurl that divine potentiality that is waiting to be awakened, to be enlivened, to be set afire. I AM that likeness, and in that affirmation itself, I deepen my likeness. My "I AM" is that One Consciousness, that divinity that is taking the form of everything – each ever-shifting quality of experience – the fire, the water, the earth, the sea. That divine Consciousness, (who I also worship as the divine Mother of All), is manifesting in-and-as the particularities of this ongoing moment. Therefore, in the midst of my sisters and brothers, surrounded by the beloveds who are accompanying me in this journey of awakening, I offer the invitation: let's begin our studies, let's truly explore what it means to be Daughters and Sons of God and the Goddess. Let's be eager students, delighting in what we are discovering, uncovering, releasing, integrating, and transforming. God is that transcendent Source, the Beyond the Beyond, gate gate parasamgate bodhi svaha! But God is also completely immanent, fully here, and is discovered and manifested in-and-as the completely unique, extremely pure, "vibratory frequencies" of Love, Power,

Freedom, Presence, Consciousness, and on and on and on – the 99 most holy Names of God, the sephirot that radiate out from the Tree of Life.

Divinization is the process of learning how to remain firmly in our place, in our Heart, in the present, in the Presence, letting Love, and Freedom, and Power, and Beauty, and Creativity – any and all of the divine Qualities – to manifest in-and-through us, more and more purely, more and more freely, in each ongoing moment. It is allowing ourselves to become increasingly translucent, so that there is less and less complication, confusion, forgetfulness, and contraction, and there is more and more simplicity, clarity, remembrance, and expansion.

Divinization is seeking to manifest each of these divine Qualities as fully as possible, celebrating the beauty of their diversity – those scintillating, qualitatively unique, interacting colors of the one Light. Those colors of divinity are shining forth (and shifting, and flowing and intermingling) in-and-as this moment . . . and this moment . . . and this moment. Therefore, the invitation is this: remain steady and firm my sisters and brothers, rest in your own highest and deepest Self, remain centered in the Heart of it All, celebrating God’s transcendent heavenly Presence and Beauty (a transcendent Presence and Beauty that is discovered and revealed with more and more clarity in the *mirações*), *and* over and over again celebrating God’s Presence and Beauty as it is also revealed, here and now, fully, in each and every moment of everyday experience, the Whole that is within every part.

And there are no parts. There is no separation, only interpenetration. There are no walls, only interconnection.

And each of us is fully unique. We are all an ongoing miracle. We are all sisters and brothers, we are all heirs, and by recognizing, and affirming, proudly, our Kinship with God and Goddess, and with each other, we are profoundly helping the process of divinization, the unfurling of the evolutionary thrust that is propelling the universe forward in time to a wondrous culmination (a culmination that never stops), the full unfolding of divinity, in all, as all.

In the deepening process of divinization, I seek to affirm the vow, made in the timeless past, by each one of us, “to recover all, to redeem the Fall.” Each one of us, by consciously seeking to awaken, by consecrating the miracle of that liquid grace that is pouring into us as the nectar of each moment, are helping to catalyze that Universal Transformation. And so, we do not “merely” seek to awaken within our own being. We also seek to be servants of that cosmic Awakening – an Awakening that is unfurling within everyone, and all things – the Universe itself awakening to what has always been. And each of us is hastening that cosmic Awakening by awakening ourselves to what fully Is, Now. And the impact of that revelation is such that it propels us to a transformative glimpse of an unimaginable level of Joy and Freedom that is beckoning to us from the future (and from the deepest strata of the Now), a full, ongoing, and ever-deepening cosmic Awakening for All that is so supremely glorious that we cannot even begin to limit it with words, no matter how uplifting and profound.

I affirm and celebrate that paradoxical interplay between the already and the not yet: both intermingling, and both distinct, Shiva and Shakti, the erotic dance of the Knower and the

Known, Pure Being and Creative Becoming, the One that is Two – and far, far Beyond any and all limitations or concepts.

The process of divinization is fueled by the play of Love; it manifests in the desire to be swept away by the Beauty of the Divine Mother as the petals of the Now unfurl; in the longing to give ourselves fully, without holding anything back; to offer ourselves to Her, as we are, as fully as we know how, asking to be filled with Her Presence and Her Love, as we give our hearts to Her at each instance, over and over again, with Love, with Joy.

Divinization is also feeling so, so relaxed; so, so at home; so, so at ease; resting back into the soft and loving lap of the divine Mother, and resting as well in the nest of our own utterly unique physicality, with its ever-shifting patterning of soft flesh and solid bone; sinking ever-deeper to the Center of our intimately personal, unrepeatable, utterly miraculous, universe of experience.

Divinization is learning how to let go – of expectations, of the demand for perfection; it is also, paradoxically, the affirmation of the perfection of each moment, as it is, while simultaneously seeing, with clarity and compassion, the wounds, the buried hurts, the suffering – all which cry out for healing and transformation. And it doesn't matter whose suffering it is: Daughters and Sons of God and the Goddess, empowered by the Daime, their hearts opened by an influx of divine grace, over time increasingly begin to feel the call to offer themselves up to help, to be vehicles of healing and transformation in this world that so desperately needs it. Daughters and Sons of God, over time, with divine assistance, make their lives a sacramental offering, letting that Divine Presence shine fully in-and-through them in order that the pain of the world can be

illuminated, can be met with compassion, with tenderness, with kindness, with calm, with love, as each Daughter or Son of God, each to their own degree, consciously, and freely, dissolves their separateness, and affirms their Union with divinity, as well as their solidarity with all of the suffering ones – intertwining, in every moment, the One and the Many.

And, miraculously, there's no end to divinization. There's no final moment of enlightenment when we stop growing, when we stop learning. There's always more. There's always More. And that More is ever New. Ever deepening. Ceaselessly creative and fecund. Always surprising. Love is infinite, and to feel that Love, more and more fully, is itself the greatest gift we can possibly receive. I thank God and the Goddess for their Presence in my Heart, in-and-as that Love – a Love that I feel so powerfully, that flows into me, and out from me, a river of Love, an ocean of Love, into which I throw myself, with delight, with tears of unspeakable joy and gratitude, my separateness dissolving into that Light, that Love, as again and again, I emerge from those holy waters reborn, shining with Love, in Love, as Love.

May any and all obstacles to this awakening dissolve in the transformative recognition that these obstacles are themselves the fuel that catalyzes our transformation, they are themselves shining icons of divinity. May all illusion, all suffering, be healed and transformed in the Light of that Recognition. May we all increasingly recognize our Oneness with that Love, with that Light. May we all come to know the hidden divine depths of our own Self, as we awaken, with wonder, with stunned and joyous gratitude, to the new facets of our divinity that are shining forth in every moment.

May it be so, now and forever, amen.