

God's Love and Man's Love

By Eugene Halliday - TTBI:153-162

Love is a real power, yet even the most intelligent man cannot define its shape, its mode of operation in precise terms. The essence of **love** is its infinite flexibility, by which it is able to adjust its action to an infinity of quite diverse situations. There is no situation definable or indefinable where **love's** power cannot reach. "Nothing can separate us from the **Love** of God."

What is the difference between the **Love** that God has for His creatures, and that which man calls **love**? The absolute difference is that God does not **love** us in order to get something out of us for Himself that He does not already possess, for He is infinite **Love**, infinite Power, infinite Presence, infinite Wisdom. We could not give Him anything unless He already has given to us this very same thing. We cannot give Him anything of our talents, our thoughts, our feelings, our actions, except those which He has given us the power to conceive and express.

What then does God will for us? He wills for us our highest good. But what is our highest good? It is for us to be able to activate our being in such a way that we will be able to achieve the highest joy possible for us. "God wills our highest good" means "God wills our highest joy".

But highest joy is possible for any being only when this being is in fullest activity in all its functions. Now we must remind ourselves that no being can fully activate itself without entering into relation with other beings, because all function is inter-function.

Let us examine this notion a little more closely. The idea of the use of a thing necessarily involves the idea of bringing this thing into relation with another thing. To use a saw we bring it into relation with the wood or other material we intend to saw. To use an idea we bring it into relation with the thing it represents or into relation with some situation in which it has an application.

We can see that each thing or idea we use has what we may call a "zone of application" and a level to which it belongs. For example a hammer has a zone of application, which contains all hammerable things, nails, metals, etc. It also has its own level; in the case of a material hammer, at the level of material things. But we talk also in figures of speech, such as, "He hammered home his point", when we mean that a man presented his view on some matter in a forceful way. "To hammer" here means that, at the level of ideas, force was used to try to compel acceptance.

Just as we can use the idea of levels of application of uses of things and ideas, so we can use the idea of levels of relationships between beings. Two men of approximately the same educational level may talk together about something with a fair probability that they will be able to keep the words they use within the same zone of application. Two mathematicians may discuss mathematical ideas at a mathematical level using the basic concept of unity in an agreed way. A non-mathematician might use this same word in a quite different way, for example, a bishop might talk of the "unity" of the Church, and a politician might talk of the "unity" of his party. There are different levels of use, and different zones of application for the same words.

A human being has many levels of application of his energy. He can apply it at the physical body level, at the emotional level, at the level of ideas derived from the experiences gained in time, at the level of higher ideas which derive from the inner intuitions of spirit, at the level of freely willed act, and so on.

It is possible for two people to use the same word, but at different levels of application or in different zones. When this happens without awareness of the fact there may arise a misunderstanding, more or less serious, according to the actual importance of the occasion. When this occurs there is a failure of inter-function of the different parts of the persons involved in the discussion. We can say that most of the world's troubles and disharmonies arise from such failure of inter-function amongst human beings.

God wills for us our highest joy; but we cannot attain this joy unless we become able to function properly, and we cannot do this without coming into actual relations with other beings.

For harmonious interaction there are certain preconditions which must be fulfilled. **Firstly**, there must be a will towards harmonious interaction, for without this will, whatever else we may do will not be able to fulfill its real purpose. A grudging will does not freely release the energy needed to bring an idea into full operation.

Secondly, there must be a sufficient comprehension of the situation, so that we are able to confine ourselves to the chosen field of interaction.

Thirdly, there must be a moment-by-moment awareness of the way the situation may be changing, either in its general direction, or in the levels of application of our ideas.

Fourthly, there must be a sensitivity to the mood or feelings or changes of emotional attitude as the interaction intent proceeds, so that we can vary the stress we place on each part of our intention, so that we do not ride rough-shod over the other's feelings or preferences.

Fifthly, we need to keep an eye on the real physical facts each moment, the materials of the situation, so that if these change in any important way, we can make allowances for them and adjust to them, or bring in whatever else may be needed.

If we make this five-fold survey while we are relating to other beings there is a high possibility of attaining a harmonious relationship. If we do not, there is an equally high probability that we will fail.

Human interrelationship is the most complex interrelationship we know of, and as such is also the most difficult. But if it is intelligently and sensitively entered, it is also the most rewarding. Naturally we would expect that the most valuable things would require from us the most intense application. High attainments require great effort. The summit of Everest was not reached without some unusual expenditure of energy. So with the highest relationships of the highest beings on earth. And the highest of all relationships is that of **Love**.

Love is a state of being in which one's whole will, feeling, thought and action are directed towards the raising of the level of interaction of all parts of the being one **loves**. For **Love** is not fully satisfied until it has involved itself in every part and activity of the **beloved** one. If we **love** someone we will that one to be whole, to be wholly able to receive our **love**. But **love** does not just stand there gazing at the **beloved**. **Love** works for the development of the **loved** one, so that the relation with that one can become more and more intimate.

"God **loves** us" means that the Creative Intelligence that permeates the universe is working for our development, working to awaken in us the capacity to realise ourselves as co-creators with His intelligence, His will and His **love**. God does not sit back and smile lovingly upon us from a distance. He is omni-present, everywhere with us. His is the All-Power which is the very basis of universal manifestation. There is nowhere where He is not, and where He is, there He works for the raising of His creatures to the level where they will be able to understand Who it is who has been working for them, and why He has and is so working.

Apart from the working of God there would be only a chaos of clashing energies. Energy, itself is indestructible. If it is not ordered in some way, then it is like a tumultuous sea, restless, self-disturbing, unquiet, void of peace, happiness or joy. To bring it forth from its condition of disquiet and self-contradiction, there must be the introduction into it of some intelligent purpose. This purpose is the Divine Will's creation of the complete human person who shall fully represent the Divine Will on earth.

The problem for God was a logical one. He is eternal spirit, full of power, intelligence and sensitivity. Either He wills to create a harmoniously ordered universe, or He does not. If He does not then He inhibits His own Creativity and leaves the infinity of energies implied in His omnipotence in a state of non-ordered disquiet or even of mere latency. If He does create, then He creates either perfectly ordered beings with perfect functions and no freedom to go wrong, which would be a mere machine universe, or He creates within His relatively ordered universe some beings to whom He gives the gift of free choice, with all the implications of the possibility of error that free choice presupposes.

God chose to create not a mere machine universe, but a universe in which some beings had free choice. We are of the free beings that God chose to create. We have a possibility of free choice, and this is at once our most noble quality and also our most dangerous capacity. Given this freedom, so that we are not mere machines, we can use it intelligently and sensitively, or we can abuse it, unintelligently and insensitively. We can use our free will to discover and to invent all kinds of scientific devices, and we can use it insensitively to pollute the atmosphere, the world's oceans, lakes and rivers, to make the earth unfit for us to live on. And similarly we can abuse our mental gifts to destroy our mental environment, to produce the conditions of an ever-mounting list of psychological disorders.

We human beings have free will, because God's alternatives were to create either free-willed beings, or mere machine-beings, or not to create at all. He created free-willed beings. We are here on earth, or above it. We have been to the moon. We shall go to other planets. We shall go all through the solar system and beyond it. But all this kind of travel is but at the physical level, and there are other levels as yet unsuspected by scientists, waiting to be discovered.

But wherever we may go and whatever other levels we may discover, all will be where everything is within God. For in His infinity we will always "live, move and have our being". And always the problem for us as free beings will be the same. Shall we co-operate with our Creator or not?

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