

Love, the Heavenly Gift

Dr. M.W. Lewis

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The subject this morning: Love, the Heavenly Gift; Love, the Heavenly Gift.

Of a certainty, love is a heavenly gift. It is not something which we have to acquire, it is there. But we have to remove those things which prevent its natural flow. That it is a gift from heaven, the Bible clearly points out, for we read in 1st John, 1st, 4th Chapter, 16th and 10th Verses, "God is love. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him." And finally, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us..."

That's something we do not realize that God's Love produced us. Because of His great feeling of Love, He created universe upon universe. And it is that Great Force of His Drawing Power, which is drawing all things back to Him, and that's within our hearts. Not that we acquired it, but that He gave it to us. That's why Love is a heavenly gift. We do not have to find it even. All we have to do is to know it. We have to realize that Great Gift of God within us. God is Love. It cannot be any clearer. God is Love.

Now to understand this Great Love of the Infinite Father, Divine Love, we have to just say a word or two about lesser loves. Lesser loves, loves, love between friends, filial love, parental love, marital love; those are lesser loves, usually, because they are tinged with outward consciousness of possession and attachment. They can be very wonderful. But until they are superseded by that Heavenly Gift of Divine Love, unconditioned, they are lesser, known as lesser loves.

So that Great Gift of God, Divine Unconditioned Love, the greatest force in the universe, is our own, naturally implanted in the hearts of each and every one of us. And from time to time God manifests that through great souls, as the great saints, and the great prophets and gurus of all times. And the story which Mr. Cook read, clearly points out that God had sent through the great Sri Yukteswarji, an instrument whereby Divine Unconditioned Love manifested, because his first words, practically, to our Master were, "I give you everything, I give you my love, unconditioned."

And I'm very happy to say that the first time I met the Master, in 1920 on Christmas Eve, practically, his first words to me showing that he, too, is a Divine Instrument to manifest, and show, and illustrate, and exemplify that Love is the natural gift in the heart of everyone. If you can manifest it like he did, his first words to me were – and I can visualize him now sitting before me – when he said, "Doctor, will you always love me as I love you?"

Those were strange words to me, right out of the world, for I was not used to those things. But I saw in his, in his eyes, in his face, something that aroused within me, thank God, the realization that here was an opportunity that God had sent whereby I would be helped, if I could just realize what he meant. There were, there were no doubts in his words. There was no doubt left in my mind when he said those words, because the Force of God is the greatest force in the universe. And that force was manifesting through the Master when he said those words. And that same force can manifest through each and every one of us, if through the Grace of God we can be made a fit instrument for that Great Love of God, through which, rather, that Great Love of God can manifest.

The only drawback is the instrument must be perfected. The channel must be opened, and left open. God is the Doer. He will manifest the feeling of God. That's why this Force of Love is so tremendous. It's the great Feeling Power of God. It is the Pulling Power. It is the Force that keeps all things together. And it is the Great Force that is pulling all things back to God. That's why it's such a tremendous Force, and that's why it's the saving grace of all of us - the Great Force of Attraction; the Great Pulling Power of God.

Now God's Consciousness is one, and when that Consciousness moves, it becomes two. It becomes the creative force, which goes out from God, and it is also the Pulling Force, which pulls all things back to God. Which is the greater? The Pulling Force, isn't it, because all things go back to God. We learn from science that about two billion years ago, more or less, that this universe was projected out from God. And two billion years from now it'll be all drawn back into Him. Why, because of the Great Pulling Power of God, the great Cosmic Force of Divine Love.

I understand from scientists that it has happened about seven times. Don't take my word for it, but they say there have been seven such of those Brahmic days and nights. But the point is that's neither here nor there, in God's Great Omniscient Love there is no time or space. Eternal Now is what His Divine Love

is; Eternal Now. The time and space element is the delusion. There's no time or space in God's Love.

And when the Master said to me, "Will you always love me as I love you," and I saw something, there were, there wasn't any time or space in that consciousness. It was, and it has been since then. And by the Grace of God, my prayer is, "Let not delusion overtake me, that I lose it," and that's the prayer of every humble devotee. "Father, let not delusion overtake me. Let not that Great Love which Thou has given to me, that heavenly gift, ever be removed from thy, my sight." Isn't that what we want? Why? Because God is Love, the greatest force in the universe is the Great Force of Attraction. That which is pulling each and every one of us back home.

The force of delusion, the force of outward consciousness, Satanic force is strong. You all know about that. You know how difficult it is to keep on the razor's edge. But it's worth it, because the goal is oneness with the Infinite Father; oneness with His Great Love. Divine Love is unconditioned. The lesser loves may be conditioned due to attraction, attachment, possession. But if that is superseded by Unconditional Divine Love, then that lesser love becomes supreme.

Whether it be between husband and wife, parents and their children, it becomes Divine Love when you remove the obstruction. When all the dross of the heart is removed, and, as the Master said, "The heart becomes pure gold," no dross, then this Heavenly Gift of Love will flow; whether married or single; whether your position in life is this, or that. That doesn't matter. The thing that matters is, do you know God is Love, and do you feel Him in your heart. Do you meditate that the obstruction be removed that you can feel Him? That's the important problem. Nothing else matters. That's the most wonderful thing, to realize that a man of realization is not conditioned by these outer things. He is conditioned only by one thing. When he is working in the world, does he feel the Great Love of God? Does he work for God and His children, and feel that love? And when he's not working, is he thinking of God, meditating on God, rather, merging himself in the one Heavenly Gift of God's Love? That's the man of renunciation. It doesn't say anything about your position in life. It just says that. The man of renunciation is one who knows God is Love.

That this Love of God is a heavenly gift is attested to most beautifully in a few verses of Jeremiah. I could not help but write them down and read them to you.

"The Lord hath appeared of old unto me." This Divine Love of God is not something new. It always was, always will be. "Saying, yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love," – an eternal love, an unconditioned love – "therefore, with loving kindness have I drawn thee." You see why it's a heavenly gift? Because it's the greatest Drawing Power in the universe. And finally it says, "Therefore, with loving kindness have I drawn thee." For herein is the great Drawing Power of God referred to. That's why this verse is so wonderful. We do not have to find it even. We just have to remove those things which prevent the great Drawing Power of God taking us back home to that one great cosmic home of Light – our common home wherein our common Father rules and reigns. By what – by His Great Love.

This is the most wonderful verse. "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love." It will always be there, so we must know it. We must remove those obstructions. "Therefore, with loving kindness have I drawn thee."

Master always said, I couldn't understand it then as much as perhaps I do a little more now, he always said, "God loves us so wonderfully, so silently and wonderfully, and through His devotees." Here we have the testimony of that very thing. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love." That means it will never be withdrawn. How can the great Force of God, the Great Pulling Power of God ever be withdrawn? No. The thing is we have to know it, and if we once know it, God will never remove it from us. That's the greatest promise. If we can once somehow rise above this delusion of outward consciousness, this dream consciousness, and see the reality of God's Love, it will never be withdrawn. We may have to wait until we work out some of those things we have laid up, but it will never be withdrawn from us. So we should be of good cheer.

Follow the Master's teachings because he knew, he knew that one Father and the Father's Love flowed through him, and through his teachings which he has left. We must realize that, utilize what we have, for God came to us, responded to us through this channel of His Love - the channel of Self-Realization, exemplified by our Guru, Paramhansa Yogananda.

Now, Sri Yukteswarji was, of course, the teacher, or the preceptor, or the guru of our own Master. You have heard from the Autobiography a few words about him. But he has said one or two wonderful things, which I would like to give to you at this time, about the virtue of love. Love will do things which nothing else will do. And he says in his Holy Science, the gist of, of which I will give you just in a few words at this time.

Thinking about love he says that when this Love, the heavenly gift of nature appears, what's it do? It removes all exciting causes from the system and cools it down. God's Great Love is not a fiery thing, a disturbing thing. It's a solacing thing. And so when this Love flows through you, it cools down your system.

He also says that it invigorates the vital eliminative powers – the natural functions of our body and allows them to work in a natural way, and this removes all toxins and foreign matters – germs of disease. And what happens? There's nothing like God's Love to make you perfectly well and happy.

He says it most beautifully. I'm just giving you the gist of his words. And finally he says another thing – when this Love is developed in you, and in me, then we understand our position in this universe, our position in life, and our relationship with one another. Isn't that wonderful?

How sometimes we feel helpless. Why? Because we don't understand why we're here, where we're going, what it's all about. But when God's Love flows through you, you'll understand why you're here. You'll understand your relationship with others, and especially with your one common Father. That's the greatest, one of the greatest things Sri Yukteswarji has said.

And finally he says, but greatest of all, with the help of this developed Love – and this is very important – man becomes fit to mix with divine personages, like the Master mixed with his guru, and like, by the Grace of God, I had that privilege of hearing his words, "Will you love me as I love you." When God's Natural Love flows through you and is developed by regular discipline, then the devotee becomes fit to be drawn to those divine personages and to their teachings. And what happens? Then the devotee is saved forever from delusion.

Don't you agree that God's Love, the Heavenly Gift, is supreme? How does this happen? Because when you cultivate within your heart that Heavenly Gift, what appears to you? The great Word of God comes. You are able to hear that Word of God, and see the Light of that Word of God; greatest of all, to feel in your heart God's Unconditioned Love in that Word. That's what does the changing. That's what makes you better. And finally, that's what gives you salvation. Love, God is Love.

And finally, perhaps the final proof that Love is a Heavenly Gift from God, perhaps the greatest words that we can read are from the Bhagavad Gita, which

is so applicable to each and every one of us – Lord Krishna’s words to his beloved disciple, Arjuna. Many of you know Arjuna, who Arjuna was. Arjuna was he who wrote the Gita, Vyasa, none other than the beloved Master years and years ago. And what did he say to him? And realize that he says it to each and every one of us. Each and every one of us is made in the Image of God, and we have like opportunity, if we will avail ourselves of those opportunities. And Lord Krishna said these words, "Listen thou to my supreme word, most secret of all, beloved art thou of me." We’re beloved of God. We don’t hafta find it. It is there. "Beloved art thou of me, therefore will I speak for thy benefit. Merge thy mind in me. Be My devotee."

All God asks us to do is to be, be what he has given us, His lover. Master called God his Beloved. Why? Because he felt the Heavenly Gift which God had given to him – the gift of Love. "Merge thy mind in me, be My devotee. Sacrifice to Me." That is, unconditionally surrender to God. It’s those little reservations that we have which prevent God’s Great Love from flowing through us. "Prostrate thyself before Me." That means surrender, that’s all. With such a great Lord and with such Divine Love, why not surrender to His Will? He’s doing everything anyway. He’s the Sole Doer.

So He says, "If you do these things, thou shalt come even, even to me." Even to be one with the Master of the Universe. "I pledge thee My troth." That’s the promise of God to His devotee. We will know and be one with that Heavenly Gift of Love. Why? "Thou art dear to Me." Is there any doubt in our minds that Love is not a Heavenly Gift? Each one of us is dear to God. We don’t realize our opportunity.

And finally, to prove what I have said, Sri Yukteswarji pointed out that the end will be salvation – salvation from all delusion and darkness. For the last words I’ll read are these, "Abandoning all duty," – that is abandoning the responsibility, give it to God – "abandoning, abandoning all duties, come unto Me alone for shelter." If God is Love, the Supreme Force, why do we go to other things? Now that doesn’t mean not to try other things, but realize behind everything – behind this Drama of Life, behind this Great Play is that one Supreme Force, God, God’s Love. "Abandoning all duties, come unto Me alone for shelter. Sorrow not. I will liberate thee from all sin."

Love, the Heavenly Gift of God; it is ours, it is implanted in us. We do not have to search it out, all we have to do, our own humble effort, and especially through

God's Grace, if we can receive, if we can receive the glance of His Grace, we will know beyond doubt, God is Love, and that He is in us, and we also are Love.