

Love Your Enemies

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You all feeling pretty good this morning? Because we have a rather delicate subject: "Love Your Enemies."

Someone does us mean, the tendency is to do otherwise. But, "Love Your Enemies" is, of course, a very good subject for this reason, that, if we can do that, I'll try and point out, that not only is the enemy to be helped, but you will be benefitted tremendously. "Love Your Enemies." That leads us to ask the question, "Why should I love my enemy? Why should I love them?" The answer is that there's a Great Spiritual Law behind this statement, "Love Your Enemies." Because, if first, if you do not love those that hate you, you incite them to hurt you more. You incite them to do more damage to you.

And secondly, if, perchance, they receive the love which you give them, what happens? You receive, in return, the Love by which God is trying to bring back his erring children to their one Cosmic Home of His Great Divine Love. You receive, even from the enemy, if, perchance, you can make them love you; you receive that Great Pull of God's Power, His Love, which is drawing all of His children back to Him.

And third, even if your enemies do not respond – and sometimes they do not – you will feel better, I will feel better, if I give them love, even though they do not receive it.

So remember this Great Spiritual Law. If someone dislikes you, and hates you, and says all manner of things against you, and is your enemy, if you hate him, you'll incite him to be a worse enemy. While on the other hand, if you give him love, as our Master said, "Anybody hates me, I just give them love and wait for them to change." And they will all change, because, eventually, all will receive Salvation, as we'll talk about next Sunday – all will go back to God.

Now what is this, what is this Love which we should give to our enemy? Love is the Great Attractive Pull of God, which is drawing all things back to the Source from which they have come. Everything came out of God. In His creation the Great Force of Repulsion, and there's this Great Pulling Power which is pulling

all things back to Him. On the personal plane, that Great Pulling Power of Love, the Attraction, must have an opposite; and that opposite is "hate." And that opposite is "fear." We fear things because, or rather we hate things, because we fear what they'll do to us – what damage they will do.

And so, when you hate your enemies, it's because there's fear in your heart, fear what they may do to you. But, on the other hand, if you give them love, what happens? There can be no fear. "...perfect love casteth out all fear (sic),¹" and, therefore, hate cannot stay when there is Divine Love in your heart. Realize that. That's the law behind love your enemy." Because not only is your enemy to be benefitted, but we, being all selfish for one thing – Salvation in God – we will be benefitted by receiving through the Divine Love of Attraction, even from our enemy, God's Great Love.

And so, we can do only one thing, if we are wise and that is, to love our enemy. We're practical people, we're sensible people, although we've been instilled, or this outward consciousness has been inculcated in our being, whereby we give an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. That is not right, because of this Great Spiritual Law. Now from the standpoint of worldly consciousness we may feel like retaliating. When you see some of the injustices done in the world, no one can be blamed for feeling like retaliating to that particular thing, that sin, or that evil, and to the ones who perform that evil. From ego consciousness, that's natural. But from the standpoint of Soul consciousness, it is not. Because from the standpoint of Soul consciousness, we realize that God is in the enemy, just as much as He is in each and every one of us. Therefore, we cannot, we cannot, hate that enemy.

And you will find, as by your meditations, you more and more merge in the Presence of God, and feel Him in an active way throughout your being; you will find you will not hate them. It will be impossible for you to hate them. Now that's the Power of God. That's the Power of Love. Try it, you'll find out. You'll reach a point, no matter what they do to you; you cannot have any animosity, no retaliation, no hate. These things are Spiritual Law, that's why you'll find them, if you meditate regularly, and feel the Love of God in your heart.

From the standpoint of Soul, you will realize we're all made in the Image of God. "What's the difference," Master used to say, "between a sinner and a saint? A

¹ 1st John 4:18, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love."

saint is a sinner who didn't give up," that's all. We're the same; God's Consciousness and Light flows through each and every one of us. And so, let us realize that; and from the standpoint of Soul, judge accordingly.

Some of you, perhaps, remember the story about Abraham and Lot. They had herds of cattle, and sometimes there'd be trouble between their herdsmen. And so Abraham, the wise man that he was, tried to use persuasion rather than laying down the law, so to speak. And so, he said these words, he said, "Let there be no strife between your herdsmen and mine, for are we not all brothers (sic)?"² These are most wonderful words. Remember them. "Let there be no strife between us..." your enemies, and you, "for are we not all brothers (sic)?" We are children of the One God, and, if we can feel His Love in our hearts, we will not have these animosities.

These animosities and trouble, which breed enemies and enmity, come from following that consciousness where these things dwell – outward consciousness. We have to follow outward consciousness, I know. We have to live. We have to move. We have to have our being. But, we can also have God, at the same time. And, if you can do that, then you can rise above these outward conditions wherein we find hate and enmity. Let us understand that God is Supreme, and His Great Love will level off all conditions, even of hate.

Persuasion, I think, is much better than laying down the law: "This is it, now you've got to do it." Most people say "I won't do it." That's natural. But, if you say, as Master used to say when we'd come to him with our problems, he'd say, "Well, don't you think that it's better to do it this way?" And we'd, most all the time, say, "Certainly." Persuasion, as Lot, as Abraham used, is much better than forcing the law, so to speak, although you may be right. But still persuasion is better. Why? Because God uses persuasion all the time; if He laid down the letter of the law, in one instant, He could snuff us all out, and all His Creation. But He doesn't. He tries to persuade us by His Gentle Love to come home, and get out of the trouble.

God is the Greatest Persuader, because He knows that's the only way to win. Because it is human nature; He has given us free will to do what we want; and when you lay down the letter of the law, the person says, "I won't do it now, anyway." But, if you persuade that person, then comes out the "bigger self,"

² The Holy Bible, King James Version, Genesis 13:8, "And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and they herdmen; for we be brethren."

which says, "Yes, I will do that." Because why? He feels God's Love in his heart. Let us realize this great truth.

Now, hatred for those who wrong us, rather than giving Love, only incites them to do further wrong. Let us understand that. Also, this one thing we must remember; that these emotions of hatred and anger, which lead to the formation of enemies; these things have a very detrimental effect on all people – all of God's children.

And so, if you incite your enemy to further wrong action, you increase – in his being – wrong functions; you will create great disturbances; because fear and anger empty into the bloodstream – as is well known – poison, which spoil the normal functioning of his body, and also burns out his nerves, and even can cause death. These poisons come because of the increased metabolism due to the throwing into the bloodstream of adrenaline, and other things. And you get an increased metabolism with by-products given into the bloodstream, and much harm can come. Therefore, you are duty bound not to incite your enemy further, because it will hurt him. And, also, we should not forget that we, too, are subject to the same law. And, if we retaliate with hate instead of love, we also impair the natural functioning of our own being, and especially the finer qualities of the Soul, wherein Love is predominant.

Let us understand this one thing, which is a scientific matter. That you cannot afford to incite your enemy further, because he is a child of God, and especially you cannot afford to incite yourself, and hurt your own system by throwing into the bloodstream these poisons and toxins. They come when you hate. You know how you feel when you get mad? The hair stands up under your collar, and you begin to shake, and all sorts of things. Why? That just doesn't happen, because of what I have just said. You give yourself a good dose of these toxins. And you get hot and bothered all over, and as a result it takes you a long time, sometimes days, to get over it. Well, we're not foolish. If we're sensible, I'm sure we cannot afford to do that. So let us understand this.

I have one thing I'd like to read at this time, from the Autobiography [of a Yogi], about forgiveness. You know it's much nobler to forgive than it is to hate, because it's founded on law, Spiritual Law, and it is so nicely written in the Autobiography. I just will read just a bit of it. "One should forgive under any

injury.³ Now think of it. Well, Jesus set the example, when they nailed him to the cross, and they were going to take his life – he forgave them. He said, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.”⁴ And so, we read in the Mahabharata, “It has been said that the continuation of the species is due to man’s being forgiven.”⁵ Otherwise he’d kill himself in a moment, and all his creation. These are wonderful words. And then it goes on, “Forgiveness is holiness. By forgiveness the universe is held together.”

Do you realize the Force of Love and Forgiveness? These are facts, you can prove them. “Forgiveness is the might of the mighty⁶.” Some of the greatest conquerors forgave when they saw the enemy was turning and understood. And then he goes on to say, “Forgiveness is sacrifice. Forgiveness is the quiet of mind.” When you hate, your mind will be in a whirl. But, when that balm of forgiveness comes over your Soul, and you forgive your enemy, you’ll have peace of mind, and, if you carry it further, you’ll have the Peace of God. And finally, “Forgiveness and gentleness are the qualities of the self-possessed. They represent eternal virtue.”

So it is good to forgive, rather than to continue the boiling pot of hate, which causes the, so much destruction in the world. And, I think, right now, in the conditions in which we find ourselves, it is so necessary for nations to forgive and forget. Otherwise, it’s going to boil over, this pot of hate, in which find ourselves. And we, as God’s children, have to do our best to keep His kingdom from being dissolved, this kingdom of good, by giving love instead of hate, and being tolerant, and being forgiven – forgiving.

And so, going on now; sometimes we feel that those who criticize us are our enemies. My! Don’t we get puffed up? People dare criticize me? But Master has, has said these beautiful words, he’s given the solution to the problem in such a wonderful way, and I cannot help but just quoting it at this time. He says in his little book, The Master Said, which many of you read, and which gives us so much. He says these words, “One does not do good without being criticized...” So now, if you’re going to do good, expect the criticism. “One does not do good without being criticized.” But what of it? Those who love God do

³ Chapter 44, Page 448, Revision 1951, “‘One should forgive, under any injury,’ says the *Mahabharata*. ‘It hath been said that the continuation of species is due to man’s being forgiving. Forgiveness is holiness; by forgiveness the universe is held together.’”

⁴ Luke 23:34

⁵ Autobiography of a Yogi, Ibid.

⁶ From The Mahabharata, Vana Parva, Section XXVII, Translated by Sri Kisari Mohan Ganguli, Verses on Forgiveness

not take their eyes from Him whether you're criticized or not. Who cares? If you have the Love of God in your heart, that's what lasts – not the criticism, or what it does to you.

So he says, "Those who love God, do not take their eyes from Him." Now, if you have that, the criticism doesn't make you any better or any worse. It's whether you have God or not that's the Reality. So let them criticize. Who cares? Then he goes on, "In pleasure and pain, sickness and health, success and failure, they are unshaken." Then he says, "That's how you must be." And he finally ends, "What is said will not affect what I am, unless I am weak enough to let that negative criticism enter into my consciousness." These are wonderful things.

If someone criticizes and it hurts you, and you feel hurt, you're still in ego consciousness, and you've allowed it to enter into your consciousness. Throw it out. If God is with you, that's all that matters. And so, he says, "In the end, you see, it is not others who make us suffer, but ourselves." If you can take criticism when you're doing good, and it doesn't touch you, you've won the battle, because you have not allowed that negative consciousness to enter into your consciousness.

"Why listen," Master says, "to negative things?" "Why listen to negative things? You are concerned with God." Isn't that beautiful? These words are immortal. Be concerned with God. When people criticize you, why should it touch you? Because the law is, when you do good, the opposite is coming in. You're going to be criticized. What of it? If God is with us, what do we care for a little criticism?

And so, in the final analysis, loving your enemies is solved by loving God and knowing Him. This is the answer. If you can love God – first, if you can know God, and really love Him and feel His Power in you, the question of loving your enemies will take care of itself.

Sri Yukteswarji has written these wonderful words, "Ordinary love is selfish, deeply rooted in desires and satisfaction (sic).⁷" But, he says, "Divine love is without condition..." Divine love is Unconditioned. Whether your enemy hates you, or not; you don't hate him. Divine Love is from God. Ordinary love, or rather "Divine love is without condition, without boundary, without change."

⁷ Autobiography of a Yogi, Paramhansa Yogananda, Revision 1951, Chapter 10, Page 24, "Ordinary love is selfish, darkly rooted in desires and satisfactions. Divine love is without condition, without boundary, without change. The flux of the human heart is gone forever at the transfixing touch of pure love."

And his final words – they’re so wonderful. “The flux of human love is gone forever at the transfixing touch of pure love.” Human love is conditioned, limiting. But when God’s Great Love flows in upon us, then it takes away those limitations; and then we can answer the question about loving our enemies.

Finally, from the Bible we have the answer that loving God is all that is necessary, and knowing Him, feeling Him, being one with Him. And in 1st John, the 4th Chapter, you’ve heard many times, but I’m going to give them once more, because this is the answer. People can talk for ages about the answer to “Love Your Enemies.” This is the answer. Right in our own scripture when it says, in the 4th chapter, 16th and 18th Verses: “...God is love, God is love; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him.” There can be no enmity against anyone if you feel that Great Love of God. And what’s more, you’ll receive from everybody that Great Love – including your enemy’s.

And so, there is no fear in Love. Fear is, leads to hate. We fear a thing; we hate it, because we’re afraid of what it’s gonna to do to us. We’re afraid of criticism of our enemies. What of it? For it says, “There is no fear in love;...because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.⁸”

If you fear anything, realize you have not perfected the Divine Love within you. But, if you meditate regularly, and keep at it, that influx of God’s Love through the Holy Ghost, will change you, and will purify you so that God’s Love will be complete in you. Having that, it is impossible for you to hate your enemy. Realize, “Love Your Enemies.” It is possible when you know God, and know His Great, Unconditioned, Divine Love.

⁸ 1st John 4:18