Love all lovely

by Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

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Jesus and love are synonymous! If you say love, you need not say Jesus. If you say Jesus, that means love. Jesus said once, ‘‘If you call God in my name, if you ask God in my name, whatever you ask, shall be given... For God is love.’’ Such a complete expression of love is found in Jesus. Whatever little glimpses you may get here and there indicates that fullness, the ultimate expression of the inexpressible that life is striving to express throughout time.

Love goes with courage. Look at the courage Jesus had. He completely overthrows the common concepts of people such as the strong will inherit the earth. He turns it around, ‘‘The meek shall inherit the earth. The meek shall inherit heaven.’’ For love makes you meek. However strong you are, when you are in love you are the weakest. Love is the strongest force in this universe and yet, it makes you meek... it makes you weak. Even a macho man will cry when he’s in love. Love makes you weak, but brings you the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus says, ‘‘Love each other as much as I love you.’’ It was impossible for someone not to recognise the love Jesus was, but since love makes you weak, it is also scary. Among thousands, just a few followed him. Many heard, but just a few came. That’s why he says, ‘‘Many will come and hear, but only a few will understand. Very few shall pass through the narrow path.’’

Even after showing all those miracles, only a handful could recognise and follow Jesus. They were not high intellectuals but simple innocent people. When Jesus said, ‘‘the kingdom of heaven is within you’’, they did not understand. They said, ‘‘which side of God will you be sitting, the right or left?’’ Once you go within, there is no right or left! There is no front or back. Jesus’ patience and compassion can only come out of love.

Very few understand what Jesus meant when he said: ‘‘I have put man against man, father against son, daughter against mother’’. Who you think are your friends are really not your friends because they make your faith in material things strong, and spirit less. ‘‘I have come to put one against each other. I’ve come to put fire, not make peace.’’ If Jesus had to say this, it is because he has seen the depth of slumber in people! When you talk something nice and peaceful, everybody will go to sleep! When there is something sensational, people wake up and hear. Newspapers are filled with such stories! This is the human mind.

Jesus did all he could to help one cross the mind and get into the soul, the spirit, the source of life, the Self. You break through the limited concept of relating yourself with something, or somebody, or identities, and recognise the Divinity within you, that you are much more than just a human. You are part of the Divine and you will inherit the kingdom, which is right here, right within you.

Somewhere he has said, ‘‘It was better if Judas had not been born at all.’’ Those words are not coming out of anger or frustration. Many times, when people don’t like somebody, they say, ‘‘I wish they were never born.’’ Here Jesus is saying, ‘‘Judas... I wish he was never born,’’ because he could feel the pain that Judas was undergoing. Judas played the role that he was ordained to play. He had no choice! And Jesus could feel that pain, that suffering that Judas was undergoing.

At one point, in the end, Jesus says, ‘‘I am not yet one with my Father, but go and tell them that I am one with my Father.’’ Scholars wonder why Jesus would tell such a lie. Also, that last moment when he said, ‘‘Forgive them, for they know not what they are doing.’’ Or when he said, ‘‘Oh, my God, my Father, have you forsaken me?’’ That one idea at the last thought that, ‘‘God has forsaken me,’’ kept the distance between ‘‘me and my Father’’. So Jesus said, ‘‘I am not yet one with my Father. I am at the doorstep of the house, but you tell the world I am already at home.’’

When someone is at home, it’s much easier for them. When they’re standing at the doorstep, waiting for the others — waiting in the rain, in the snow, in the storm, in the sun — that can only happen when there is so much love, so much compassion. Practically he is at home for the whole world.

The renowned sage Bodhisatva once said, ‘‘I’ll stand at the door of heaven, till all the people go in. I’ll be the last one to enter heaven. I’ll wait at the doorstep.’’ The same thing was true with Jesus. ‘‘I and my Father are one, say this to people.’’

You cannot understand the sayings of Jesus if you are not alive with prana, with the life force. The knowledge will all be just a concept in the head. Only the heart can feel that heart. Otherwise, in the name of Jesus, in the name of God, in the name of religion, people kill each other. In the name of God, many wars have happened. For centuries men have fought on this planet in the name of God, in the name of prophets, in the name of religion. They had no clue of Jesus.

When there is authority there cannot be love, and where there is love there is no authority. Jesus is opening his arms and saying, ‘‘Come, you are my friend, don’t be afraid, don’t put me on the altar. Give me a seat in your heart. See me in everyone you see around you. Love everyone as much as I love you... Or as much as you love me, share that with everyone around.’’

What more do you want to see in that embodiment of love? But people still wanted proof. If Jesus came today, he would still

be asked, ‘‘Prove to me you are the son of God.’’ So in those days too, he was asked to prove how he was the son of God, even after turning water into wine. This is because the mind dwells on proof. The mind cannot understand

Jesus, only the heart can feel the presence of Jesus.

Those who crucified Jesus were not bad people... they were ignorant. They were stuck in their head. They were not born out of spirit, but they had read all the scriptures and books. They thought he was being blasphemous, that he did something criminal.

Jesus never said, ‘‘I am suffering for your sin’’. That was just a way people used to awaken other people.The wise have many ways to lead one towards the truth and that was one of the ways. There are many things said like that, ‘‘Look, doomsday is coming, come on, wake up!’’ When Jesus was on this planet, those days were the darkest period. People were slaves; they were not highly educated nor aware. It was necessary in those days to say, ‘‘Come on, wake up! There’s going to be disaster!’’

Fear wakes one up from slumber. Otherwise, one is doing the same thing, repeating the same thing and not open to knowledge. The teachers in those days knew this psychology. Fear need not be a tool for someone who is sensitive, but it works for someone who is thick-skinned.

Jesus himself has said that the Divine is in the present. ‘‘Your mind has been stolen by the past or the future. I am here to bring it to the present moment. I am the only way. If you cannot see the Divinity in me when I am right in front of you, do you think you are going to see the Divinity in the future or in the past?’’ Jesus leads you to your own Being, your own self, your own Divinity that is deep within you.

The spirit is eternal and beyond birth or death. Spirit is love beyond name and form. When you are truly in love with Jesus, you will see Jesus in every name, in every form, in every nook and corner of the planet and beyond. If you are just imagining Jesus as a form limited to a certain time of history and place, then your growth is also limited, because you are limiting Jesus. Of course, if a name or form is very appealing to you, you can have it as your personal master. Just go to the values that the Master truly represents and live them. Then he is not of the past, he is here now. And he will be in the future, also, forever and ever and ever.