

Romantic Love between Followers of the True Law

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Now and then among the letters Miss Yuko Chino receives there are those which ask for her to teach about the right attitude and correct way to understand love between a man and women for those who follow the True Law. Michael defined love in the third chapter of "*The Door to Heaven*" where he talks about the love of Eros and the love of Agape. The first thing the followers of the True Law must learn is the pricelessness of God's love. This is the love Jesus had which atoned for the sins of mankind, a kind of love which sacrifices oneself for the sake of others. The preciousness of this love was aptly expressed in the following words.

"There is no greater love than for a man to give his life for the sake of his brother."

All those individuals called Saints and holymen from times immemorial, showed this love to people in the third dimension with the guidance of God. This kind of love is truly the highest form of love which can be called the epitome of spiritual beauty. Everyone, when they receive love of this nature, feel their own heart becoming purified and learn to have the same love of Agape in their hearts, and wish to give of themselves.

This type of love can be sought and realized in ties between parents and children, brothers and sisters, and sometimes even between total strangers. In Christianity, historically this love has been interpreted as the absolute form of love for others which completely outsteps the bounds of self-love and includes love for those with different aims, and even for foolish or evil people. This is similar in many ways to the attitude of compassion in Buddhism and probably is derived from a common source in the teaching of "the salvation of all mankind."

Learning that "God's love" is for the benefit of others and

totally self-sacrificing, could cause a person some uncertainty, especially when one thinks that followers of the True Law must make this love their unshakable foundation. This is because then the love between a man and woman comes into question. One could be confused about whether romantic love should also be a platonic love on a level as high as Agape, and also that anything less might be viewed as a sin.

This view is of course incorrect. Even Jesus said, "love your neighbor as you love yourself." The love for oneself is generally a selfish love and an instinctive love. It is certainly not the love of Agape and it is not even "Philia," the love in friendship. This love for oneself becomes love for others through spiritual development and evolution. That is to say, unless you have the instinctive love of yourself, the platonic love, or love of Agape will not emerge. In the normal human relationship of love between a man and woman, a balance has to be maintained between instinct and reason. Each person has to respect the character of the other, and be considerate and willing to serve. In other words, one must keep the spirit of Agape as well as accept the love of Eros. Otherwise there will be problems in staying healthy in mind and body. You must not forget that a human being not only has a spirit, but also has a physical body.

Puritanical and strict love unnaturally represses the love of Eros which occurs naturally, and consequently a person has to be tied down with very strict rules of behavior which are equally strong. Strict people quite often do not accept the love of Eros, and they have the distorted understanding that morality is equal to abstinence. With this reasoning they bind themselves down with rules and try to control others in the same way, but they totally bypass the spirit of openness and tolerance necessary in a healthy attitude toward life, and they consciously place themselves under the suffering of a religious ascetic.

But neither am I suggesting hedonism. What I am trying to

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say is, those of you who live the True Law must learn to take care and follow the Middle Way in everything. So one must not go off the deep end with spiritualism, or seek only the pleasures of the flesh, but rather, a person must keep in mind that the "golden mean" is the barometer for health in mind and body, in viewing love between a man and woman. I would like to add that work and recreation are in a similar relationship in this respect. The same can also be said for studying. The more intellectually demanding a person's job is, the more creativity is required in getting a change in pace once in a while to refresh one's mind. Rest is liberation from constant work, and it is a necessity. When proper rest is not obtained, the mind and body are forced to deal with nothing but tension, and fatigue builds up to a point where finally the accumulation of stress causes mental or physical illnesses. Recovery of health takes a long time, and in the meantime studies must be forsaken, and work and one's career have to be suspended.

On the contrary, if one lives just to relax all the time and enjoy leisure, he will come to dislike engaging in a regular occupation, and he will become unable to fit into society as a normal productive member. To keep this from happening and to maintain your mental and physical health on a daily basis, you should not do only one thing in exclusion of all other things, or adhere to only way of viewing things. It goes without saying that understanding both factors of the mind and body, and wisely managing both aspects of oneself is important in developing a stable and well rounded character.