

Love is a Reality
A sermon by Rev. E Kent Rogers 11/17/2019

Love is the only reality. We all know it. When we hear it, we know it. Love is Oneness. Love is Oneness because whatever it meets, it binds together as One. Love is Divine, and its own light lights the mind to know these things. God is Divine Love—Perfect Oneness, and Reality Itself.

For there to be Oneness, there must be Other. Oneness cannot be comprehended or real except in another. Love exists only with Other. For fullness of love, there must be equality between the two bound love. The Divine cannot create another equal to Itself without it being Itself. This being impossible, Divine Love requires not just one Other, but many others, each created to love all others, as equals. And in this, Divine Love, is finally reified.

For finite, separate minds to exist, there must be a forgetting of the truth that the only reality is Divine Love, and that all is bound as one within the Oneness of Divine Love. This is the illusion of self into which each mind descends—the illusion of self as actually separate, and so the source of its own life, own love, own volition, choice, goodness, intellect and own truth. Were we not born into this perception of separateness, and autonomy, we would not achieve a state of otherhood, and so love could not pass from one to another.

It is a risky plan, to create entities completely blocked off from perception of the Divine Truth, and yet it is absolutely necessary for Divine Love to exist. So God created us in His image, male and female.

He delights more in our loving one another, than in our proclamations of loving Him best. When we love one another, we are opening a door for the Divine Human Love to enter into the natural realm and become manifest. It is in actively loving others that the Lord comes in, dwells with us, and sups with us. “He who loves Me,” says the Lord, “Obeys My commandment...this is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.” We exist that by loving one another, Divine Love can be made manifest and the joy of Divine Love experienced.

Love is the foundation of all reality. It is the only true substance. When through the door of human relationships Love manifests, something foundationally real is actualized for the first time. It is a form of the Divine

Human. Though all forms of love pre-exist time, they only find their purposes in time.

Love is eternal. When this new form of the Divine Human comes to exist in the natural realm, it remains as a saving force in the fabric of the natural world forever. It raises up each life it touches closer to heaven.

When we look out from our eyes, hear with our ears, touch with our hands, what we experience seems immanently real. Yet the natural world is only the stage, set, and props to accommodate the great play of Divine Love. The natural world only exists as the vessel through which the strains of Divine Love might be sung. It seems that the trumpet creates music. But in fact, the trumpet is created out of the love and delight in music. Music first creates the trumpet, that the trumpet might house music. The trumpet seems more real, more substantial than music. But being its creator, music is more real than the trumpet. The instrument is put down and forgotten, but we remember the song forever. The stage, seemingly more solid and substantial than the production, is forgotten altogether when the actors take the stage; but the performance remains in the hearts of all forever.

The love-song that has been reified by the instruments of this natural world—our bodies—last forever, even as those supports fall away. Each new song brought into reality creates a new ripple in the fabric of humanity; a ripple that expands ever outward from heart to heart. These myriads of ripples spread forth, and converge within individual human hearts in new patterns, and each melody of love strengthens the purity, wisdom, and beauty of the other. The songs combine, compliment, and harmonize to create ever grander, fuller, and more wondrous music, generation to generation.

These currents and strains of love are the true reality cloaked over with that which our natural senses perceive. Love, in its need to be actualized, summons the body with its senses into being, just as the delight of music causes the invention of the instruments.

Within each person, a singular array of affections bud and blossom. Each human vessel gives home to a unique bouquet of love. It is this eternal arrangement of affections, loves, charity and goodwill that comes to house us and we find the true being of our Divinely ordained destiny. We first give home to love, and then love gives home to us.

Physical matter, so convincingly solid, seemingly fundamental and defining real, is ephemeral, a mere appearance. Love, which seems

fleeting and non-substantial is eternal and is substance itself. The trumpet is laid aside, and the melody seems to be gone with it. But the song has been sounded, heard, loved, and learned. It remains on the lips of all those hearts who sing the joy and gratitude of having heard such a wondrous song. The song remains forever sung as the impact of that life ripples and amplifies throughout the fabric of humanity on earth.

The person's deeds of love, move the hearts of the recipients, and of witnesses, to love more deeply and more truly. The life of that person lives on in that eternal swell of love. The person's delight, joy, gratitude and wonder—the vibrancy of her love—warms the hearts of others, causing them to resonate with the reverberation of these same delights and wonder, and so the song continues to be sung forever from person to person. The person's faith, guiding living principles and vision of God is also transmitted to others, and, to the extent this serves the purposes of Divine Love, it too has uplifting permanency within humanity.

The song lives on forever. The melody of each life is woven into that greatest song, the Song of Songs, which is the wedding song of the union of Divine Love with humanity, the Lord and His Bride. It is the song of the Divine Human.

This Divine Song precedes time, but is realized by means of time. Once the song of a unique life has been sung and received into the hearts of others, that part of the Divine Song is forever known, and forever sung. And because each part, each note, each harmony and each melody is of eternal Divine Love, it is outside the shackles of time.

“In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you.” When our earthly body falls away, we enter into the body of the Divine Human, which we call heaven. The spirit enters into its own and becomes sentient—not of the earthly medium through which love finds expression, as we on earth know—but of the delights, yearnings, and joys of love itself. When we see the smile of a loved one communicating her love, we see a change in her physical face, and we are warmed. The angels on the other hand are the very warmth causing the smile and the warmth felt in the other as a result of the smile. Angels experience these inner realities directly with their senses. They are their home and the topography of their landscape.

There is an eternal marriage of heaven and earth, each dependent upon the other. We give home to them, and they give life to us. The special

life that dwells and manifests within an earthly human form becomes a new vision of heaven, of Divine Love, and it is this that becomes an angel. This new and unique expression of the Divine Human, once the body has passed away, in turn finds home in others, animating them to life, to states of love. The boundaries of space and time fall down and the life of each angel is present within all people wherever they may be, whenever the delights of the loves of that person are experienced. Since all genuine forms of love touch on all other loves, all angels dwell in all people simultaneously, wherever any love of any kind is experienced. Every moment of expression causes amplification of the life of love. Thus the life of all angels increases in fullness, and perfection, forever.

If our vision could be relieved of its bonds to the dross of the material, and lifted up to see the truly substantial—Love—we would weep for joy in what we saw, and our hearts would resound with the Song of Songs, the song of Divine Love manifesting within humanity, and so the marriage of the Lord and His Bride. We would see an eternal stitching together of spirit to matter, where not one thread goes wasted or is lost. Instead of time, we would see each life growing brighter and warmer in eternity. Instead of space we would see the union of all depicting One Humanity, the image of Divine Love.

Marriage love is the greatest and highest form of love. It is a love founded on mutual honoring of value and equality. It is a complimentary, symbiotic and inter-reliant love unlike any other. It is a love that is supremely, and freely self-sacrificing more than any other love. For this reason, marriage love embodies Divine Love most perfectly. It purifies the spirit like no other love is able. To love one's spouse demands sacrifice, the putting down of selfishness for the sake of the other's wellbeing. It requires learning of and from the other, adapting, and adopting what is good from the other. It requires forgiveness and focus on what is good. It requires patience, kindness, and true humility. For these reasons, marriage love is eternal.

The relationship itself causes a new and unique song of love to be sung and improved and perfected. This new song is the union of two souls into one. The unique array of affections within one partner, unites with that of the other, and they become one bouquet, one garden. Two melodies join to become a song of rich harmony, strength and beauty. The Song lives on forever. The song of a marriage, is a variation and revelation of the original

song of God's love for the human race, the Song of the union between original Oneness—Divine Love—, with infinite diversity by which Divine Love may be realized—Divine Wisdom.

Wherever selfless love exists, there the Divine Human is born on earth, and those states of love are our eternal salvation. In 45 days, we will sing songs to the Incarnation of the Divine Human, Jesus Christ, Who sang us to life by His Song of perfect Love. The songs of our lips and of our lives are notes in the song of His Divine Love, which He sang into being 2000 years ago. We borrow His song, and our lives reformulate a tiny corner of the melody of this grandest of all fugues. When humanity was reaching the nadir of perception of God as Divine Human Love, and awareness of our Oneness was lost, when the song threatened to die out permanently, the Lord sang to us His song of love, and we lived forever. The forgetting was so that the Song might be sung, and heard, and known. The Song can never be unheard, and it will swell forever. And of its fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. In Him is life and His life is the light of our lives. And we are named by Him His children, born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Quotes

Love is a person's life. People know that love exists, but they do not know what love is. They know from common speech that it exists. For instance, people say that he loves me, that a king loves his subjects and the subjects love their king, that a husband loves his wife, and a mother her children, and vice versa; also that this or that person loves his country, his fellow citizens, his neighbor. So, too, in regard to matters apart from person, as when it is said that someone loves this or that thing.

But even though love is so frequently mentioned, still scarcely anyone knows what love is. Whenever someone reflects on it, he cannot then form for himself any mental idea of it. Therefore he says either that it is not anything, or that it is merely some stimulus flowing in through his vision, hearing, touch, and social interaction, which thus affects him. He is totally unaware that love is his very life, not only the general life in his whole body and the general life in all his thoughts, but also the life in every single

particle of them.

This the wise person may perceive from considering the following proposition: If you take away any impulse having to do with love, can you form any thought? Or can you perform any action? Is it not the case that as the affection belonging to love cools, in the same measure thought, speech and action cool? And the warmer the affection grows, the warmer they grow?

Still, the wise person perceives this not from any concept that love is a person's life, but from his empirical observation that it is so.

2. No one knows what a person's life is unless he knows that it is love.

Without knowing this, one may believe that a person's life is simply sensing and acting, another that it is thinking, when in fact thought is the first effect of life, and sensation and action its second effect.

(We say that thought is the first effect of life, but there exists an interior thought and a still more interior one, and an exterior thought and a still more exterior one. The inmost thought, which is a perception of ends or purposes, is actually the first effect of life. However, these levels of thought will be discussed below where we take up the degrees of life.)

4. God alone, thus the Lord, is love itself, because He is life itself; and angels and people are recipients of life. This observation will be clarified in a number of places in my treatises on Divine Providence and on Life.* Here we will say only that the Lord, who is God of the universe, is uncreated and infinite, while people and angels are created and finite; and because the Lord is uncreated and infinite, He is the underlying that-which-is or being itself which is called Jehovah,** and is life itself or life in itself.

From Him who is uncreated, infinite, being itself and life itself, no one can be created directly, because the Divine is one and indivisible. Rather he must be created out of elements already created and finite, so formed that the Divine can be present in them.

[2] Because people and angels are such creations, they are recipients of life. Consequently, if anyone allows himself to be so led astray in his thinking as to suppose he is not a recipient of life, but is life, he cannot be averted from the thought that he is God.

A person's feeling as though he were life and so believing it to be the case is owing to a fallacious appearance; for in any instrumental cause, the principal cause is invariably perceived as inseparable from it.

That the Lord is life in Himself, He Himself teaches in John:

...as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son (also) to have life in Himself... (John 5:26)

And He says that He is "the life" (John 11:25, 14:6).
Now since life and love are one (as is apparent from the discussions above in nos. 1, 2), it follows that because the Lord is life itself, He is love itself.

11. God is supremely human. Throughout the heavens one finds no other idea of God than the idea of a person. The reason is that heaven in its totality and in every part is in its form as though a single person, and it is the Divine existing in angels which forms heaven. Thought, moreover, proceeds in accordance with the form of heaven. Consequently it is impossible for angels to think of God in any other way. For the same reason, all people in the world who are conjoined with heaven think similarly of God when they think inwardly in themselves or in their spirit. It is because God is human that all angels and all spirits are human beings in perfect form. The form of heaven causes this, its form being the same in its greatest and in its least constituents.

15. Being is not being unless it has expression, because prior to that it has no form, and if it has no form it has no character, and whatever has no character is not anything.

That which has expression as a result of being is united with the being by virtue of the fact that it is an expression of the being. The consequent effect is a union into one; and so it is that each mutually and reciprocally is the complement of the other, and that each is the all in all things of the other as it is in itself.

22. As for the thesis that the infinite elements in the human God are, in a distinct combination, one, this too can be seen as in a mirror in people. Every person has in him many constituents, and these beyond number, as we observed above,* but still he is sensible of them as one.

43. From the foregoing it can now for the first time be seen that Divine love and wisdom in themselves are substance and form, for they are being and expression itself; and that if they were not such a being and expression as to

be substance and form, they would be only a figment of the imagination, which in itself is not anything.

44. Divine love and wisdom are substance and form in themselves, thus the one and only absolute. We have just established above that Divine love and wisdom are substance and form; and we have already said as well that the Divine being and expression are being and expression in itself.*

47. Divine love and wisdom cannot but be and have expression in others it creates. The essence of love is not to love self, but to love others and through love to be conjoined with them. It is also the essence of love to be loved by others, for thus is conjunction achieved. The essential ingredient in all love consists in conjunction; indeed in it consists its life, which we call pleasure, gratification, delight, sweetness, bliss, happiness and felicity. Love consists in willing what one has to be another's, and in feeling the other's delight as delight within oneself. That is what it is to love.

48. What person cannot see this who is able to discern the essential nature of love? For what is it to love oneself alone, and not someone apart from oneself capable of returning that love? It results in rupture rather than conjunction. A conjunction of love results from its reciprocation, and no reciprocation is possible in self alone. If it is supposed to exist, it is from an imagined reciprocation on the part of others.

From these observations it is apparent that Divine love cannot but be and have expression in others whom it loves and by whom it is loved. For inasmuch as there is such an ingredient in all love, it must exist especially, which is to say, infinitely, in love itself

49. In regard to God, the possibility of loving and being loved in return cannot be found in others who have in them anything of the infinite, or anything of the essence and life of love in itself, or anything of the Divine. For if they were to have in them anything of the infinite, or of the essence and life of love in itself, that is, anything of the Divine, God would not in that case be loved by others, but would be loving Himself. For the infinite or Divine is indivisible. If this were to exist in others, they would be the Divine, and the love would be love of self, not a particle of which can possibly exist in God. For the love of self is altogether opposite to the Divine essence.

Consequently the possibility of loving and being loved in return must be found in others who have in them nothing of the Divine in itself.

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The Divine Esse is Esse itself, from which all things are, and which must be in all things in order that they may have being. A fuller conception of the Divine Esse may be gained by the following propositions:

(1) The one God is called Jehovah from Esse, that is because He alone Is, Was, and Is To Be, and because He is the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End, the Alpha and the Omega.

(2) The one God is substance itself and Form itself, and angels and men are substances and forms from Him, and so far as they are in Him and He is in them are images and likenesses of Him.

19. (1) The one God is called Jehovah from Esse, that is, because He alone Is, Was, and Is To Be, and because He is the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End, the Alpha and the Omega. It is known that "Jehovah" signifies I Am and To Be [Esse]; and that God has been so called from the most ancient times is clear from the Book of Creation, or Genesis, where in the first chapter He is called "God," and in the second and subsequent chapters "Jehovah God," and afterwards, when the children of Abraham through Jacob, during their long sojourn in Egypt, forgot the name of God, it was recalled to their remembrance; of which as follows: Moses said unto God, What is Thy name? God said unto Moses, I am who I Am, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent Me unto you; and thou shalt say, Jehovah God of your fathers hath sent Me unto you: this is My name to eternity, and this is My memorial from generation to generation (Exod. 3:13-15).

Since God alone is the I Am and Esse, or Jehovah, nothing can exist in the created universe that does not derive its esse from Him

20. (2) This One God is Substance itself and Form itself and angels and men are substances and forms from Him, and so far as they are in Him and He in them are images and likenesses of Him. As God is Esse He is also Substance; for unless Esse is substance it is a figment of the reason; for substance has subsistent being. Moreover, one who is a substance is also a form; for unless a substance is a form it is a figment of the reason.

Wherefore both substance and form may be predicated of God, but in the sense that He is the only, the very, and the primal Substance and Form.

