

FACING FEARS --
FINDING
HAPPINESS

a way of life

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Published by New Church Outreach
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CHAPTER 1

THE FEARS THAT SPOIL YOUR LIFE

Introduction

I grew up in a Christian family with good parents. What more would I want? Yet I was not satisfied. I knew something was missing. I had so many questions. Then I met another approach to life, and it gradually began to fill all the needs and desires of my mind. Let me tell you more about this life style. It might help you in your spiritual search.

In my approach to life, fears are replaced by loves. This really has been the most wonderful experience of my life. Giving up fears and acquiring loves instead is probably the most basic, the most important and the most exciting change I have made in my life.

Fears And Loves

Everything we do, every relationship we have, everything in our life, is somehow motivated either by fear or by love. Whenever we fear, we are holding on to something, because we fear to lose it. We may fear to lose the affection of another, because we fear loneliness. We may fear to lose a loved one or loved thing (like money), or we may fear to lose our comfort (we fear pain). We fear to lose our life, or our source of income, or control, or our reputation, or our independence, or our power, or our health. These are all realistic fears.

Fears Are Insidious

Fears are insidious. Let's say we are afraid of having our feelings hurt. What do we do? We try to protect ourselves, we try to hide from being hurt. We may do this by defending ourselves and so appear shy and aloof. Or by attacking, so we become belligerent, or by intimidating people, or by manipulating them.

Whatever we do to hide from this hurt, others will not like it, and will reject us. So our acting on the fear of rejection actually brings more rejection. Fear really is an insidious thing.

If we are worried about making mistakes, we will be hard on ourselves every time we make one. Psychologists call this punitive self reproach. The result of such reproach is a lower level of self esteem. The lower the self esteem goes, the more likely we will make mistakes.

If we make a mistake and we allow ourselves this mistake, then our self esteem will go higher. Our consciousness is not controlled by fear as much anymore, so that we make fewer mistakes. You can see how fear actually increases itself and makes things worse, while your giving up fear will make things better. This future is one decision away.

If we look at other fears we may have, and think them through, we will see that each fear, if acted upon, will make things worse.

We Have So Many Fears

In the beginning of my life I never realized how many fears I experienced. I did not realize how possessive I was. It was so important to hold on to things. Nor did I realize how these fears were tied up with feelings of hatred. The desire to possess quickly brought conflict with others.

Don't Fear

Don't fear anything, except fear to do something that separates you from the love of God and the love of people.

Fear is an evil, a disorder or the opposite of love. We are to shun these evils, these fears, as sins against God, because they separate us from the love of God.

Fear and love exclude each other. If we fear we cannot experience love. We are either in one, or in the other. Living with fear is like a hell. Living with love is like a heaven. We are either in hell, or we are in heaven. It is our choice.

With fear we feel unhappy; we hate fear. But that does not help us get rid of it. We can hate that fear with all our might, but it will not leave us. Getting rid of fear is deciding to choose love instead.

Let me use an analogy. There is darkness and there is light. I may hate the darkness, but I will stay in darkness until I turn on the light. Then the light dispels and replaces the darkness. It is similar with fear and love. I have to

replace fear with love. Where there is love there is no fear. There is no fear in love. Love casts out fear.

As long as I choose fear, I cannot eliminate it. Just as, when I love the darkness, I will not turn on the light. When I have chosen not to fear, I am already beginning to eliminate fear. As soon as that happens, love will begin to flow in.

Make A Beginning

We can have many, many loves, so that we also can have many, many fears. Most of the time we are not aware of these fears, but they are there. They influence us, and they take their toll.

Obviously, we cannot rid ourselves of all fears in one stroke. Yet we can make a beginning. We can make a turn around, so that we can experience the victory of love over the defeat of fear. We can begin to deal with our fears, instead of being a slave to them.

What Love Does

Love has the capacity of lighting up our mind, so we can become aware of fears that make our life difficult. We can work on any fear. The choice is up to us. In this booklet I have chosen to start with the fear of death..

Feel free to choose. Stand in front of the mirror and ask: "What am I going to do. Shall I continue in fear, or do I want out? "

The Fear Of Death

Many people drop all conversation when the word "death" is mentioned, so many avoid that word. Some people do not talk with their spouse and their children about it. Some people get very upset when it is suggested they write a will.

It is amazing to me how severely people resist and deny death. They deny it by not thinking about it, by believing they live on in their children, or in the work they are doing. There are people who deny death by living recklessly and irresponsibly, by getting very close to death. There is so much to be gained, if

we are willing to decide that we are going to deal openly with the fact of our death and the death of loved ones.

Attitude Toward Dying

When I was in the hospital after my heart attack I observed the behavior of a wife and children towards a man who was dying. The man knew it. The family knew it. But they kept denying and pretending. The man wanted to talk, but he was not able to pierce the pretense and denial of his family.

Many are afraid of death - consciously or unconsciously. This fear starts early in life. Denial of death is sustained by a wide variety of maneuvers. Some of these maneuvers obstruct our normal development, and our becoming autonomous.

For example, some people refuse to grow up, some people avoid commitments, some people are sexually compulsive, some people are frenetically busy, others leave major tasks undone.

In the relationships between parents and children we see strange effects of the fear of death. When a parent dies the child feels angry. For as long as a parent lives a child feels he cannot die. By dying the parent has stopped guaranteeing the child's immortality. Parents may resent their children growing up because their growing up pushes the parents closer to their death.

The fear of death does strange things. If we fear death, we defend ourselves against death by refusing to live. If we do not live we cannot die.

The fear of death may show itself as the fear of the unknown. This is an external fear. The internal fear is the fear of losing our own individuality.

Our Mind Never Dies

There are people who say that the body does not really die, it just decomposes and becomes part of nature again. This is no comfort to me. When this happens, my individual body ceases to exist.

There are other people who say that the mind never dies, but that it is reintegrated into the pool of consciousness from which it came. I do not like

that idea either. For then that mind will no longer be mine. As an individual I have ceased to exist. The atheist completes this reasoning by saying that therefore he, as a unique biological entity, with a unique history, with a unique set of experiences and a unique perspective on the world, is alive only for a limited time. The agnostic will not be so definite. He prefers to say that he does not really know. However, the atheist and the agnostic of today disregard the overwhelming evidence of the survival of the human being.

There is evidence given by the testimony of many people who were near death, that defies denial. It would be scientifically irrational to deny all this evidence. There simply is no doubt that a person lives without a living body, that a person lives beyond death. That a person sees and feels and hears and does just as he does when his body is still alive. To say that after death it is all over is simply an untenable statement.

At the same time, there is no irrefutable evidence that a person keeps on living after death forever. This cannot be concluded from the near or after death experiences.

Gather Factual Evidence

We will never be able to gather factual evidence of the reality that in the other world we will live to eternity. Visual observations cannot be made for that purpose. We can only see this truth with our rational mind. We can only see this if we know the purpose of creation and of human life.

If we love a person, we think that it will last for ever. We want to be with that person and we want to love that person for ever. Many love songs express this idea. We all perceive this truth without difficulty.

If we love every moment of life, then we intuitively feel that we will do this for ever. We simply feel that there will be another moment after every present moment.

Learn To Live In The Present

It is very important that we learn to live in the present moment. If we do not learn to live in the present, we will live either in the past or in the future. Living in the past means we are always looking backward where we see our failures. If we are living in the future, we only see our ideals and we feel the

difference between that ideal and our imperfect present. More and more we dislike the future where we do not want to go.

It is true that if the going is rough in the present, we hope that the future will bring improvement. If we have to suffer hunger or oppression or pain, we obviously hope this will pass us by as soon as possible.

When our physical suffering cannot be taken away anymore, we long for the time we will have a young vibrant body again. The old and the terminally sick, long for an ending of their old body. People who believe in an after life, and are looking forward to living there, know how to live in this world.

Rational Sight of Eternal Life

Perceiving that our life is eternal, is easy. It comes to us naturally. How do we come to see the eternity of our life in our understanding?

Our understanding cannot see this in our observations or in the observations of others. We have to see it rationally. Rational sight is higher than sensory sight. Rational sight can see what the eyes see and more. Let me give you an example.

Today we can observe that the earth is round. Now if the earth is a ball, and people live on all parts of that ball, then some of us are hanging down from the earth, others are standing on top, and still others are standing against the sides.

Can you imagine that? Can you see that with the sight of your eyes? If we keep thinking within our senses, within the level of observations, we simply cannot believe that the earth is round. If we reason it out, we have no problem. We can see it rationally. We can see it in our understanding.

We Cannot Observe Eternity

It is the same with eternity. We cannot observe it, just as we cannot observe an endless line. We can see that it must be so, with our understanding. It is from rational arguments that we can see the truth of eternity. If you have any doubt, please recall how you dealt with lines to infinity or lines without end in geometry.

Let us recall that we were created. We had a beginning. But rationally this immediately involves that our creator did NOT have a beginning, that He always was. If He had a beginning, He also was created.

Goal of Creation

Creation implies something else. It implies a goal or purpose. In psychology there is a principle that all behavior has a purpose, a goal: a payoff. The idea that everything created has a purpose is totally scientific.

A famous biochemist, whose name escapes me, when interviewing a prospective assistant, always asked him if he believed that everything he observed in nature had a purpose.

Understanding Human Behavior

It is the same with human behavior. We can truly understand human behavior only if we know and understand the payoff, the goal. It is the same with divine behavior. To understand divine behavior we must understand the purpose of that behavior. There is clarity about the divine purpose: God created us, so He could love us, and we could love Him.

Our Creator did not have a beginning, He was not created. For that reason He also does not have an ending. His existence is eternal. If He had an ending, after that ending He could not maintain the universe, and mankind in this world and in the spiritual world would cease to exist.

It is not reasonable to suppose that a being so capable and intelligent to create a whole universe would suddenly cease to love and act. Once we see the rationality of His existence, then we, as it were, tag along with that idea. We will be eternal.

Reason For Living

We retain our individuality to eternity. While living from day to day, we change from state to state. We increase in love and wisdom if we want to. At the same time we will bask in the warm sunshine of divine love. From that love we receive our reason to live, our self esteem and our love for others.

I do not fear death anymore. In fact, I now am looking forward to it, as I look forward to a trip. Living is full of purpose. Every little way I can improve

myself becomes exciting. No more do I worry about how long I have in this world. I have enough time, because the Lord in His infinite wisdom knows when the best time is. When my time comes, I will go, thanking God with gladness in my heart.

Worry About Life

I do not worry about what I am doing with my life. I know where I am going and I love it and I do not want to crawl into a shell anymore. No more do I need to fool myself or others. It is all in the open and I feel free. I am not foolishly hoping for scientific breakthroughs. I do not feel anger. I do not feel betrayed. I am not asking "Why me? ", and I do not feel that the Lord is not fair.

The fear of death brings deep feelings of loneliness, which can be terrifying. When you lose the fear of death, that feeling of loneliness is gone.

It is true, today people often die in a hospital, away from family and friends. While I would rather stay away from a hospital, I do not fear it, for I know from the many reports of near death experiences and from the Word of God, that I will not be alone. Instead I will be surrounded by angels who will protect me, accompany me into the spiritual world and help me to get used to living there.

The Fear Of Self Esteem

When you have dealt successfully with the fear of death, you are in a position to deal with other fears. When we fear, we are concerned about losing something. The fear of death is the fear of losing our individuality. If we have dealt with this fear, we do not worry about losing our individuality. We see ourselves in the grand scheme of things. We have established a relationship with God and we have an idea of how we relate to other human beings.

We have acquired a sense of belonging. We feel at home in time, in the present, in the past and in the future. We feel at home in nature, and in the world of human beings. However, do we feel at home with ourselves?

It is relatively easy to deal with the fear of death, and to see you are not going to lose your individuality, because it is not difficult to be objective about this. We all have to deal with our fear of losing esteem. We worry that others will lose it. We worry we ourselves will lose it. The fear of losing self esteem deals much more with ourselves, with our inner being, than the fear of death. We

hide from this fear much more than we hide from the fear of death. It is harder to deal with this fear.

The Fear Of Losing Self Esteem

When we fear the loss of self esteem, we cannot stand to be alone. We drown out or flee that loneliness in various ways. We worry about what others think of us. We want to be dependent on someone and/or we want others to be dependent upon us.

What is the point of keeping your individuality, when you do not like yourself? If you do not face the fear of loss of self esteem, it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to face other fears.

Do Not Run From Self Examination

What you need to do is to face a mirror. You have to face the reality of yourself. In theological terminology- you have to examine yourself.

I did not say that you have to examine other people. This is what you want to do when you are still filled with the fear of self esteem. Then you want to examine and judge others.

The way we faced our fear of death was by facing the truth, by facing reality, by facing facts. We faced it by discussing this fear with ourselves and with others. It is the same with the fear of loss of self esteem. We have to start talking about it. We have to try to see the reality of ourselves, whatever that may be.

Face Your Problems

Facing the loss of self esteem is liberating and exhilarating. If we begin to talk about it, we already begin to raise the level of our self esteem. We are returning to reality. We are not anymore in some imaginary heaven, which in reality is an agonizing hell. We begin to connect ourselves with reality, the biggest of which is God, and the next of which is we ourselves as we really are.

Here are the choices you face. If you don't get to a reasonably satisfying level of self esteem, you will continue to be motivated by fears. But if you face the fear of loss of self esteem, it will be easier to face other fears and replace them by loves.

Creation is amazing. As soon as something goes wrong, there are warning signs. Fears are such warnings - feelings of guilt are - feelings of self distrust are. By seeing these feelings as warnings, we can start to dispel them.

Look In The Mirror

Look in the mirror. Face yourself without any reference to anything else or anybody else. Remember one very important thing, : you are an individual with eternal life and you are loved by God unconditionally. These two facts are true regardless of what you feel or what you have done.

Knowing that you will live forever, gives you the reason to face yourself. Why live with fear? Postponing fighting fears is senseless. Knowing that God loves you, gives you the motivation and the power to face yourself. It is God's love that raises self esteem.

Be Truthful With Yourself

When you face the mirror, be truthful with yourself, hate the fears that have beset you, and want them out your life. Then God's love comes in, removes the fear and leaves love behind. In theological terminology it is said that you must shun evil as sin against God, and then you can do good.

For example, fear keeps you prisoner, it makes you suffer and escape from reality. To shun fears means to stay away from fears. Shun these fears as sins against God, shun them as something that separates you from the love of God and of other people. If you act from the love of God, your fear subsides, because God and His infinite love chase them away.

Practical Rules

You may say this is an attractive theory, but you want practical rules. Here they are. Every morning do the following:

1. Look at yourself in the mirror, and say: I am a human being, created by God, and I am going to live for ever and ever. Having said this a number of times, you go to the next statement.
2. I am loved with an unconditional love by God for ever. This love connection with God will always be. I can count on it.

3. Then you say: I am afraid of giving in to my fears. But now the Lord is casting them out, because I have asked Him. This I know for certain.

Repeat these statements many times, even away from the mirror. Say to yourself often; "I am loved."

Other Fears

The fear of death and the fear of loss of self esteem are fears that deal intimately with the identity and the ego of the individual. Both stand between God and man.

Beyond these two fears there are others. All fears distort our thinking. Fears perpetuate in life the very thing we are afraid of.

Fear Of Rejection

Take for example the fear of rejection. We realize that we run the risk of being hurt if we try to engage in relationships with others. It is normal for us to open up to people when we enter into in a relationship and then we become vulnerable and dependent.

Defense Against Vulnerability

We may set up a defense, like shyness or belligerence or manipulation or intimidation. These defenses alienate people from us, leaving us lonely and rejected. How can we fight the fear of rejection? How can we replace this fear with love?

First, take a realistic look at yourself. May be you are hiding behind shyness, belligerence, manipulation, or intimidation. See that first. Then go after it anyhow with determination and perseverance. You may need the help of your partner or a good friend.

Fight Fear Of Rejection

Fight the fear of rejection that has led you into this spot. Remind yourself that if you keep acting from fear, things will get progressively worse. Never again make an excuse for yourself when you act from fear.

The next time you feel shy, keep repeating to yourself: "With God's help I am self confident. " When you act belligerently, repeat to yourself: "With God's help I am friendly. " If you intimidate others, repeat to yourself: "With God's help encourage others. " If you manipulate others, repeat to yourself: "With God's help I leave others in freedom. "

Yearn For The Good Act

Not only do you shun the evil act, but you also long for the good act to come into your life. You cannot shun fear, or order it out of your mind. You can put yourself into a mental position in which love can push out fear.

Our minds are surrounded by spiritual forces, some positive and some negative. God always maintains a balance between these two forces and we are free to decide which one we want.

Until now you have wanted the fear of rejection to dominate your feeling and thinking. It may have been a conscious decision, or a decision by default, but still, you are responsible for that fear ruling your mind. Dislike the fear, refuse to be enslaved by it.

Invite Love Into Your Heart

Invite love into your mind. Love is a thousand times stronger than fear, and is quite capable of driving it out. Love has this ability, because love is from God, and God is all powerful.

Love has great power. Invite it into your mind. Of course, you can use these ideas without believing in God, but then all you can see behind that love is yourself. Love is powerful, because this is the nature of love. But it will not be all powerful when it does not come from God.

God Is Behind Love

When you see God behind love, you see Him helping you. Then you are assured of victory, for His love is invincible. Let me give you some imagery that I have used to drive out fear.

I first imagine God, loving, kind, and friendly. Once I see that picture, I say to myself: I want to follow, I want to imitate. Slowly I begin to see myself, loving, kind, friendly. I begin to feel that way, and I begin to smile.

I allow myself to be in contact with others, so they can react to my new appearance. It works wonders. I test principles I believe in. I tested this one. I remember it vividly.

Practical Test of Principle

My wife and I were on a college campus attending a marriage encounter conference. There were many people milling around, and we did not know any of them. The situation was perfect to be filled with the fear of rejection. I decided to test the principles of my religion. I imagined myself imitating the love of God - I longed for it to flow into my mind. When I saw the face of His love in my mind, I began to smile, and to my astonishment people began to greet us.

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My wife asked me if I knew these people. I said No. It happened over and over again. My wife could not understand it. Finally I told her what I was doing. I felt I had seen God's love at work both in others and in myself. What is more, I also had seen God's love in rational principles.

Now You Test Your Principles

You can test your principles too, because you need the feeling of certainty that comes from such testing. I invite you to face your fear of rejection, the enemy that comes between you and your neighbor.

Fasten your eye on Divine love with the confidence that with the Lord's help you can change your life. Then stop the behavior and start to see yourself without fear and with love. Yearn for love to cast out fear.

You say it is impossible? By yourself this may be true. But with God everything is possible. Take His invitation and act on it, and have a wonderful life.

CHAPTER 2

SELF ESTEEM

It Began With Creation

It all begins with God creating us. He did not make us like puppets. He made us independent, autonomous beings. Autonomy involves independent survival, thinking and judgment. Autonomy is our birthright and our God given destiny.

Because we are created, we are, in a sense, dependent upon God. We need a continuous influx of life from God. Both our mental energy system and our bodily energy system need to be renewed continually, and we cannot do this for ourselves.

The Lord does this regardless of the choices we make. He does this regardless of how we feel towards Him. He does this even when we either hate God or deny His existence. The Lord never says: "If you don't, I won't. "

God Gave Us Freedom

God gave us our freedom and does not want to tamper with it in any way. To make sure we will be autonomous, God created into us the love of self. The love of self is not our invention. It is not the result of our effort to become independent. The love of self is given to us by God, so we will forever know the joy of independence. The love of self prods us to fill our hunger and quench our thirst, it impels us to protect ourselves against extreme heat or cold, and against anything that we perceive as a danger to our well-being. The love of self causes us to take care of ourselves, physically, and mentally and spiritually. The love of self causes us to pursue growth, in our body and in our mind. It propels us from dependent babyhood to independent adulthood.

Self Love Is Not Wrong

Love of self, having been created into man by God, is therefore not wrong, not evil, not sinful. What is evil is when we do things that harm the love relationship between God and ourselves and between ourselves and other people.

Having a love relationship with some one else means that we give up something. We give up the desire to bring harm and hurt to others, not when we are unaware, but when we know it harms and hurts.

We do evil when we do things that harm love relationships. We commit a sin if we know with certainty that something is evil and we do it anyhow.

When Self Love Is Evil

If we love ourselves more than others, then we are in evil. We are sinful only when we realize what is evil and we choose it knowingly. We can exist for our own sake. Our right to exist is not contingent on services we render to others. We do not exist by permission or favor of someone else. Our life is from the Lord, it is given without conditions or restrictions.

From the love of self we pursue self esteem. From the love of self we regard our own as a creation of God. The love of self obligates us to care for our self esteem and to protect.

Love Your Neighbor As Yourself

The Lord said: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. " (Mark 12:30) What a curious and deep statement. It says that love to the neighbor is defined in terms of the love of self. We cannot understand what it means to love the neighbor unless we understand what it means to love ourselves.

In Matthew it says: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets. " (Matthew 7:12) We cannot really promote self esteem in others, unless we have promoted it in ourselves.

Also, we can love ourselves as much as we want. But if we want to be happy, we need to love the neighbor as much as we love ourselves.

Life belongs to us the moment it flows into us from God. He wants us to have it without conditions. He does not give us life to make us His puppets, nor does our life belong to anyone else.

Also, the Lord creates us and gives us life, so we can become happy, not so that we give up our own happiness, and live only for the happiness of others. In

other words, we always remain autonomous, we never surrender to the neighbor, to the church, to the state or to God, thereby erasing ourselves.

My First Obligation

My first obligation to God and myself is to live up to my own expectations - expectations I have formed on the basis of information I choose to use. I cannot be of use to anyone else unless I first look after myself. Charity begins at home. It begins with ourselves. If it does not begin there, it does not exist and cannot go anywhere.

However, while God gave us the freedom to live for ourselves only, He also gave us other opportunities. We have faced the fear of death and the fear of losing our self esteem. The fear that we will lose ourselves in the interaction process with others remains.

Better To Have Good Relationships

Every person can see that it is better to have good relationships than bad ones. It is better not to fight others, better not to steal from others. Even the man in jail does not like others to do to him, what he did to others.

Rationally we can see that it is best to love the neighbor. But how? - that is another question. This is an important question and we need the answer, but we get the answer from revelation only.

No Life Of Sacrifice

God does not ask us to sacrifice our self esteem to others, but He wants us to keep our self esteem and love of self in tact to eternity. The more we raise the level of our self esteem and the more we cultivate and nurture our love of self, the better we are able to love our neighbor.

Relationship With God

We work on a one to one relationship with God. We develop our value system on the basis of God's Word without reference to what anyone else thinks.

This does not mean we don't compare notes, that we do not listen to sermons or classes and that we do not read books. It does mean we decide individually, what we believe and how we will act.

Develop A Value System

We now have to develop our value system. We have to find out how to love our neighbor. At first glance this looks simple. When we get into it, it becomes more complex. We could ask a pertinent question: "Who is our neighbor? Whom should we love? " And right behind this question is the next one: "How much should I love that neighbor? "

How To Approach Love To The Neighbor

We have only so much money to give away, so much energy to act out love, so much time in our lives. We are limited, so how do we do the best with what we have. I offer here general principles about how to develop your own value system. Here is an example to think about.

You promise yourself that you will give to the poor and the needy. You decide how much, then you give it to whomever comes into your vision first.

So a man comes to your door, asking you for money, so he can buy food for his children. This request moves your heart. You give. A few hours later you see the same man drunk.

How do you feel? You feel hurt and taken. May be you did not have that much, so your gift meant a lot to you, and you never would have spent it on alcohol. you don't like drunkenness, and you worry about the children at home.

What can be learned here? Not everybody is the neighbor to whom you should give. Or perhaps you should not have given money, but baby food. You realize you should be more careful in how you give to others.

After an experience like this, you are much more interested in the question: "Who is my neighbor, and how much should I love him. " And you realize that if you do good without much thought and discrimination, you are likely to be fooled.

Who is my neighbor? My neighbor is everybody outside of myself. But there is a difference between one neighbor and another. One neighbor really uses the help he gets, another is a parasite.

Let me widen the concept of neighbor. Don't we also speak about loving our country, our school, and our church? These are composite neighbors. When we ask ourselves what we should do for the neighbor, we also have to consider this larger concept.

One Way To Look At The Neighbor

We can differentiate neighbors in two ways. We can look at their composition and we can look at their character. Let's first look at neighbors from the composition point of view. The closest neighbor we have is ourselves. Then we have "one person" neighbors, like our partner, our boss, our gardener and so on.

The next class of neighbor is the family, first your own family and then other families in your neighborhood. Still another neighbor is the society in which you live, the country in which you reside and the church you belong to. More remote is heaven and most remote is the Lord. Yes, the Lord is our neighbor too.

Another Way To Look At The Neighbor

You shall love the Lord you God, and your neighbor as yourself. Here the Lord teaches us how to look at the neighbor in a different way. First we love the Lord, and then we love the neighbor. We love the divine good and truth in the Lord, and then we love that good and truth in the neighbor. We do not love evil in the neighbor.

Loving The Neighbor In Different Ways

Now we have seen how one neighbor is different from another, we can see that we should love one neighbor in a different way than another.

When we look at the behavior of those around us, some will appear to have more selfish motivations than others. Obviously we should give less love to those who appear to be selfish than those who appear to be less selfish.

Then we will give more love to the one who has more good. Also, we may see that one neighbor is less evil than another. Then we give more love to the less evil one. Also, if one neighbor is evil, we may do him more good by punishment and correction, than by gifts and help.

I have been helped to see that loving the neighbor is not a matter of blind acts to anybody. It is a matter of using our mind and heart to discern who the neighbor is, and how he is. In a way, blind indiscriminate giving is much easier than using discernment and wisdom. But giving with discernment and wisdom is so much better, more effective, and more charitable.

CHAPTER 3

FEELING GUILTY

What Guilt Feelings Are

Most people experience feelings of guilt. When we feel guilty, we feel moral self reproach. When we feel guilty, we acknowledge that we had a choice, made a bad choice, and are responsible for that choice.

Guilt feelings are useful. They warn us that something is wrong. Pay attention to them. We should examine ourselves, and see what is going on.

What To Do With Guilt Feelings

When we have guilt feelings, we have two choices. We keep doing it, or we stop doing it. If we keep doing it, we will justify our behavior with some reasoning. We will lie to ourselves or speak against our own values.

We can stop doing what is wrong. We may be tempted again, but now it will be easier to keep from doing it. We want to do it less and less.

Guilt Feelings That Are Wrong

Sometimes we feel guilty when we should not. We have guilt feeling that are wrong. For example. We have done something for a long time and then we discover that it is evil. We feel guilty. But we are wrong in feeling guilty. We did something evil, but we did not know it was evil. So we should not feel guilty.

Guilt Feelings From Our Youth And Heredity

Let me give another example of a guilt feeling that is wrong. When we are young, we do things, though we do not know what is right and what is wrong. In that situation our chances are 50% we do it wrong. Then we are corrected by our parents or teachers and we feel guilty. And our parents or teachers can really increase those guilt feelings by the way they react to our wrong doing. There are children who have learned to feel guilty all the time. They feel they are no good.

As children we may observe the marital unhappiness of our parents, and we feel responsible for it, and guilty about it. But we really should not, because we are not responsible.

There is another way in which we have guilt feelings that are wrong. Someone tells us that we are sinful from birth on. We have inherited evil and sin from our parents and therefore we are wrong and guilty before we are even able to think and act.

Personal Responsibility

There are also people who claim that we are responsible for everything we experience. So if we experience something bad, it is our fault and we are guilty. Sometimes we feel guilty when a loved one dies, or when our child becomes a drug addict. We have incorrect guilt feelings when we worry about that past.

Each one of us has, at times, felt guilty, when we should not, when we were not responsible, when we did not know what was right. It is fine to feel guilty when we knew and were responsible. But we have to examine our guilt feelings with a lot more care, and if they are not correct, we should reject them.

Live According To Your Value System

We need to live according to a value system, for if we just act on our impulses, we are not truly human and we will be unhappy and make others unhappy. The acquisition of a value system is a purely personal responsibility that needs to be pursued independently of anyone else.

Don't Get Your Value System From Another Person

We are asked to develop a value system within ourselves and on our own. We are not to take it from another person.

The Word of God is the only authority we have. However, each person needs to come to such an acknowledgment in freedom and then we can formulate our value system on the basis of that revelation. We do it independent of anyone else. We can disagree with each other about what we believe to be the teaching of Divine revelation.

Man Judges Himself From His Own Value System

When a man forms a value system from the Word of God, it is up to him and him alone to judge his behavior in the light of that value system. The Lord does not judge man and therefore man should not judge others, for with what judgment man judges, he will be judged again.

In other words, each one of us is totally responsible for his own value system and for his own behavior. We cannot blame anyone else, nor do we accept the judgment of others.

Why is this so important? Because only when we are willing to stand on our own feet, without leaning on anyone else, only when we are autonomous in value system and behavior, can we hope to continually raise the level of our self esteem and only then can we hope to increase our usefulness to ourselves and to others.

Bottom Line

You need to look in the mirror hard, and ask yourself: Do I have a lot of guilt feelings? Are my guilt feelings correct with a few incorrect ones, or do I have a lot of incorrect guilt feelings? And how high is the level of my self esteem? Am I feeling pretty good about myself, or do I have little respect for myself?

If you have a lot of guilt feelings, if you have a lot of incorrect guilt feelings and/or if you have little respect for yourself, then you are most probably unhappy and unsuccessful. But it does not have to be that way, it does not have to stay that way. You can reverse the situation. It is possible to do this.

CHAPTER 4

ORDER AND AUTHORITY ALLOW LOVE AND FREEDOM

There Is Order In The Universe

Order, control and authority relate to love and freedom. There is order in the universe. Everything in the universe operates according to its laws of order. This operation provides for repeatability in the universe, and repeatability then brings predictability, and predictability brings the opportunity for management and control. When we speak about control, we also speak about authority. And these bring the opportunity for freedom and love.

The whole of the universe has been created according to laws of order. Why? Because God is order itself - God is law itself. For example, the law of gravity causes every object in the gravitational field of the earth to fall towards the earth, wherever this object is in the gravitational field. So if a person steps off the roof of a high building he will fall down and probably be killed.

There Is Repetition Because There Is Order

The operation of the law of gravity provides repeatability. Can you imagine what would happen if it did not? One step we would be on the earth, the next we may be above the earth.

You Can Predict Because There Is Repetition

Repeatability brings predictability. We can predict what will happen if we make a step forward. If this were not so. We would not be able to control ourselves. We would not be able to manage ourselves, and the objects we have around us.

For example, the authority we have over our walking and driving would be gone. What a disaster this would be, if we suddenly could not control our car. We would lose the freedom to use it.

Law And Order Give Us A Chance To Love And Be Free

There are so many things we love to do with our car. If we cannot do them anymore, our loves are frustrated. So you see, laws provide us with the opportunity to love and be in freedom.

Many people do not believe the connection between laws, love and freedom. I did not. At first I saw laws as interfering with my freedom, and restricting me. As a free spirit I still do not like protocol, and often I will forget to observe it. But the more I was trained as an engineer and as a theologian, the more I began to see the important connection between law, love and freedom.

The Consequences Of Lawlessness

If there were no laws in a country. Crime would be uncontrolled - civil disagreements would abound - and no way to resolve them or decrease them. How could we have a marriage, a job, a home, a family? It would be a nightmare. As an adolescent I wanted freedom. Today I want order and law, because then I know I have freedom, and can do the things I love.

Law and freedom go together in this world. What about the other world? What about the world of our mind? What about the relationships that exist between human minds? This is a very important question for it is in the realm of the human mind that we have our greatest problems.

Importance Of Laws In Human Relationships

As an engineer I worked with many engineers and other professionals, and faced many problems. But the overwhelming majority of problems were human problems. Technical problems could always be solved easily. If a problem was really difficult, we brought greater technical talent to bear on it, and it was solved. Human problems were always harder to solve, but we need to get a handle on those too.

The Laws Of The Human Mind

Where can we find the laws of order that exist and operate in the world of the human mind? One thing seems certain. We will not be able to discover them as we have discovered the laws of the natural world. Scientific investigation works

marvels in the natural world, and we have learned a great deal about order in the natural world. The reason we have been able to do this is because we can look down on that world, we can set up experiments, and make repetitive observations.

You Learn Them From The Word of God

Investigating the world of the human mind is a different problem. We are not able to look down upon the human mind as we were able to look down upon nature. Only God can look down upon the world of the human mind, and so only God can introduce us to the order of that world. This He does in His Word. In fact, He gave us His Word for this very reason, so we could learn the order of the world of the mind. The whole purpose of revelation is not to reveal the laws of the natural world, but only the laws of the spiritual world.

It is true that psychology and psychiatry have uncovered a lot of knowledge about the human mind. We can look at the actions of other people, try to understand their behavior. Psychology and psychiatry can be immensely helpful in understanding what revealed truth says about the order of the world of the human mind. And this is exactly what we need to do. We need to understand revelation, so we can interpret it correctly.

The Word Is More Than A Human Book

The Word is a lot more than words on a piece of paper. The Word is like a man who has a body that is clothed except for a few spots that are bare, like the face, the hands and the feet. Revelation is also like a man in that it has a mind that communicates with the body, and with the whole of the spiritual world.

The soul of divine revelation is the Lord Himself. Deep within the Word is the Divine itself. Its mind is the Lord appearing to the angels of heaven, and its body is the Lord appearing to man on earth. But most important is that the Word is divine or infinite love appearing to finite minds. Whenever we read revelation, remember that we are seeing God's love approaching us with care and concern.

Don't Be A Literalist

People have tried to understand the Lord by becoming translators and by memorizing the literal sense so they can quote it from memory. There is a

danger in doing this, for we can lose sight of the love relationship the Lord seeks with us.

First Look For His Love In His Word

If you want to learn from revelation what the laws of order of the human mind are, then you approach that revelation with a desire to see God's love, and to be told how to live. Look in revelation for His order, so you can decide what to do with your life.

Then Look For The Order Of The World Of The Human Mind

To see the order of the world of the mind in revelation, we have to approach revelation as if it is a man. First look at His face many times, see His love in His eyes, hear the assurance and authority from His lips.

Then Find Open "Common Sense" Principles

First look for passages that are open and easy to understand. Absorb their spirit and love. Assimilate the assurance and authority of His love. This is the beginning of your order and value system.

Then look at the hands, at those passages that reveal the power of the Lord, the power you need to make the changes you desire in your life.

If you believe God is Infinite Love, you cannot believe that He would want certain people to stay out of heaven. This would not make sense. Instead, believe that God wants all people to go to heaven, and if some do not, it is because they do not want to be there. Do not accept an idea blindly, especially when it goes against your common sense or against your perception of a loving God.

Seek, And You Will Find

Seek spiritual laws and you will find them. Knock on the door of the Divine mind, and He will open it. Ask for help, and you will receive it. Decide today that you are going to knock, and ask, and your life will become a much happier one.

CHAPTER 5

BEING JUDGED, MAKING JUDGMENTS

No Need To Make Judgments On People

In a previous chapter I explained how we love our neighbor, that we do not love people blindly and indiscriminately - but that we love a good person in a different way than a selfish person.

From this it would seem that you are going to have to make judgments, that you are going to have to figure out who is good and who is evil. But this is not the case. Let me explain how you can be discriminating in the exercise of love of the neighbor without making personal judgments on people.

What You Need To Do Instead

Your first step towards discriminate love to the neighbor is to know what is good and what is evil. In other words, you need to develop your value system from the Word of God.

The second step is to live according to that value system. If you make that step, you will begin to know, perceive, and feel what good is. And your mind will be drawn more and more to good, and away from evil.

Looking For The Good In Others

The more we live according to the value system that we have from the Lord, the more we will seek good in a person and the more we will avoid evil. If we see good, we will extend our love. If we do not see good, we will wait with love, stand outside as it were, hoping that we will sometime see good, and excuse evil when we see it.

With this approach we do not evaluate an event, or the action of a person. We do not come with criticism, disapproval, judgment and rejection. We do not come with judgment. How wonderful this is, because judgment would interfere with the love relationship we can have with others.

The Temptation To Make Judgments

Now it is not easy to see this approach. We are so inclined to judgment. We call people names, and we make judgments about them. We first fail in relating to other people, and then we try to rationalize our failure to relate. So we begin to dehumanize the other by using negative labels. Once the other has been dehumanized, we can blame him/her for our failure to relate, and we then feel better about ourselves.

Sometimes we fail to do certain things, and instead of concentrating on our own failure, we look at the failure of others and judge them. For example, we have problems in our own marriage, and we may even think about divorce, and then we become disturbed when we see how others become divorced, and we blame them for getting us off the right track. We judge them, while we really should judge ourselves. Parents who do not have an unconditional love for their children, excuse this failure by making judgments on their children.

The Lord once said: "Judge not, so that you be not judged, for with what judgment you judge, you shall be judged, and with what measure you mete it shall be measured to you again." (Luke 6:38, 38) In other words, when you say that others are evil, then you are evil yourself. Once you start applying a value system to others, you have to apply it to yourself also.

After these statements the Lord said this: "Why do you see the mote in your brother's eye, but do not consider the beam in your own eye? Or how will you say to your brother, Let me pull out the mote out of your eye, and behold, there is a beam in your own eye. You hypocrite, first remove the beam from your own eye, and then you can see clearly to take the mote out of your brother's eye (Matthew 7:3-5)."

What Judgment Really Is

We do not need to be in doubt about what we should do with judgment. The Lord, who acts from infinite unconditional love, does not judge anyone ever. And if we want to follow Him, then we need to do the same thing. The closer we come to the Lord, the higher our standards will be, and the greater our forgiveness. It does not matter what happens outside of ourselves, or what others do wrong. The one important thing is how we act and what we are.

Judgment Is Hating

When we judge, we really hate, as we have chosen fear and hatred. The judgment has not touched the other person, but it has touched us. And the more we hate and judge, the more that hatred and judgment will go against us.

But, you say, we have to judge criminals. We need civil judgments of equity. You are right. Society could not exist if criminals were not apprehended, judged and punished. We must have judges who can judge on disagreements between people. These judgments are needed, not because a judge hates a person, but because others need to be protected.

We Do Need Criminal And Civil Justice

In the case of criminal justice and civil equity we cannot say that it does not matter what happens outside of ourselves. It matters a great deal. We cannot ignore the fact that a person kills, hurts, or steals. We cannot ignore the fact that a person does not follow contractual obligations. Society would be in total chaos, if we were not willing to make these judgments.

An act of murder can proceed from hatred or from greed. However, in a criminal or civil suit we are not asked to judge the person's spiritual state. We are asked to judge his acts only. We are asked to protect the civil freedom and safety of people.

The Importance Of Having The Facts

From criminal and civil suits we learn something very interesting in regard to spiritual judgment. In a criminal or civil suit there first has to be a "finding of facts". We first have to establish exactly what happened. This finding of facts is surrounded by laws.

In other words, the courts only accept certain ways in which facts can be found and established. After the facts have been found, there has to be an application of law to facts, which then leads to conclusions of law. It is in these conclusions of law that the court comes to a final judgment.

I believe that courts can do much better fact finding than we individuals. The courts can subpoena, put people under oath, and compel them to testify. As individuals we have no such powers. And so our facts will never be sufficient to make a correct judgment.

Judging is not only bad for your own state of mind, and your own happiness, but it is impossible to do it correctly.

As long as you think you are obliged to judge others, you are carrying a heavy and unnecessary burden. Why not decide now to get rid of it? Why not decide now to stop judging others and become a loving person? Why not decide to move towards heaven and love? Your life will change drastically. And you will be very happy with the change.

CHAPTER 6

JUDGMENT, HUMILITY AND GRATITUDE

If we want to judge others, we place ourselves above them, and tell ourselves that we are better, and in a good position to make a judgment on them.

But if we are humble, if we are aware of our own failings and weaknesses, then it is not so easy to make judgments on others, because when we see the feelings and actions of others, we see our own.

Once we establish a love relationship with the Lord, we begin to realize how much we love ourselves, and how much in ourselves goes against such a relationship. We realize that we have to make changes.

When we try to make changes, we find it is not so easy. We realize that others must have the same difficulties. We become more understanding of the failings of others.

The reality of life is that we cannot make these changes by ourselves. We cannot make them without the help of the Lord. Suddenly we realize how wonderful it is that the Lord helps us this way. Feelings of deep gratitude well up in our heart, and at some time we also discover that others are in the same position.

When we stop judging others, we become humble and grateful at the same time. Not judging others, humility and gratitude, go hand in hand. The person who shrinks from judging others, is also the person who goes through life with gratitude and humility of heart.

Do not expect to make fast changes. It takes many decisions and many times starting over again. At first this seems hard to accept. Why could not the Lord help us to make changes faster? Actually the Lord brings about changes slowly, so you will feel like a human being and not a puppet manipulated by the Lord. While changing you, the Lord watches your freedom and protects it exquisitely. You do not want to wake up the next day, after a drastic change, and not recognize yourself.

CHAPTER 7

MARRIAGE

For Singles And Married

Fifty percent of the adult population of the United States is married. The other 50% are living in the single state, a state which, in this world, many will never leave.

I was 37 before I married, so I understand the single state very well. I have gone through the hell of loneliness that many singles experience. As a minister I have seen and felt the pain that widows and widowers experience after their partner leaves them for the other world. I have seen what pain divorce can bring to people.

I realize that even if you singles feel at home in your church and there is a lot of support there for you, when you come home, loneliness is there.

Goal Setting

What about the ideal of marriage? I have learned that goal setting is all important. Goal setting is the same as the formulation of ideals. In every field of life we need to know what our ideal is, what our goal is. Then we figure out where we are, then we see the path between our goal or ideal, and our present state. This approach gives stability to our life.

House In Heaven

Our goal in marriage is a one to one love relationship between a husband and a wife that will last to eternity. This relationship represents a oneness that relates to the Lord. In heaven such a relationship exists in a home, which represents this oneness that cannot be shared with anyone else.

This why in heaven no person can enter the marital home. It is a unique entity. All this is involved in the profound words in Genesis that announce that God created man (Adam), male (ish) and female (isha) created He them.

God Permits Imperfections

When we begin to approach our ideal, we are not immediately there. It takes time. We are permitted to be imperfect. It is normal to make mistakes, and they are part of the plan, as long as we try to learn from them.

The God of my life loves me unconditionally. This means if I make mistakes, He continues to love me, and He does not judge me. If I choose to do the wrong thing, He is saddened, but He does not interfere. If I keep trying to do right, He is delighted. He does not blame me for imperfections, and He gives me all the happiness I am capable of receiving, wherever I am on my journey of spiritual growth.

My theology says that the Lord wills perfection, but permits imperfection. By permitting imperfections the Lord does not agree, but He permits. Otherwise He would take away freedom. As long as some good comes out of our imperfections, the Lord permits them. As long as I am on the way to heaven, the Lord permits, because I learn from mistakes, so I become better.

The concept of permission is a very important concept in marital life, family life, work life, and any other field of life. It prevents discouragement. It helps us to deal with unfulfilled expectations. It enables us to have the right idea about how God deals with us in our daily life, and how the Lord does not have to do anything extraordinary to erase imperfections from our being so we can live in heaven.

The principle of permissions nurtures common sense, and helps us to face the reality of life. In this principle we see the humanity of our Lord.

Without Permission There Is No Ideal

This principle of permissions connects with the ideals of marriage, family and work. Without permissions we would live a life of double standards, of lofty ideals and of imperfections. Living such a life is very unsatisfactory, it leads to a psychological breakdown.

With the principle of permissions, our ideals are given meaning. They become practical. We learn from them. We make them our goals and strive for them. Through the principle of permissions imperfections become intermediate goals, intermediate ideals, or intermediate goods.

Eternity Of The Male/Female Difference

The most important fact about marriage is its eternity. This means that a man is a man, and a woman is a woman, not only in this world, but also in the other world. The sexual relationship we see in this world, we also see in the other world.

Once you see the eternity of sexuality, your attitude towards sex and marriage changes. For whatever ideal you are going to work towards in marriage, you know this will continue to eternity. It is not for say 60 years, but for always. All the investments of thought and love and work that you make in marriage pay off forever.

The Single Status

There is another consequence of seeing the eternity of masculinity and femininity. If you are single, and wonder if you will ever find a partner, you now know that you will find a partner, if not in this life, then in the other life. Ask and it shall be given. Seek and you shall find. Start your spiritual journey and begin to follow the Lord. It is a precious investment which will increase your happiness today, and in the future when you are married.

The single state is not the married state, so it is not as ideal. It is imperfect. But imagine you believe that marriage is only for this world, and does not exist after death. When you do not get married, you may become sad and depressed.

When you believe that marriage exists in the other life, your hope for a wonderful relationship does not have to be given up. The same hope is given to those who have been divorced or have lost a spouse.

The Male/Female Difference And Relationship Are From The Lord

When you see the eternity of sexuality you realize that sexuality is not superimposed by the construction of the male and female body. You realize that sexuality is first in the mind, then in the body from the mind. And if it is in the mind from birth, then it is in the soul from conception, so that sexuality is therefore from the Lord.

You will see that this idea has a profound effect on your thinking. It does not answer ALL your questions about sexuality, especially the questions you may

have about the deviations from the ideal, but it still will change your attitude towards sex, and I believe you are also in a better position to understand and manage your own deviations from the ideal.

If the magnificent difference between men and women is not just of the body, but also of the mind, you will begin to wonder about the nature of the masculine and feminine mind. You will become interested in the physiology of the masculine and feminine mind, because you realize that this can have a profound effect on your ability to have a good marriage.

The Masculine And The Feminine

The masculine and are equal but not the same. We try to understand more fully the difference, and how through the difference they can become a one.

The Ideal And The Nonideal

The ideal, in this world and in the other world, is for one man to love one woman, and for her to love that one man, and for the two to go on that spiritual journey of self improvement, so they become one. This is meant by the well known statement: "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh. " (Matthew 19:5)

Oneness of husband and wife has to be fostered and promoted here on earth. And this oneness does not come about unless both husband and wife go on the spiritual journey of self improvement. The ideal is that a man meets his wife in early adulthood, and that they grow together more and more, and that they meet again after death, and that they are married in the spiritual world to eternity.

Living On This Earth Is Not Always Ideal

On this earth things are not always ideal. Things do not always go right. Sometimes things go wrong. Not all of us grow up as hetero sexual, not all of us are ready for marriage in early adulthood. Some of us have flaws from heredity or education that make a marriage either impossible, or unwise, or problematic.

Those of us who do get married, often have problems. Sometimes we cannot overcome them right away. The most hopeful idea in such situations is that we know that we can reach a beautiful relationship in the other world, regardless of our heritage or education.

The Marital Challenge

Every man and woman is given a marital challenge. Every man and woman is given the ideal goal of a heavenly marriage with one partner. A marriage that is from God and with God, and that will last to eternity. A marriage of real and deep friendship accompanied by trust and peace.

The challenge of such a marriage is to see our imperfections, to know that God tolerates them, and to work on them, so they will be removed.

We are all called to this challenge. We are created for it. We are attracted to it. Moreover, the Lord will help us face it. My wish for you is that you will see the challenge, face it and sometime enter into the joy of a wonderful marriage.

CHAPTER 8

THE FAMILY

The Ideal Of The Family

Look at the connection between family, marriage and the Lord. Marriage as an institution has a direct connection with the Lord. It comes from the Lord and the Lord's love is directly focused on it.

In marriage there is the reenactment of creation. Marriage is the seminary of the human race, and so the seminary of the angelic heavens. From marriage comes forth a continuous stream of human beings, and from that stream comes forth a continuous supply of new angels.

The point of marriage is not just to feel comfortable and good ourselves. Marriage does not exist to dissolve loneliness. Although it is fine if it does that. The point of marriage goes far beyond two individuals. It goes far beyond the couple. In marriage we are heavily involved in creation, and that involvement has numerous lasting and far reaching consequences.

A Heaven Of Angels From The Family

I believe that all angels in heaven were once human beings on earth. When you look at your children, and see their innocence in their eyes, you are seeing potential angels. When you are attending your dying parents, you are seeing angels go to heaven.

When you are meditating, you can experience the nearness of angels. People who were near death, have reported the sight of angels. Angels are normal and are with us all the time. They are not a sign of death, but a strong indication of eternal life. We are involved with them all the time. They are normal parts of life.

Good Deeds In Marriage

If we do something good in marriage, it affects our partner, our children, the people we work with, and the society we live in. If we do something wrong in marriage, it affects our partner deeply, our children, the people we work with, the neighborhood, the state and country, and the world we live in.

It is so difficult to get these last two ideas across to adolescents. It is hard for them to see how good behavior really affects others. Adolescents who have never seen evil behavior cannot imagine how it effects others. Adolescents are usually concerned with themselves on their way to becoming independent adults.

But once they see evil behavior from close by, and they see how it effects spouses and children, they are able to see the terrible effect of such behavior.

Effect Of Open Discussion

Those of us who have listened to various talk shows on radio and TV have been deeply impressed by the terrible and widespread effects of evil behavior. Our hearts have gone out, I am sure, to the victims. There is no more doubt that such behavior should be shunned.

Fifty years ago, when we did not have such open discussions, we did not know how rape, and incest, and sexual molestation of children affects a person. We did not know the terrible consequences of such behavior.

Eternity Of Marriage And The Family

When children are born within the marriage, the family evolves. But there is a real difference between the marriage and the family. Marriage is meant to be eternal. Marriage between two people does not always last in this world. But as long as both partners nurture their own spiritual regeneration, then both will find eternal partners after death. So marriage is eternal.

Family does not last and is not meant to last. The connection between parents and children is as temporal as the connection between child and womb. Parents need to keep in mind that their relationship with each other is more important than their relationship with their children, because the relationship with their children is not eternal, while the relationship with each other can be. The relationship between parents and children will change into a relationship between adults who are close friends in this life.

Importance Of A Good Marriage

If a marriage relationship is good, children will benefit from it. If this relationship is defective, children will suffer from it. The first requirement for a good family is a good marriage.

In a family children learn all kinds of lessons. First of all they learn lessons about marriage. The boys learn about women, and the girls learn about men. In the family all children get their first taste of how people react to behavior. The family is the laboratory where children test out what they have learned about life. It is in the family that children learn to be grown up. Parents play a very important role in the development of their children.

Education Of Children In Marriage

As parents we know little about the education of children. What we know, we have learned from our parents. So often, when children become parents, they behave like their own parents. This makes it important for parents to know and do what is right. Let's go beyond our temporal parents, and see what we can learn from our heavenly father, the Lord, and from our heavenly mother, the heavens and the church.

Unconditional And Nonjudgmental Love For Children

The most important lesson to learn is unconditional, nonjudgmental love for children. This is what our heavenly father has for us and this is what the angels of heaven and the people of the church have for us.

This is not easy to give. It is important that you persist, because unconditional love is for children the bread of life, without which they suffer and starve. You don't have to be educated, you don't need a college education, all you need is unconditional love.

Children Meet Outside Forces

When children move into the world outside the family, which happens when they go to school, they all meet with hostile forces. To deal with these forces children need parents who will help and teach, but nevertheless approve and love wherever and whenever possible.

What children need to learn from their parents is that their love of self is good, but that this love needs to be balanced with concern for others. What children need to learn is how to exist for themselves and how to exist for and with others.

In the outside world the children meet with authority. Therefore they should have met with authority in the family in the sphere of unconditional love, for then their reaction to authority outside the family will be normal and comfortable. If parents exercise parental control in the sphere of unconditional love in the family, then the children will react correctly to control when they meet it in the outside world

Parental Fear

I meet parents who are afraid when they deal with their children. They are afraid to do the wrong thing, as they were told by psychologists about all the bad things they could do to their children.

You need to deal with this fear because you cannot do a good job when you come from fear. That fear needs to be replaced by unconditional love. If you act from unconditional love and common sense, you will go a long way. You can learn from various sources, but be sure to use your common sense to choose. Finally, do not feel guilty about mistakes you make.

Acknowledge your mistakes to your children, and tell them your mistakes sadden you. By doing this you will model to your children what you will be teaching them, and what you hope they will do as adolescents and adults. Your children will see you are human, and will learn to permit themselves to be human too.

Introduce Children To Laws

Parents need to introduce their children to the natural world and to the laws of that world. Parents also need to introduce them into the spiritual world and to the laws of that world. Parents need to educate their children for heaven.

This lifts your family, with all its mundane daily details, up into the sunshine and dimension of heaven. Suddenly eternity comes down to the little seemingly unimportant activities of your life. This gives you a whole new view on family life.

Heaven Is Activity

Heaven is a kingdom of activity, where happiness comes when you do something good for yourself and for others. When we educate our children for heaven, we help them to learn how to do something good for themselves and others. In the family, children learn about work, how to think about work and how to approach it. This is the subject of the next chapter.

Whether you are young and still single, whether you are adult and see marriage in the immediate future, whether you are already married and have children, dream of being useful as a father or mother to your partner and to your children. Dream not of yourself, but of them, and of your being useful to them. Realizing this dream is far more important than satisfying your own selfish desires. You can dream these dreams and live them.

CHAPTER 9

WORK

The Excitement Of Work

Work relates to family, marriage, and society. I love work and the challenge and activity of work. I love the morning and the beginning of the week. Friday comes to me too soon.

When I joined the work force, it did not take me long to find out that many people do not feel this way. Lots of people hate to go to work and/or love idleness.

Work Is Not A Curse

Some people who believe work is a curse placed upon mankind by God. This was done when God was angry towards Adam and Eve for their eating of the forbidden fruit. It is not surprising that they believe that heaven is a place where eternal rest is their high reward.

Work Is Not A Curse But A Blessing.

Work causes happiness, and as heaven is happiness, it is logical that work is also an integral and important ingredient of the life of heaven.

There is a very strong connection between work and heaven, between work and marriage, and family, and finally, between work and self esteem and the love of self. But the highest connection that work has is with the Lord.

Work is from the Lord, because when He created us, He created us free human beings, and He purposely involved us in His work. Because work is from the Lord, it is a blessing. All we have to do, is see it that way, and all His blessings are ours.

There is work for us in the spiritual world and in this world. First let me give you some examples of work that we may have in the spiritual world. When we die, the Lord wants us to enter the spiritual world in a sphere of deep peace. The highest angels are involved in this process. They sense when a person is dying and they then stay with him. They surround the person with their

angelic sphere of love and peace. Later on, lower angels accompany the person so he gets acquainted with the new world he has entered.

How The Lord Helps

Every good ability and attitude these angels have, is from the Lord. Actually, the Lord is doing the comforting and the accompanying, but He does it through the angels. In that way human beings can be involved and participate in the work of Divine help.

You can see there is no curse in this work, there is only happiness and blessing. When the angels work with a dying person, they are coming in the name of the Lord, and so they bring His divine blessing. What a wonderful job to have.

There are many other things the Lord does for the minds of people, and in all these many uses, angels are involved. Of course, the angels who are involved in the immediate helping of human beings on earth, need themselves help from other angels. They need support in many ways. So there are angels who work at providing this kind of support. Each angel has a unique place in the divine work of helping people on earth. Each angel performs a special use.

Created For A Use

I would like to show you how this works, for then you can see the overpowering truth of the statement that we are all created for a very special use.

The heavens can be compared to the human body. For example, in the human body there are many cells - in the heavens there are many angels. In the human body these cells form various organs - in the heavens these angels form various societies. In the human body these organs perform certain functions - in the heavens these societies perform certain uses. I could go on for quite a while drawing this parallel, because there is a perfect correspondence between the human body and the heavens. In fact, we speak about the “Grandman of Heaven”.

Just as each cell in the body takes its own unique place in the body, so an angel in the heavens takes its own unique place in the heavens. It performs a specific function there.

We are special in societies of heaven, and special in societies on earth. There we have a special use to perform. On earth we prepare for that use. This is

part of the connection between work and the Lord, and between work and self-esteem and love of self.

The Lord feeds our self esteem, and challenges our love of self by giving us a special place in His universe, and a special task in society. So we should not lower the esteem we have for ourselves.

Love Of Self

Our love of self should accept this special task, and feel challenged by the trust that the Lord has placed in us. Never should we allow anyone in this world to detract us from this task. It does not really matter how successful we are. What is that we are faithful and that we persevere.

In society, in this world, we are usually doing some job. In this job we are remunerated for the work we are doing and we use this remuneration to support marriage and family. Outside this financial reward, we receive other rewards of a more psychological nature. We need these rewards to increase our self esteem and to satisfy our love of self.

Work that is done in a job in society is extremely useful, because its remuneration provides for shelter, food, clothing, and education. Without these the family cannot exist. The influence of a working person goes far beyond one family. For if that person does a good job, he or she will also help to support other families. To see how good work in a job impacts and helps many other people, you need to see what happens if a person does a terrible job. Its negative influence will reach amazingly far. We can correctly say that if you do a good job in your daily work, you do good for your own family, for society and for your country.

Role Of Parents

Parents do more than just work in a job in society. Parents are also good role models for their children. Parents do good work when they teach their children how to derive a value system from revelation, how to approach problematic situations in life, how to live rationally, and how to control and manage their lives. You will be surprised when your child begins to tell you what you have taught him or her.

You teach your children 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. Can we say this work is a curse? My answer is NO. It can only be a blessing. Working for your

family can be so absorbing that you do not see much else. But there is a greater view.

Help In The Family

Your influence is greater than you think. Opportunities to help your children are more than you realize. There is more to your work than the daily work you are involved in, and the work you are doing in your own family. Many of you are also working in the community and in the church.

Priorities today are a challenge. First comes family, then community, then church.

I hope you will always see your work as coming from the Lord, that you will always see this work as a great blessing, that you will be excited every day about the many opportunities the Lord is giving you , and that you are looking forward to a life of usefulness both in this world and in the world to come.

CHAPTER 10

MORE BENEFITS

Why Talk About Religion?

My wife and I have two wonderful sons. We feel good about our family and what we have done for our children. But there is one thing we are deeply concerned about. What kind of a world are they facing? It is a troubled world, in which people are uncertain about fundamental values and ideas.

What is needed is a set of principles, that lead to a happy and peaceful life, and these must stand up to the reasoning of anti-religionists.

We need principles that are not only true, but also reasonable, balanced, rational and above all, defensible. My wife and I have found such ideas in our religion and have given them to our children.

We would love to share them with you. As I already have shown you, my religion has many wonderful benefits. Now I would like to mention a few more of them, so you can see why we are excited about our religion.

Acceptance By God

My religion teaches unconditional love of God for people. The Lord does not say things like: "If you do, or if you are, then I will. " The Lord loves us regardless of what we are and do.

In my life I have setbacks. I am dissatisfied with the slowness of my personal progress. Yet, when I see the unconditional love of God and I see my life in that perspective, I can see intellectually that all these things are not as devastating as they were when I felt them at the time.

If things do not work out on this earth, as I would like them to work out, they will in the future. If certain people reject me today, I will meet many in the future who will accept me. Even if I have not made progress, I will have plenty of time to try again.

No one is always successful. No one is always accepted. Most of us have doubts about our life's use, about our vocation, and about our goals. I want you to know you are not alone.

Not In Religion From Fear But From Love

I am not in my religion because I fear something, but because I love it. No one scared me into it. Nor should this ever be done to other people. No one should be led to the Lord by any fear tactics.

The love I am talking about is strong and wise, it is not sentimental and foolish. It is the kind of love that enables me to react to the circumstances of life with calm circumspection and serene confidence that everything will turn out to be right and good. It is not the kind of love that flares up and dies down like a straw fire, causing foolish behavior. It is a love that overcomes and yields lasting victory.

How The Lord Allows Imperfections

In my religion I have learned how to deal in a loving way with disorder, with things that are exclusively selfish. I have learned to understand that the Lord permits all of us to do things wrong and that He leads us away from fear and selfishness little by little.

He does this gently, without forcing us to change. The choices we make are usually between something that is bad and something that is not as bad. This concept of lesser and greater evils plays a great role in our changing, in our regeneration.

No Need To Be The Best

In my religion you do not have to be the best or the most successful. If you do not compete with others, then that does not mean that you are nobody. In my religion you are not compared with others. You are somebody already simply because you were created by God and are loved by Him. No one is inferior to another person.

Help In Education Of Our Children

Some time ago my youngest son wanted to talk. So we did, as we have done so many times. He said that he was looking forward to being married and to having a family. When I asked him why, he explained that he wanted to have with his kids, what I had with him, a relationship of love and communication.

Our children were educated in a sphere of authority. But apparently it had not interfered with my love relationship with them. In fact, my son once told me that he felt that it had actually helped him to grow up and stay out of trouble. In other words, in my religion it is possible to have authority, but at the same time to have love, ties, and communication.

Would you like to have such a relationship with your children? If you are an adolescent or a young adult, would you like to have such a relationship with your parents, so you could avoid alienation and separation and have independence and love instead? You can have it. You are one decision away.

No Conflict Between Science And Religion

In my religion there is no conflict between science and religion. People trained in science find it sometimes difficult to accept that certain writings are from the Lord. Even if they can do this, there is often a conflict between science and theology. I was trained in chemical engineering before theology and I can empathize with people in that predicament.

In my religion there is no such conflict. In my theological studies I use the scientific method. From the Word of God I derive ideas regarding the spiritual world and from nature I derive knowledge regarding nature. I do not expect science from the Word of God, nor do I look for theology in nature. Nature and the Word were both created by the same God and so I do not expect contradictions. If I were to encounter contradictions, I immediately know I have made a mistake somewhere.

I have found that I am continually growing and changing in both fields, and I also have found that both these fields are developing continually. And of course, these opinions may have to be changed. I consider it quite possible that even after death I will have to be taught new ideas. But the bottom line of all this is that scientific ideas never shake my belief in God and His revelation.

Two Ways To Find Truth

There are two ways in which we can find truth. The first way is called perception. Say you encounter a statement that is claimed to be from divine revelation. When it enters your mind, you intuitively see that it is true. You do not need to reason, discuss, or compare it with other statements. With your whole being you say yes to the idea. That is perception.

It is quick and effortless, but it does not come to everybody. Most of us have to approach truth in the second way. This second way requires reading, studying, thinking, comparing, understanding, and making decisions. You do not perceive as much as you understand.

Understanding the Word of God is an accomplishment that is achieved after work. It is an accomplishment in which one grows continually and forever.

CHAPTER 11

YOUR FUTURE

Belief In The Future

With my religion you have a great future. This religion can enable you to live in a wonderful present and to be heading for a promising future. Let me explain how to get to this belief in the future.

The Lord wants to do good. He does not cause hunger, war, pestilence, sickness, depression, alcoholism, or addiction. These things He permits. All HE does is good. If revelation says anything to the contrary, it is an appearance of a truth, not real truth.

The Lord does not judge. He does not punish. He tries to keep us from doing foolish things though He will not interfere with our freedom. All the Lord does is to attract us to heaven to a state of deep and intense happiness. He attracts only. He does not manipulate. He does not scare. He does not give us the proverbial sales pitch that this is our last chance. He does not use fear to get us into heaven.

Scare Tactics

This means that you need not listen to voices that try to scare you into heaven. Reject voices who present the idea that the end of the world is nearby, that we are about to go under in a gigantic struggle between nations. These voices are not from God. The voice of God is the voice of love that says: Fear not. Open your mind to His love, so you can be moved by it

You are totally free to respond to the attraction of His love, totally responsible for the choices you make. You judge yourself. You have your future in your hands. It is totally up to you. You can be intensely happy if you want to be. Or you can be intensely unhappy. No person, no event and no thing can really influence this. Nothing can touch the inner happiness that flows into your mind from the Lord.

You have the challenging task of becoming an individual who follows the Lord, who lives in divine order, who is autonomous, whose self esteem is rising to higher levels, who is in control, whose fears are subsiding, and whose spiritual strength is increasing every day. The more you become such a person, the

more you will be able to deal with others. The more you will be able to convince them of your good-will, and the more you will be able to help others and improve the quality of their life.

While following the Lord, don't look at anybody else, and don't compare with anybody else. As soon as you start to follow, keep going and persist to the end of life, and you will be successful. Refuse to compare your external actions with those of others. The Lord does not do this, so why should you?

God looks at the heart, He looks at motives, efforts and at nothing else. In His eyes you are a unique creation with a special place in His infinite scheme. A place that only you can fill. All you have to do is to grow in that place, following His call and leadership.

The most wonderful facet of the future is that it is open ended. Even in retirement, you can be more active than you are when you worked in society. When you go to the other world, your usefulness will be opened even more, for there the freedom of activity and your energies will be much greater. Let me invite you to see that is just as true for you as it was for me. I am inviting you to start this journey towards a bright future.

You start from wherever you are, and begin to walk to Him and to a greater self. I am going to ask you to look at your life. Ask yourself how much of your waking life are you really happy, and how much of it are you feeling unhappy, unfulfilled, depressed, and fearful? Look at yourself in your job. Do you go to it with delight, or do you drag yourself there because of the money? Look at yourself in your marriage. Are you happy there or not? Look at the world outside and its future. Are you worried? Once you have answered all these questions, you will know how you really feel.

Spiritual Journey

If you feel fearful, unhappy and depressed a good part of the time, I want you to imagine that you could feel just the opposite, no fear, but happy and elated most of the time. That's how it will feel when you are making the spiritual journey of regeneration.

If you start on that journey, you will change your life, and you will change the life of others around you. You will improve the quality of their lives. You will increase their happiness. All this will give great meaning to your life and existence.

Your influence on the lives of others is much greater than you think. Just listen to TV and see how bad deeds impact the lives of many. How much more will your good deeds influence other people. It will even influence the lives of people you do not know.

The First Step

The first step is to become more and more aware of God, of His unconditional, nonjudgmental love, of His tremendous wisdom, of His great power and His presence in everything in your life.

The Lord can come into you with that great love and take away your loneliness, fears, and guilt. With His wisdom He can show you what to do and where to go. And with His great power He will help you do everything that seems impossible now. That love, wisdom and power will be present with you in all the regions of your mind and in all the situations of your life. I hope you will make this first step.

The Second Step

In the second step you share what you have just found with others. Do not be concerned with yourself only, but think about others now. This booklet is a stepping stone, so buy it, read it again, and pass it on with love. Help others as you were helped.