

THE POWER OF EVERLASTING LOVE

Pulse of Spirit

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What do you think the people in your world might be asking of you? Or, to put it another way, what do you think they need from you?

We could think of the *whole* world. This week, there have been devastating floods in Pakistan. In Ukraine, the Russians are threatening the integrity of the largest nuclear power plant in Europe. Here in America, our democratic system of government is under ongoing threat. These are only a few of the issues that are taking center stage in the global news. What do these situations call for from us?

And then there are the people immediately in our lives. It is apparent to me that the people in my life—my world—need something from me. They are asking for something from me. How about you?

It is also true that there is an urge in me to *give* something to the people in my life. Thank God for that! It would be disturbing if it were all need, with no gift to give. But within all of us, there is the urge to give our gift. If we are open to it, we learn to access something deep within ourselves to be of

service to other people. Our first attempts might show that there is something more powerful to bring than we initially appreciated.

We have Love to bring to others. Love has many dimensions. They may need an affectionate kind of Love, which can be a wonderful thing. And yet, there is far more to Love than human affection. Love is a power, and we have the power of Love to bring to others.

When I think of the people in my life, I know they need the power of Love from within themselves, but perhaps there is something they need from me to remind them that the power of Love is present.

The word *power* is interesting. It has two meanings in the English language. One is the power to move something, the power to do work. That kind of power is energy.

But we use the word *power* in another way too. When we say that a person has power, we might

mean they have some kind of authority, perhaps politically or organizationally.

When we speak of the power of Love, both these meanings of the word are relevant. Love is an energy that can move mountains. And the power of Love brings the authority of Love.

The authority of Love is the government of Love. Does our world need some of that? The Russian army is severing power cables to the nuclear station in Ukraine. Do you think there is a need for the government of Love in that situation?

We could name many other world situations where the government of Love is needed. Sometimes you feel like asking, *What are you doing?!* There has to be the authority of Love to come back into the human experience. Yes, the affection and the energy of Love, but also the authority of Love, to order the human experience. Would you not say it is true that there are people in your life who need the ordering power of Love for their own soul, for their own well-being, and perhaps even for their sanity? They need the power of Love entering in, reclaiming the human experience.

If the power of Love is a reality that is urgently needed by the people of our world, what would it take for us to access it deeply and offer it to them?

There is a way that we, in human culture, take spiritual realities and attempt to possess them, as if they were our own—as if they were the property of the part of human culture with which we identify ourselves. When we do that, we are taking something real, like the power of Love, and turning

it into something unreal. In such case, we don't have the reality of it to offer.

It is, to some, as if God was an element of human culture. Sometimes that is called religion, and religion often tries to own the spiritual. It tries to own God. And it doesn't matter which version of God it is or what representation of the spiritual it is—from Buddha to Mohammed to Jesus to Confucius to Moses. Religion often attempts to own God and the human representation of God, as if it was theirs. But who the Buddha was is unchanged by anything people say about him. And the truth he brought is unchanged by any Buddhist teaching. I'm not saying there is anything necessarily wrong with Buddhist teaching. I'm just saying that no one owns the Buddha as their own. He was a gift to all humankind.

The same is true of Mohammed. He is not owned by the Shia branch of Islam, the Sunni branch, or by anyone else. He brought a reality that transcends any religion, even though the practice of the religion of Islam may bring a person closer to that transcendent reality.

Does the Catholic Church define who Jesus was and is? Or does any protestant church? Do Emissaries of Divine Light? As the Christmas story itself tells, he was a gift to *all* people—from East, West, North, and South; of all races, all religions, all ages, and all cultures. What had meaning was not an element of human culture. It was a spiritual reality that transcended any religion. He brought the power of everlasting Love.

We have the expression “My God.” *Mine, all mine!*

“My God.” The expression could be taken two ways. One is very possessive, as if I own whatever God is. And my understanding of it, my experience of it, and my beliefs about it are God to me. And that God that I think I own I might impose upon you.

“My God” could also be an expression of devotion. It names who I have chosen to devote myself to in humility, not pretending that I own God or that my beliefs about whatever God is are the ultimate reality.

If we are interested in the reality of what God is, does that not take humility, so that we do not end up believing in our beliefs? That is circular thinking. If we are to have an authentic experience of the spiritual, we have to concede that whatever our culture says about it, whatever we say about it, is not the last word on the topic. We are interested in the reality of it.

Confucius said that when a wise man points at the moon, the fool examines the finger. Surely, we are more interested in spiritual reality than what points to it, even though what points to it might have value. Yet that value is secondary to the thing itself.

Our world needs the reality of the power of everlasting Love from us. Not the power of everlasting belief, not the power of everlasting religion. The power of the everlasting Love that comes from the Divine.

Human culture has created all kinds of self-sabotaging traps that tend to make the power of everlasting Love null and void in the individual

human experience. People often reject it and turn away from it within themselves. And they often do the same when someone else brings it to them. Or it is embraced in a way that tries to take possession of it—that co-opts it. Perhaps they can make money from it. Maybe it can give them political, cultural, or religious power. Perhaps they can build a followership from it. That has happened through millennia, right up to this present moment.

Simply accept the mystery and wonder of everlasting Love and bring it to the world? Who will do that?

America has been walking a fine line in this regard since its beginning. *One nation under God*, we say. And yet the Founding Fathers of the United States were careful not to mix church and state. Many of them were devoted Christians. But they had seen the pitfalls of cultures that attempted to possess God and enshrine him in a state religion. And so, they created a fascinating experiment—democracy.

Winston Churchill said that democracy is the worst form of government—except for all the others that have been tried! And we might envision some other way of governing in an ideal world. But for *this* world, our democracy might avoid the trap of attempting to possess spirituality in the cage of human government. In America today, that attempt is still being made.

I just came across *One For Israel*, a ministry of native-born Israelis bringing Jesus to Arabs and Jews in Israel and bringing the “Gospel of Messiah” to the world.

Perhaps like you, I have so many mixed feelings upon hearing about their work. Firstly, the Christ Spirit that Jesus brought is precious to me, and I have a natural affinity with anyone who brings that spirit to the world. At the same time, I am aware of all that can go wrong in such an endeavor. Without knowing much about their approach, I'm aware of the possibility that people can attempt to bring the God of their religion—*their God*—to the world. I'm aware of how tragic the outcome of such an endeavor can be.

Anyone who attempts to share the gift that Jesus brought has two strikes against them. The first one is the rejection of Jesus in his lifetime by the culture of his day. That inclination to reject what he brought hasn't gone away.

The second strike is the attempt on the part of the Christian Church to possess Jesus as their own and then impose the Jesus they co-opted on the rest of the world. That led to the Crusades and the Inquisition, among other things. In that way, the Christian Church has besmirched his name. I am not going on a rant about this; just facing facts. If I were a Muslim or a Jew, I might be wary of any attempt to bring an awareness of Jesus' spirit and message to the world. And if the people bringing awareness of Jesus have the same tendencies that the Christian Church has had down through the centuries, that would be strike three.

But what if Jesus brought the clearest, purest expression of the power of everlasting Love the world has ever seen? By its very nature, that was not only a reality then. It is a reality now, to be received by anyone and then given to the world. If

that was actually done, what would the result be? If the person bringing that gift transcended religious culture, would others do the same to receive it?

Just like anyone who has ever lived, who Jesus was when he walked the earth is who he is now. His spirit, the Christ Spirit—the power of everlasting Love—is present now. In that sense, Jesus is alive now. Everlasting Love is alive.

Does it matter that he walked the earth? Do the spiritual gifts brought to humanity by anyone matter? Everything in me says, *Of course, they do!* When will we, the human race, end the pattern of refusing to receive the gifts given to us, and attempting to steal them, as if they were our own? When that happens, we do not meet the very real world need for the power of everlasting Love.

The reality of everlasting Love lands through us individually. And yet there is something to be known collectively, not because we are claiming spiritual reality for ourselves and trying to own it but because we are transparently open to it and experiencing it in relation to each other and in relation to the world in which we live. In other words, the power of everlasting Love is landing in and through us. To the degree it is, it is a known reality.

The need is stark for those of us who live at Sunrise Ranch. Would any of us who live here not say that? We have guests coming; we have people visiting. They come from various places throughout the world. They come from various stations of life and past experiences. They come as people of all ages.

They come with all the things we as human beings have going on for us in our lives.

Is there a need for the government of Love at Sunrise Ranch? The need is stark, obvious. Our ability to relate together transparently in a way that grounds and lands the power of Love is the greatest need we have. That's why what passes between us at the core of this community must be crystal clear—so the power of Love can work. People need it. The world needs it.

They need to know that blessing pouring down through them, into the soft spot within themselves. That opens them to the authority of Love in themselves—something far more than a warm

feeling. We all need warm feeling; life becomes meaningless without it. When the heart is cracked open and experiences warmth, we find that the carrier wave of Love brings us far more. It brings us wisdom. It guides us. The ordering power of Love is at work.

So it is, wherever we are around the globe. People need this in their life. At some level, they are asking for it. Let's answer them by sharing the power of everlasting Love.

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