

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT



EMISSARIES
OF DIVINE LIGHT

LOVE EXPRESSING

6 JULY 2010

No Love Greater

*There is no love greater than the love shared
By those in whom life blesses them that bless.
There is no joy greater than the joy known
When friends of life give what their Friend has given.
Gardens of God eastward in Eden grow
That will bloom westward where life's true friends tend
Climate and soil. No doubt but in their giving
They will lay cornerstones of the bright mansion
Whereinto God coming shall be received.
Mansions in gardens visible and green
And people in them clothed in righteousness
Turning to greet their King. There is no love
Greater. So you, whom honor consecrates
To this redeeming gesture, give yourselves,
To send on earth the silent heaven's sound
And end the age-old loneliness of God.*

Ted Black

Love is about relationship. I believe for love to be real it has to be exercised in relationship. I have a hard time imagining that God, however you imagine God in this infinite universe, is lonely. However, I believe there is a great deal of loneliness experienced within the body of mankind, a body that was created for God's expression, a means for God to be in expression on this planet. To the degree that loneliness has existed within the body of mankind, I believe we have it within our power to do something about it.

I was recently recalling a couple of experiences in my life that relate to this. Decades ago, there were many of us of a similar age range living here at Sunrise Ranch. At one point, one of the women who had been living here indicated to me that she was leaving. She indicated that she was leaving because she felt lonely. When I heard that, I felt a very deep sadness—I felt like I had not done what I could have done to extend myself to this person in a way that she would not have had to leave because she felt lonely. That feeling has stayed with me for a long time.

There are, I believe, personal internal roadblocks, perhaps for all of us—I know there have been in me over the years—that get in the way of extending ourselves in a way that would be a blessing to others. Ted's words were "no love greater than the love shared / By those in whom life blesses them that bless." The state of giving and receiving is a major part of life: giving and receiving, to give love and to receive love.

I also recall an experience I had with a woman who is close to both my wife Susan and me. A number of years ago, when a long-term relationship ended for her, she was feeling diminished in many ways—undervalued, underappreciated. I wrote her a letter and told her what an amazing woman she is, how I saw her and how I felt about her. In doing that, I realized that there was some cultural or social boundary that I was coming very close to overstepping, being a married man. But I wanted this valued friend to know that I loved her.

There may be things that we need to overcome internally and culturally to truly love one another—to let a current of love flow between us. For love to flow it has to be more than a feeling. It needs to go to another level. It needs to go to the level of actually expressing love. It has to be expressed to be known by us and others—not just felt. We are designed to be the vehicle for that. It does have to get real. So let's get real about the expression of love. Let's get real about what is flowing between us.

In a marriage, hopefully there is commitment—commitment that keeps one in the relationship when challenging issues come up. And they do come up. Presumably, each individual is committed to work out what it is that is coming up to be worked with, rather than taking their toys and going home, which we can do when we are kids—the neighbor kid starts acting up and we don't like it, so we just pick up our toys and go play in our own yard. But hopefully that is not done in a marriage.

We are not all married. Those of us who want to make love real in a spiritual context do not have a formal contract, in that sense. However, I believe commitment is required. We have been given many tools to assist in allowing the truth of ourselves to emerge fully. They have been given to us for a reason.

I have to ask the question: Do you really want to make this real? If the answer to the question is yes, it requires commitment. It requires the willingness to overcome the obstacles in my own inner landscape, my own inner dynamic, and the cultural limitations that I may bump up against. I believe that commitment is essential: I see you, I appreciate you, I know what you love, I love what you love. Therefore I am going to stand in this with you, no matter what comes. I am not going to give up on you, and I ask that you not give up on me.

I don't want to make this sound arduous, but it is essential if it is to become real. The opportunity to love one another is real. I think we are all here because we know it is real. But there's always room for more. There is opportunity to make it more real, more substantial. I think Sunrise, on occasion, can still be a lonely place. The world can be a lonely place. Is that okay with you? It's not okay with me. I have said to some, "Our door is always open." There are those to whom I try to express my appreciation—appreciation for what they do, appreciation for what they bring—but I think in one sense I use the word *appreciation* because I am afraid to use the word *love*. I might be misunderstood. Or if I say, "I love you," I might be committing myself to stay put with you when things arise.

Jesus' commandment was "Love one another, as I have loved you." I don't think that is necessarily a Christian notion. But it is "the redeeming gesture" (as Ted indicated in his poem) that when we give ourselves to it, heaven's silent sound comes into the earth and there is an end to the "age-old loneliness of God." I believe that is why we are here, that is why we have come on to this planet, and that is why we find ourselves together in this spiritual project.

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