

Sounds of Love Series

Love: The Greatest Gift

Love: The Greatest Gift. That is the title of this talk. I am going to speak about love. It has been called the greatest gift the Creator has given to us. But what is love? And why do people talk so much about it? It looks like love is an experience in life of which there is no other similar experience. It is not something that can be duplicated. It is a unique experience in human life. We have seen that people look for love at every stage of their life. A newborn baby comes to his or her parents and looks for love. Look at the faces of the mother and the child and you see how much fondness and love they show to each other. As the child grows, that love is shared with other friends in school and at home. As life goes on, love is shared at an adolescent level. Love is, therefore, a continuing experience that goes on throughout one's life. When one is old, one begins to love not only people, but causes. One likes to work for a cause, work for parties, work for organizations. And that love can be so overwhelming that it can take away lot of time of the lover.

So a human being is essentially a lover: A lover that continues to love from childbirth, from the beginning of life, to the end, until his death. But is this love the same kind or is it of different kinds? Can we call this entire experience an experience of love? I put this question because there are many people who say, "The only thing they miss in life is love." If love is so universal, and everybody has it, how come some people say, "We miss love in our life?" Let us consider what love means to different people.

Love is something that identifies a person with someone else. Love is the ability of human consciousness to become someone else. When a mother loves a child, for that moment, the mother forgets the motherhood and becomes like a child, even starts speaking like a child. This ability of human beings to experience the identity of somebody else is called love. But there are some fake situations, some duplicates of this situation, which are not really love, but are other attachments, other relationships which have a different experience. The experience of attachment between two people creates the experience of knowing both of them simultaneously. A person who is attached to another knows himself or herself as well as the other at the same time. Therefore, if somebody says, "I love you," what is that person experiencing? That person is experiencing "I" and "you" and a fondness or attachment which is called love. This experience of I and you and love is not, strictly speaking, the love that we speak of as the greatest gift. This is an experience of attachment. When one is conscious of oneself, as well as the beloved, it is an experience of attachment and not of love.

But attachment masquerades as love all the time. Day in and day out we hear people saying, "I love you. I love you. Please tell me, do you love me? Please repeat that you love me." Why is there so much emphasis on getting this verbal reassurance of love? This need for reassurance arises from the fact that what we are calling love, is not really love. It is attachment. Attachment has one great drawback compared to love. In the case of love, a person concerns himself or herself with the beloved to an extent of forgetting ones' self. In the case of attachment, one is so concerned about ones' self that it almost amounts to an ego trip. Consider a person saying, "I love you." And you don't respond by saying, "I love you too." But say, "I don't." In a few minutes that person can say, "I hate you too." This kind of ego trip is not love. But it is, strictly speaking, an act of attachment. Attachments are different from love because attachments give us the experience of two – the one who is attached and the one to whom one is attached. In love, the experience is of one, the beloved, the one you love.

Attachment is, at best, togetherness: The two experiencing a feeling of being together. It is not an experience of

oneness. Love, on the other hand, is an experience of oneness. In love, one forgets the lover. Only the beloved remains. And this identification with the object of love makes it a unique experience, quite different from the experience of attachment. Real concern for somebody comes only through love and not through attachment. Attachment is conditional. Attachment survives if both parties play the game according to the rules of the game. Love is unconditional. It is not based upon two participants. It is based upon the beloved. The beloved has attracted the lover. The beloved has made the lover forget the lover. And, therefore, it is not a game being played by two. It is a game of the unity, of the oneness, of the two participants who forget they are two. Therefore, love is a different kind of experience from attachment. The daily statements, "I love you. I love you." does not refer to love. It refers to attachment. That, if attachment is different from love, what are the consequences? In attachment, there is likely to be pain and suffering because of the element of separation. Whenever two persons are attached to each other, they cannot be sufficiently attached to avoid separation. Therefore, when two persons say they are attached to each other, there is still a distance between them. Even if physically they are in the closest proximity, there is a distance between them. There is a mental distance which is not overcome by attachment. Love, on the other hand, removes that distance and there is no difference between one and the other. I recall a very interesting story of Lila and Majnu where Lila was the beloved and Majnu, the lover. This guy, Majnu, fell in love with this girl, Lila and the love was so real, after a while he forgot that his name was Majnu. When asked who he was, he would say he's Lila. And everywhere he searched for Lila and everywhere anything beautiful, anything esthetic, anything appealing that he could see, he thought was Lila. This kind of experience where the lover, himself, becomes of the same identity as the beloved and all likeable things become the beloved is only possible in an experience of love and not in the experience of attachment.

We have in human consciousness two forces that function within us. One is the human mind which creates mental experiences. And the other is the human spirit or the human soul which creates the spiritual experiences. What is the difference between these experiences? In the case of the mental experience, the mind performs basically three functions. One, it senses things through sense perceptions. It interprets what these sense perceptions are giving to consciousness. Second, it argues and reasons through the logical process, through the thinking process, and this stream of words and images that goes through the mind creates a rational, logical being, and creates the intellectual self. And the third function of the mind is the creative function, in which it does not really create anything, but merely rearranges the elements of perception in new patterns and diagrams. And they look like new creations. These are the only three functions the mind is really performing in a human being. And as we notice these functions, we find all these three functions take place in time and space and follow the laws of cause and effect. Therefore, the mind cannot function unless it has time and space and has a cause and effect a priori condition to work in. The mind is confined to the time, space, causation framework.

But this is not true of the human spirit. The human being, in the true sense, is the soul of the human being, the spirit of the human being. And that soul or spirit is not confined by this time, space, causation framework. Therefore, when we talk of the functions of the soul, we talk of those things which do not take place in time, nor in space, nor do they follow the laws of cause and effect. Now out of these functions, the most fundamental and important function is the function of love. When one experiences love, when one completely identifies oneself with another, that experience surpasses the experience of attachment and one forgets the self and gets so merged in the contemplation of the experience of the beloved that it becomes an experience of oneness. Similarly, the second function of the soul, which is the function of intuitive knowledge, knowing things intuitively - that function also takes place without going into the framework of time, space, and causation. When the intuitive hunch, or knowledge comes to us, it does not come by taking any time. It just comes in a flash, out of nowhere and does not follow any logical cause and effect relationship. The third function of the

spirit, which is the esthetic function, or the appreciation of beauty, also comes the same way. And the appreciation of a beautiful thing is sudden, all at once, and does not follow the laws of time, space, and causation.

Therefore, love is a spiritual experience, not a mental experience. Attachment, on the other hand, is a mental experience. In attachment, the intellect functions; the mind functions; the mental processes are active. But in love, the spirit functions. The spiritual process functions. And there is not intellectual participation at all. What is the difference? When the intellect functions, it creates doubt and fear. It is the nature of the human mind to function in such a way that there is doubt and fear in intellectual activity. Why should that be? That is because intellect is confined to the cause and effect relationship which must be logical in order to be meaningful. When logic is employed by the reasoning mind or the intellectual mind, it automatically presupposes that there must be some correct inferences coming from the logical process. The types of logic the intellect employs are broadly to the deductive logic. In which case, the intellect is not really getting any new knowledge. If it says, "This wall is white and that is a part of the wall; therefore, it is white," it is not really learning anything new. But this syllogism shows the kind of deductive logic that the intellect employs. But the inductive logic which goes beyond what is on the wall and presumes that because the wall is white, the corner of the wall must also be white, leaves us with doubt and uncertainty. This doubt and uncertainty of the inductive process makes the whole logical process in the intellectual brain, in the intellectual mind, full of doubt. And doubt leads to fear because fear is always of the unknown; that of which you are not certain. So it is a natural consequence of using the intellectual process to have doubt and fear. Therefore, when the attachments take place between people, doubt and fear become a concomitant of that attachment. That is why people who say, "I love you. I love you," but really, love is not present, it is only an attachment. You will notice in their love always an element of fear and uncertainty. This uncertainty and fear is a natural corollary of the intellectual participation in the business of attachment.

In the case of love, however, which is a spiritual experience, there is no such thing because the logical process is not being used. There are no two contenders to consider whether there should be doubt or uncertainty between them. There is only one participant in the activity of love and that is the beloved. The beloved overtakes the ego of a human being. Therefore, when we talk of love, we are talking of the ability of the mental conscious activity to be surpassed by a spiritual conscious activity which does not require the ego to function. All effort, all things that we do with endeavor require our ego. And therefore, this ego comes in the way of spiritual experiences. Love is the only experience which is purely spiritual by itself and does not allow the ego to come in the way.

That is why it is appropriate to call love the greatest gift the Creator has given to us. Because if we want to identify ourselves with the truth, it is only possible through love. People talk of the spiritual path. What is the spiritual path? It is the path of love. One of the greatest Mystics of the East, a man named Kabir, who lived more than five hundred years ago, wrote His classic work called, *Anurag Sagar*, which means *The Ocean of Love*. *The Ocean of Love* is the title of the work that describes the entire spiritual experience of a human being. If one were to give a gist of the spiritual experience, one could use only one word - love. Love is the spiritual experience. Love is the spiritual method. Love is the spiritual objective. Therefore, to have this capability in consciousness to experience love is the greatest gift the Creator can give us. There is, of course, the mistaken notion that love is merely a means to God and that God must be separate from love. How can that be? If love is not only a method, but an experience, it could be the ultimate experience. What is that experience? When one loves – period; when one does not love somebody or something, but when one is in love – period, what happens? That experience of love per se, just being in love; just continuously being in that state of oneness; what happens to a person like that? That is the experience of realization of the highest truth

that exists. Because all experiences have been created from the same single source and that is the experience of love. That is also called the experience of God.

Therefore, God-realization is the same as love-realization. God-realization is the same as experiencing love in its highest form. Love is the greatest gift. It transforms us. It transforms us from one who is mentally divided in the analytical process; in the process of violence and separation; in the process of disturbed mind into one who is synthesized into the oneness of that experience of love. Therefore, we who live so much with the mind, have an excellent opportunity to move over to the experience of oneness, which is the experience of love. And that takes care of all the problems of violence, division, and analysis that we come across in the physical world by relying on the mind. Love is, indeed, the greatest gift that transforms a human being from a purely mental being to a spiritual totality. That totality, of course, does not mean, merely living in isolation in a state of love. Totality means being able to perceive the interrelationship between the various personalities of a human being – the physical, the emotional, the mental, the spiritual, the total. When we talk of love as the agency that can take us to the totality of the human being, we talk of that as giving him the total experience of all the different levels, different forms of the human personality. Therefore, love is not something that takes you from here to there. Love is something that lets you know the entire truth about one's self and one's Creator. Love is the greatest gift.

Thank you.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CBMkUjYHfZM>

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