

Questions and Answers from Joel (6/3/17)

Q: Will you please say something about parenthood?

A: This is a very difficult subject for me. I have been a parent only by proxy and I don't have the feelings that most parents do for children. I don't know that kind of a sensation, so I can't speak about it. I love children and they love me, but it has nothing to do with that emotion of love that is ordinarily felt by parents for their children or children for their parents. It is of a different nature.

A child, to me, is very much like a bud, a blossom. It is new and fresh and has infinite potentialities, and it can be molded. Not molded to my will. Too often it is molded to the will of its parents, and sometimes unfortunately so. But it can be spiritually molded. I don't know whether parents can do that. Some can, because I've seen it done. But how many can, I don't know because much of what I see of parenthood is just animal emotion, and that doesn't permit the parent to be objective or to see their child spiritually.

To see a child spiritually means to realize your child is not your child, but the child of God, another of the infinite forms and varieties of God-being sent to earth with all the potentialities of God-being. If parents can see their child that way, it helps free the child from human limitations. And as I say, never having been a parent I don't know how difficult that might be. But I have known some parents who could—some few. To be able to love a child that way is to understand that its nature came forth from God; that it was sent to this plane of consciousness not to be anybody's child, but to be an instrument for good on earth—just as much an instrument as was Jesus Christ, or Moses, or Buddha. Every child is that potentiality. Now, to understand that a child is not limited mentally by its parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents, since it is the offspring of God and its mind is of God and its source of intelligence and wisdom is God, is to free that child from the limitations of family relationships.

In the same way, to be able to raise a child without instilling fear—fear of crossing the street, fear of talking to a stranger, fear of swimming, fear of doing this or that—but rather [raising the child] with spiritual understanding to release the child into God; to raise parenthood to quite a different level than normal human parenthood. Human parenthood is almost entirely selfish, and we have to rise far above that in order to be able to see that we are the caretakers of children; we are their providers until such time as they can take over that responsibility. We are their guides, and to be able to do that spiritually means to do it through inner communion with God. It doesn't mean to be a dominating person, dictating to them what they should or should not do out of our human knowledge. It means, rather, to raise them with a minimum amount of talk and conversation and a maximum amount of holding them in that inner communion with the Spirit, permitting them to be God-governed instead of man-dominated.

Now, I can't speak about human parenthood because it is presented to the world through so many different methods, and I feel the same way about it as I do about world peace. I don't believe it [raising the child spiritually] will ever be accomplished humanly. It can't be. It will have to come through spiritual means. I don't believe that through our human nature we are going to find a way of raising children to bring them forth into their rightful heritage. For us in this work, the only way we have of bringing up children, the only way we have of giving them their freedom, is to give them the Spirit of God; to give them prayer; to give them communion; to hold them fast in that relationship, and to continually teach them the nature of these worldly evils so that in recognizing them, no temptation falls into their way.

I have known children who, at the age of sixteen, when asked to go out and get some aspirin for a visitor said, “What is aspirin? I’ve never heard of it.” They hadn’t even seen an ad for it. It hadn’t come into their awareness. They had been so brought up in the spiritual life that they wouldn’t even know the purpose of an aspirin or any other form of medicine. I’ve seen that. I’ve witnessed over and over again families who have gone for fifteen, eighteen, and twenty years without knowing anything about the nature of serious illness or accident or anything of that kind, merely because the parents were holding that household in spiritual realization.

It can be done. It can be done in the same way that a practitioner can hold his or her patients—whether it’s twenty patients, or fifty, or a hundred—so that they are almost immune from the world’s discords. A teacher can hold an entire student body relatively free for long periods of time, more especially if those students are cooperating. Why? The higher consciousness lifts the lower consciousness to its level. “*I, if I be lifted up, shall draw all men unto me.*”¹ As I am lifted up in this consciousness, knowing the nature of God and the nature of error, and abiding in this God-consciousness, all, or most of those who are abiding with me rise in some degree of demonstration to better health, to greater supply, and to better human relationships.

[Excerpt from *The Foundation of Mysticism*, pages 296-299; Kindle location 4056]

¹ John 12:32