

## The Marriage of Faith and Love



Remember David Koresh, the founder of a “religious community” in Texas? He began as a fervent loving man of God, but his loving dedication led him astray. Slowly, and unaware of what was happening, he was placing more emphasis on obedience and authority instead of love and respect. Eventually, he was absolute authority, even to the point of seeing himself as Jesus reincarnated. His every thought and desire was the word of God to his followers. Willingly, they gave themselves to him, even on the intimate sexual level, all in the name of love. And they all died with him in the name of love.

So, what is the truth concerning love? Does true love control us or free us? Obviously, Koresh’s love was one of control. But, the Church in general has not been different. Both Koresh and the Church have whitewashed the minds of their faithful concerning love, causing them undue suffering in the name of love. Both were and are more concerned about obedience to authority than about love and respect towards all. Both have “baptized” their followers in a conditional contractual love relationship which gives them complete control, and all in the name of Jesus. For both, control is an essential part of love.

If this is so, then who is willing to ‘fall in love?’

Scripture is very clear in stating that love and respect towards God, neighbor and self is of primary importance. Love, St. Paul says, is compassionate, patient, gentle, forgiving. It is Divine. Therefore, when this love is present, then whatever we do, it will be done with love and respect towards the other. And this applies to all our actions no matter how they are expressed.

When love and respect are the foundation and the guiding principles of relationships, authority and control are not needed. Demands are not necessary, not even from God.

Consequently, what is of importance is obedience to unconditional love, not obedience to the law of conditions. The latter does not give life, as St Paul said. Only the Spirit gives life, Only obedience to the Spirit of love dwelling within us, obedience to that essential desire of love within us to be one with and in the beloved, gives a life of joy.

All this is easily said, but not easily lived. This giving and receiving the love that we are does not flow purely from our inner spirit due to the experienced hurts and rejections which have created an excessive inner desire for self-protection. Even Jesus struggled with the price of the love that he desired and was, as expressed in his agony in the garden. "Father, why have you abandoned me?"

There was no response to that agonizing plea. Really, there is no formal response to him nor to us. There is only faith. His faith, concerning who he was, was deep within him because he lived the life of obedience to love, and not obedience to law.

The pain of fear here for all of us is that our obedience to total surrendering in love leads us into unknown territories over which we have little or no control. But, it is the same faith of whom we are that is the connecting link between the known experienced love of the past and the unknown experienced love to come.

So, what is this connection between love and faith?

Paul says in Hebrews that “faith is the confident assurance concerning what we hope for, and the conviction about things we do not see.”

What do we hope for? We hope for the experience of the fullness of love, i.e. unconditional love. And since we have already experienced that love in some way, faith becomes the assurance that the day will come when our present darkness will disappear, and we will again see and experience the fullness of love, the fullness of the Spirit, both here on earth and in heaven.

When the experience of love is absent, the experience of faith is present. Faith is that deep underlying foundation of the truth on which our whole life exists, i.e. Love. It is the power that carries us through the darkness that is present when the experience of love is not. It is the conviction that assures us that love has not abandoned us, despite the fact that we do not feel it's joyful presence.

Faith and love, in this life, live a “marital” relationship within us. They are the special gifts of the Holy Spirit that help us as we struggle to be unconditional love in our relationships; as we struggle to become more like our beloved Heavenly Father, Mother Sophia and their Son Jesus; as we struggle to live in our human family the way they live in the Divine Family. We can never forget that we are made to their image and likeness.

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