

BRIEF REFLECTIONS

By Rick McKinney, 2001-2026

LOVE IS NOT CHEAP

Love without sacrifice is cheap and not worthy of the name.

DEFINING LOVE:

- 1) Recognizing and Appreciating the Unique Value of a Person;
- 2) Wanting (and Praying) for the Loved One's Best Interest; and
- 3) Working Wisely (and perhaps Prayerfully and Sacrificially) for the Loved One's Best Interest.

LOVE IN UNION:

Those persons in Marital Union, Holy Communion, and Divine Union all voice the same words. I am in my beloved. My beloved is in me. We are one together.

ETERNAL LIFE IS LOVING GOD, NEIGHBOR AND OUR SELF

Eternal life consists in truly knowing and loving God, one another and ourselves. So, as Jesus said, the first commandment is to love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. And the second is like it, love your neighbor as yourself.

GOD'S LOVE IS THE ONLY ESSENTIAL TRUTH

It would seem that all essential truth flows from the one truth that God is Love. From that one truth flows the truth of the Trinity for love requires that there be more than Oneness. From it flows the truth of the incarnation and death of the Savior for true love is sacrificial in nature. From it flows the truth of the resurrection, for love triumphs even over death. From it also flows the truth of our final sharing in God's nature and character, for love is transformational.

THE TEST OF RELIGIOUS TRUTH

It would seem that a key to determining essential religious truth is the impact of that truth on forming godly character.

THE TEST OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE:

Religious experiences, be they conversion experiences, sacramental experiences, divine encounter experiences, listening experiences, praying experiences, scriptural reading

experiences, ministering experiences, receiving ministry experiences, and other religious experiences are meant to lead to godly transformation. Otherwise, they may be for nought.

EVERYONE HAS THE SAME THREE PRIORITIES

Everyone seems to have the same three priorities in life. 1) Doing what I feel I want to do or not want to do; 2) Doing what I feel I have to do or not do; and 3) Doing what I feel I ought to do or not do. Of course, if one has the mind of Christ, who always did the Father's will, then doing or not doing becomes much more simple, even when it is tough.

THE BODY OF CHRIST

If we are the body of Christ then it is we who are taken, blessed, broken, given, and consumed.

EUCCHARISTIC OFFERERS AND RECEIVERS

The Eucharist means thanksgiving, receiving and giving, all the participants - Father, Son, Spirit, and the assembly – all are offering, all are receiving in one sacred communion of persons. The Eucharist encapsulates within itself the eternal banquet of giving and receiving in the Trinity of divine communion to which we have been invited.

A GOOD HOMILY

A good homily or sermon ought to be Interesting, Informative, Insightful, and Inspiring

ALL THE WORLD IS A STAGE

It seems, as Shakespeare wrote, "All the world is a stage and men and women are but players in it." However, the players, I believe, are actually performing on a small stage in a grand audition for a more glorious play to come.

GOD'S CONSUMING FIRE

Could it be that God's consuming or purgative fire of love and truth is generally the familiar and similar experience for all those here on earth, those in the purgatory (or the Judgement) and those in hell who continue to resist the truth? Those heaven, of course, have already been consumed by the fire of God's love and truth through the Holy Spirit.

FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE – FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT – PAST, FUTURE AND PRESENT

It seems to me that faith, hope and love have a generalized locus in the past, future and present and, in a way, so does the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God the Father created us in our past and the witnesses of others and our own positive experiences with God gradually builds a trustful faith that is generally earned from those past witnesses and experiences.

For most of history Jesus is the long promised messianic hope in the future and a now is long-promised returning, future savior. However, the Holy Spirit communicates God's life and love in the present.

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THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD STEMS FROM HIS TRANSCENDENCY

God as Father is aptly named because God, the creator is first of all transcendent. He is not like us. He is Spirit and is outside of space and time which He created. He is omniscient, omnipotent, and omni-good. Fathers beget or begin a process, conception, that takes place inside of a mother for a long period of time. Human mothers are immanently involved this nine month process and there is close biological, physiological and psychological (usually) connection between mothers and their children, like an invisible umbilical cord. For instance, there are generally far more complaints interfering mothers-in-law than those of fathers-in-law. A father often has to choose to step up for his children, especially if he is not married to their mother. However, good fathers often are drawn psychologically to their children and the choice of stepping up is not a problem, but usually the primary caretaker is the mother. It is more proper to call God father because He chooses to be committed to His image and likeness and He chooses to be drawn immanently and intimately into our care, which He did in the incarnation, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God also has maternal nurturing attributes, but God as mother overemphasizes His non-inherent immanence and female goddesses often are related to earthly fertility cults. And it was not for nothing that Old Testament prophets railed against such cults. Calling Catholic priests Father is proper for they are not only "Persona Christ", but "Persona Patri" as well.

WOMEN ARE THE LOVELIEST OF ALL GOD'S CREATURES

Women are the loveliest of all God's creatures and the loveliest of all is Mary, our Mother. Women are remarkable for from their midst they bear forth persons created for eternity. No angel of heaven nor demon of hell can do such wonders. It is also women who often are the comforters and care givers. It was they who were at the cross comforting Jesus. It was men who fled or kept handing him over and over to other men and to his suffering.

DELIVERANCE THROUGH A WOMAN

God did not win our deliverance by the deeds of a mighty general, or by the proclamation of a courageous politician, or the by invention of a creative scientist, or by the words of an inspired prophet, no, He delivered us by the simple but wondrous act of a woman giving birth to a child, and that child growing up and giving up his life in death for us all. From before time began God desired and chose a mother for His only begotten son. She is same Mother of all the living in Christ and as a comforting mother is more than able to present our requests to God with a special wrapping of love.