Understanding LOVE

- PUJYA GURUDEVSHRI RAKESHBHAI

Love – a word that is used to describe one of the most natural human emotions. Yet, this very word is often misconstrued and abused. Pujya Gurudevshri invites us to examine the love that we experience and compare it to that which is defined by the Enlightened Ones... True love

Dharma is the epitome of pure love. The world believes that love is possible only between the like-minded. In the case of a Guru-disciple relationship, there is a categorical difference between the two. The disciple is identified with his body and is a slave of his mind, while the Sadguru is beyond body identification and has transcended the mind. Although there is such a vast difference between their states of being, love for the Sadguru has the capacity to dissolve all distances.

When two lovers meet, their eyes twinkle, music springs forth and their hearts dance in joy. But this sparkle in their eyes lasts only so long as they are together; when away from each other, the gleam disappears. However, the lamp that is lit in the disciple’s heart upon meeting the Sadguru does not get extinguished. The melody does not stop. His whole life becomes a dance.

Dharma evolves when the disciple is filled with love for the Sadguru. There are many examples to support this. When Sariputra bowed down to Lord Buddha, when Ali sat at the feet of Mohammad, when Mansoor took refuge in Junaid, when Gautamswami approached Bhagwan Mahavira, when Saubhagbhai came to Param Krupalu Dev, it resulted in the birth of dharma in the hearts of these disciples.

Dharma manifests when the love of the disciple for his Sadguru blossoms, becoming the cause for the attainment of the Supreme Self. Thus, the disciple’s introduction to dharma, the Supreme Self takes place through love for the Sadguru. The love for the Sadguru gradually grows and extends to the whole world. Therefore, love is invaluable.

Misconceptions about Love

In spite of the glory of love, to some, love is a sinful emotion while for some it is the cause of pain. They are unable to believe that the Divine can be attained through love.

Equating love with sin has two negative connotations— one, you will subtract the love from prayers because an offering to the Lord cannot be tainted with ‘sin’. However, prayers without love will make them dry, weak, and lifeless. They will become mere formalities. The life force in prayer is love – but you have labeled that as sin! Therefore, the doors of prayer too will close. Prayers will slowly die down. This is one of the reasons why the world is becoming devoid of dharma.
Secondly, if love is seen as impurity, it will be looked upon as a crime and will give rise to feelings of guilt and self-contempt. But love is a virtue, inherent in all beings, and considering it a sin will make life difficult. Every relation in society will be seen through the eyes of contempt.

For some, love is painful – this is not because of love itself but because of the impurities in their love. It is true that even nectar-like love can turn into poison in the hands of the immature and the indiscriminate. The experience of joy or pain in love depends solely upon you.

**Lust Versus Devotion**

Love when directed towards the higher is known as devotion while the love that the world is familiar with; the love that is directed towards the lower is called lust. Though both are forms of love, they are contrary in nature. Love as lust is painful and creates hell. Rising in devotion is blissful and divine. You reap what you sow. You eventually bear the consequences of the type of love you have nurtured.

Therefore, to experience joy in love, direct it wisely towards the higher. The lower cannot make you happy. Getting entrapped in it is sure to bring you unhappiness at some time or the other. Learn from your mistake, else you will fall prey to your lust over and over again. It reduces you to being a beggar of love. One who is a lover of the lower begs for love and happiness from those who are beggars themselves. Neither has anything to give to the other. How can such beggars be happy?

**The Label of Love**

Love is giving and not begging. You can love others only if you are filled with love yourself. When your heart reeks of hatred, fear, jealousy, differences, ego, and expectations, love does not arise within because your attention is directed towards these negativities. And when you do not feel the love rising within, you apply the label of love on whatever you have; your lust, possessiveness, attachments, likes, etc. People live under the same roof, claim to love each other, and yet they look for love and happiness elsewhere. Is this really love? Enquire! What lies at the core of that which you call love? Have you truly loved anyone? What have you given up for the other in love? Have you surrendered your ego? Have you relinquished your selfish expectations in love?

When you speak of love you refer to those from whom you have received something. For you love has been ‘taking’ or ‘demanding’ from others. True love has no conditions or demands. Where there is the desire to take or demand, it is not pure love. It is lust. And lust always remains unsatisfied.

Lust brings in its fold negativities like jealousy. And so in no time, your so-called love takes on the form of hatred. When your ego is not satisfied or expectations are not fulfilled, you may become so violent that you are ready to murder even the one you were once ready to die for. Don’t be surprised when such love brings you pain.
True love cannot be the source of pain. Saints have experienced it as nectar. They have not just eulogized love but they are the embodiments of loving themselves. If their love gives joy and peace to all, then love certainly is not the cause of pain. There has to be something other than love that brings pain. But have you ever enquired into the cause of your suffering? What is that cause? It is negativities.

If your heart is filled with the poison of negativities, that will contaminate your love too. So, you must remove from your love, that which is not love: ego, I-ness, my-ness, etc... It is this that gives rise to pain, however, you misconstrue the cause to be love, so you want to run away from love itself.

The so-called religious stay away from love instead of eliminating the negativities in it. The saints have asked us to transform our love, purify our love and not destroy it. There may be impurities in this love. But these impurities are not love. They are mere dirt and do not justify the rejection of love itself.

Open Your Eyes
Bring a fundamental transformation into your life. Delve deep within and find the real cause of pain. If there is suffering, you can be sure that it is not love. Weed out all the negativities for your love to blossom. That alone is your duty. Examine your love in the light of the understanding of pure love given by the saints. Open your eyes to true love.

Love for Sadguru will help you see the negativities and remove them. Love for Him is love for His teachings and commands and eagerness to live in alignment with them. Gold may be impure but is still gold and not iron. It just needs to be purified. Once it passes through the fire, whatever is worthless will get separated and whatever is useful and pure will remain.

Similarly, the impurities in love are only dirt. When your love will pass through the heat of the Guru’s commands, the impurities will be shed and you will experience true love.

When love gets transformed into its pure form, the doors of the Divine open. This awakening is dharma, after which everything appears wondrous and divine. Even those whom you disliked will appear Godly to you.

Invest your love in the higher. You will never suffer or regret this investment. You already have love, all you need to do is direct it towards the Divine. Dare to embark on this journey. Though you may begin with love that is full of impurities, as you walk the path of love for the Sadguru, follow His commands and remain prayerful, you will certainly reach the destination of pure love, a state free from lust, a life of true dharma, an uninterrupted experience of the blissful Supreme Self.