

## **LOVE**

It is a curious thing, that *love* needs to be explained. We all want love and, seemingly, have a clear idea of what we mean by that. Yet, misconceptions of love abound, and, still more of a problem, most persons seem not to know how to give love, seem not to know what *loving* is.

*Love is wishing good for the object of your love and acting to bestow that good.*

*The feeling of love is the wishing. Being loving is the bestowing.*

When a person says "I love candy" they do not mean that they wish well for the candy. They do not even care about the candy's welfare. What they mean is that they want to possess the candy, they want to satisfy and gratify themselves with the candy (in this case at the expense of the candy inasmuch as it becomes destroyed in being eaten).

More frequently than not when a lover says to his beloved "I love you !" he does not mean that he wishes her welfare. No, he means that he wants to possess her, to continually experience the pleasure and gratification of her for himself.

Those are not love. None of us in wishing to be loved wishes to be owned, possessed, used in such a fashion. Then, where did the concept of what we really want come from ?

It came from childhood, from infancy. When we were very young we received true love from our parents. They wished and acted with regard to us only in the interest of our welfare. They fed, clothed, nurtured, caressed, and cared for us in every way. It felt very good.

While we do not wish to return to the helplessness and dependence of that past state we do wish to continue in being loved in that way. That is what love is. Giving that to others is loving. Receiving that is being loved. It is not a clinging, smothering, restricting thing. True loving seeks the fulfillment of the person loved.

Love does not require sacrificing oneself. One must be able to, and one must succeed at, loving oneself. If one cannot really love the person that they are closest to, themselves, then they certainly cannot validly love others.

*Love* and being *loving* are the condition and acts of sound, integrated persons. They are acting in their own welfare and, because love is something that can be, that is, infinite, that is without limit, they have abundant love remaining to give to others. They are able in abundance to wish the welfare of others and to reasonably act in that direction.

*Social love* is a society based on love -- based on each member wishing and behaving to implement the welfare of the others, of all.