

TIES THAT BIND

“For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.” (Matt. 10:35)

As a man coming from the tradition of a close and loving family, I can remember reading this Bible passage, uttered by Jesus Himself, and feeling shocked and confused by its implications and mystery. I asked myself over and over again, “What upon this earth could be more sacred and mirroring of the Nature of Spirit than a stable, abiding and loving family?” I would ask, “What on earth did the Christ really mean by saying this?” The answer to these questions is contained in the questions themselves: “What on earth?”

Of course, not all families on this earthly plain show forth as mine did, for many years. Terms like “dysfunctional”, “divided”, “contentious”, and “chaotic” describe the family experience for many in this life. Sadly, my own family has lost its way in recent years, its anchors undone by the passing of my mother, then several years later, of my father. When the cohesiveness of any group of people, especially a family, is held together exclusively by the authority of persons and personalities, as well as the human experiences and memories bound up in the aforementioned, the bond can become fragile indeed.

Nowhere are the attachments of our lower bodies’ consciousness more demonstrated and on display than in our families. Regardless of whether we recall family life as positive, negative or a combination of both, we are sensitized and “all in” because of factors such as shared name, shared genetics and shared history. The experiences, both common and uncommon, in family life carry with them an order of magnitude unmatched in other human associations that we have over a lifetime. Family ties, the “blood and body” of our ancestors can become religions of their own for us. For some, a religion of love and unity, for

others more of a cult of warfare, strife and manipulation. In either case, these states become imbedded in the awareness of our lower bodies - physical, mental and emotional, ultimately making their way into our souls.

As an idea, the creation of a family unit can be the combining of mindsets, patterns of thought, and histories from previous lifetimes that provide the raw materials for what a family can become. In an earthly sense, the foundational consciousness, the “founder of the feast,” if you will, is provided by the mother and the father. This mixture, or “recipe” of mental structure, ideas, purposes, intentions, etc. is poured into molds that take the shape of what we call families. Because of the illusion of duality that permeates earthly life and affairs, this mold may look like a Covenant Ark or, it may look more like Pandora’s Box.

As an Ideal, family life can be the very proving ground for Christ Consciousness, a place and an experience where the fulfillment of Jesus’ words “Where two or three are gathered in my Name, there I am with them.” This exalted state is not the result of a religious experience filled with dogmas, structures, forced obedience and earthly authority. It is based upon a form of Freedom which has no name, surrendered to willingly by every family member, a Light that comes through the portal of, most likely, the mother, the father, or both. When the Light of Immortal Mind Presence streams forth in this way, the joys, grace and ease of a family life certified by Love can be immeasurable. Truth demonstrated through “two or three gathered” as family in this way stands as a brilliant example on earth and a microcosm of Divine Relationship shared by all mankind. The ties that bind can either gather us together in Oneness or become chains that enslave us in the cacophony of earthly consciousness and shadows of ignorance.

In my own family, I have experienced both of these states over the years: the “agony and the ecstasy.” We have lived the Unmerited Favor given by surrender to an Ideal greater than ourselves and then lost our way by focusing upon “what happened” instead of “what IS.” In the shadows of error, taking sides has replaced a previous, enlightened state of taking responsibility. We have buried the treasure of unification under earthly affairs, disagreement, displaced

emotions and forgiveness withheld. As with all things family, the emotions appear more intense, the chasm of disagreement wider, the nerve-endings of human ego more exposed than in other kinds of relationships. As with all affairs given to the lie that is duality, the elements we use to produce and nurture love in our lives can be turned, by our own hand, to appear as opposites.

Family, as an Ideal, is sacred. The way to create or even restore the sacred nature of family is to begin with that which is Sacred: Truth and First Cause. When Jesus uttered the phrase in Matt. 10:35 he certainly did not mean that he personally would come between fathers and sons, mothers and daughters. What he clearly states here is that His “I-ness” or Christ Consciousness can and shall be victorious over the human consciousness contained in the aggregate “me-ness” of sons, fathers, mothers and daughters all over the earth. Of course, this victory is a choice, but one that brings glory and Truth into the life of a family.

As the inexhaustible fountain from which Truth eternally flows into all of Creation, Christ Consciousness by Immortal Mind Presence places all affairs, not the least of which is the family unit, back into perfect alignment. When each of us, and a family as a whole, is reunited with our True Family, our Family of Origin, the Sacred Ideal of God’s Family, then the expression of our own family becomes identical. Jesus also tells us in Matt.5:17 that “I come not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it.” The fulfillment of the law is always Love revealed, and nowhere is this Ideal more poignant, more passionate and more filled with grace than within the family paradigm here on earth. A family of such a mind sees beyond the appearances of conflict, conditions, blood and body, opinions and suppositions. What was once magnified with intensity born of earthly attachments such as emotions, ideas, discordance and division now expose the Truth spoken in Psalms 34:3, “O, magnify the Lord with me”. Love, Grace and unfettered Joy are the Order of the day, and all days, for the family that finds their way Home in this way. They can announce to the world that “We and the Father are One.”