

How the Church Undermines Love for Neighbour

Love means to value the wellbeing of and involves an attitude of love and acting upon that love.

Christians are told to love God totally and the neighbour as oneself. It is telling they are not to love God as themselves. It is not enough. This commandment is the reason why the atheist should be happier than the believer for the atheist is not bogged down by a law that is impossible to keep for more than three seconds.

Valuing the wellbeing of a God who needs nothing from you is a waste of love. It would be cruel of God to ask such a huge sacrifice from you. What would you think of the richest man in the world if he wanted you to sacrifice all your savings for him? It is about him laying down rules - it is not about goodness. People suffer because love is wasted. Believers may say that valuing the wellbeing of God who does not need it is still the right thing to do for he values your wellbeing so you have to love him back. But this overlooks the fact that if he does not need the love he should not ask for it or want it. The best parent is the one who cares for his child but asks for nothing back. If the child responds in love he is pleased, but he does not command this love. If the child does not respond in love but loves others instead he is still happy. It is not about justice for him but about whatever the child thinks is best. In reality, the biggest commandment should not be to love God totally or with all your heart. There should be no commandment for love cannot be commanded. Instead, there should be the major piece of ADVICE. It is love yourself and you will love and serve others if you do.

God supposedly brings good out of evil but that would imply that because of his plan to bring about the greater good, there is no way he can bring good out of it for some people. You might suffer terribly for his plan and gain nothing. So the believers would say that in that case though he may not be able to act loving to you he still loves you and that is what matters. It is actually selfish to build a relationship with God in order to fit his plan when you believe that you will get something back - you are afraid that if you step out of the plan you will not gain from it. That ulterior motive is the reason why so many believers hate people who they see as a threat to their faith or relationship with God. It is the reward they are after. Nobody wants to be casualties of God's plan. Believers are hypocrites.

It is ludicrous of the believers to thank God when things go well - they are assuming he is doing them a favour instead of assuming it might only be done as a means to bringing about a greater good. Who the greater good will serve is not the point. The point is you are arrogantly assuming God is in the business of making your interests the greater good.

More importantly, if what matters is that God loves you even if he cannot act on it for whatever reason, then what about parents and spouses who love you but through weakness let you down? If they were able, they would love you infinitely. Like God, they cannot act out the love very well. The thought that God loves you passively does not mean we should love God any more than we love our family.

Christians demand that you love your neighbour as yourself when they don't believe in it themselves. Do they sacrifice themselves to provide organs for those who will die without them? Catholicism puts faith before people by commanding married poor African women who are having sex not to ask the straying husbands to use condoms even though pregnancy and disease can result. Asking is bad enough but commanding is worse.

You can be excommunicated from the Catholic Church for saying Mary was a sinner - a trivial enough doctrine that wasn't obligatory until the middle of the 1850's - but if you are a Hitler you are still in communion with the Church! You are not excommunicated - thus the Church associates and indirectly links itself with your evil and how bad you are as a person. It even goes as far as to lie that it hates your actions and not what they say about you. That is pure hypocrisy for the problem is you and what your actions say about you. Countless examples could be given.

The Catholic claims to love others while holding that some of them should not be allowed to receive communion in Catholic Churches for they are Protestants. Others practice open communion and claim to love others so much that they welcome them to communion and see it as a tool for unity. Religious love does not help much with the important question: "How should I treat others?" It would be easier if we didn't have religious laws and superstitions making an already over-complex matter far more complex.

Love your neighbour as yourself is unnatural and difficult - actually impossible is the right word. It can only lead to frustration and pent-up anger and self-condemnation that is taken out on the ones that deserve your devotion.

Human nature prefers looking good to being good. That is why those who hide their good works are few and far between. That is why if people get bad food in your cafe they tell the neighbourhood and say nothing to you. They feel bad about telling you but they do not feel bad about talking behind your back and ruining your business. Love your neighbour as

yourself could be a smokescreen.

It is harder and more unnatural if the neighbour is considered to be a bad mean person. Love the sinner and hate the sin is as silly as love the nurse and hate the woman who is the nurse. The teaching that we must love the sinner and hate the sin because we are sinners ourselves suggests that hating the sinner is good but only if you are not a sinner! It involves wishing you were in a position to be able to hate the sinner! That is a fine love - it is really a demonstration of how we prefer looking good to being good.

The self-righteous forgiving people boast about the freedom they have when they forgive.

If they think the evil people they forgive are sick then that was not forgiveness but pity.

They can't think that the evil people they forgive will benefit. They forgive for their own sake. Not theirs. That is not forgiveness - it is just refusing to let oneself be hurt by what happened.

If they say they forgive for God's sake only then they are not thinking of the evil people at all but of God. In so far as you forgive a person for somebody else, you do not really forgive that person.

Real forgiveness requires that you judge the evil people properly first to see how responsible they are. The Christians assume the worst and then forgive. Forgiving like that is not forgiving at all.

Hell in this work means everlasting punishment for sin from God.

Catholics see many minor misdemeanours as grave sins deserving of everlasting torment in Hell. For example, a short spell of masturbation. If a person does wrong and you see that wrong as very heinous though it is not, and you forgive, what you are forgiving is not them at all. You are playacting. You choose to be very offended and unreasonably offended and then you let go. That is orchestrated.

To like is to value. You do not value money if you feel disdain for it or if you feel nothing for it. You do not value person A who you dislike as much as person B who you like. The Church says that you love your neighbour even if you feel intense dislike for them by doing good for them despite your feelings. They separate love from feelings. This is nonsensical. It is refusing to admit that intense feelings of dislike are hate, failure to love. The Church tells the lies in order to persuade people to hate each other as they proclaim themselves to be loving. The Church wants people to become fake and deceitful in the name of God. Nobody would bother with Christianity if it taught that we must like our neighbour as ourselves for that is a very demanding ethic. It sets people up for failure and is too harsh. It is so soul destroying that it will only wreck human relationships and asphyxiate people with guilt. The Church is thinking purely of itself and not the harm that a strict morality that nobody can live out and which will remove all pleasure from life can do.

Many believe that to say you may help others and that is love even if you can't feel any love for them is to contradict the command of Christ that we must treat others as we like to be treated and we like people to express the fact that they like us by doing things for us. That being liked is more important than anything they do.

The rule of love your neighbour as yourself is just more cheese in the Christian mousetrap. It makes people feel good and attracted to Christianity. It makes them feel secure and they delude themselves that when God gave the command he really cares about our happiness. Yet they know better. They know that if you give away most of your fortune there is no way to be sure if you have loved yourself as much as your neighbours. They know that it is not clear if you are loving yourself as much as your neighbours when you get the charges dropped against them for beating you to a pulp. I could write out more examples and it would take ten years to cover a quarter of them.

According to Christians, if you are in a state of sin and oppose God strongly in adhering to your sin, you know you will go to Hell unless you repent. Suppose it turned out you need to kill yourself and go to the pains of Hell forever to save other people from it. You go in their place so that they can be saved and holy. You are obligated by Christian and legal ethics to die there and then for other people even though the consequence is that you land yourself in eternal damnation. That is loving your neighbour more than yourself - or more accurately, it is not loving yourself at all! Some will naturally think it is right for you to refuse to go to Hell even though it causes everlasting punishment in Hell for others. The Church does not approve of people using, "I can't die for other people for I will go to Hell and I have no priest or I have no strength to abandon my sin now and make myself ready for Heaven instead of Hell", to get out of dying for others when it is the only way to save people from Hell. The doctrine of Hell leads to hardness of heart.

If you really love your neighbour you will not adopt and endorse the idea that if they die in sin they should be cut off from God forever. And especially when being cut off from God is supposed to be worse than any hellfire. You can endorse without proof that Hell exists and hold that people should go there if they die in sin. Then what can you say to a religionist

who believes that homosexuals are guaranteed damnation and are put beyond the power to repent? Or what can you say to a religionist who thinks the pope is antichrist and should be assassinated? Nothing! Besides, the religionist who would murder the pope is kinder than you!

If you thought that some girl was leading your precious little Johnny into sin that deserves everlasting suffering in Hell such as sex outside marriage, hating her would be inevitable. You would hate her far more than you would hate her if she murdered him for better dead and even out of existence than rotting in Hell in everlasting agony. If you were in the habit of sinning and repenting you would reason that maybe you should kill her for you will repent anyway and get to Heaven in the end. You would believe that it is better to commit a once-off sin of murder if it saves your son from getting into habitual sin which will linger on and on. His risk of going to Hell would be bigger than yours.

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that you can commit something called mortal sin. This is a sin that implies total rejection of God. You expel the saving presence of God from yourself. Those who die in mortal sin go to Hell for they are separate from God and so can't go to Heaven for God lives there. The good works of a mortal sinner deserve no blessing from God. The works are sins themselves for the sinner is only desecrating the good by doing it without reconciling with God. To love a mortal sinner would be then to love something that there is no moral good in. You cannot love sinners and hate their sins for it is not sins we are against but bad people. Those who hate sin because it insults the God of infinite love and so is very serious cannot love the sinner. They say they can and do but they are lying. The doctrine of mortal sin prevents you from looking at the good side of the person. The good side of the mortal sinner is dangerous for it is not really good and the more good the mortal sinner does the less likely he or she will be to see how much he or she needs to correct their sin and make peace with God. The good side cannot be praised by the true Christian. Instead the sinner has to be despised. God has to be loved so much - indeed totally - so hating those who loathe him or don't take him seriously or who don't appreciate him, ie mortal sinners, would be inevitable. You cannot love God and love the mortal sinner.

Liberal Catholics say you must love the mortal sinner for it is not for you to judge if a person is such a sinner. So it can't be for you to judge if somebody is a murderer either even if you are a judge. The Bible stresses that bad people are to be avoided and Jesus only bothered with them if they were on the verge of repenting or thinking about repenting. Judgement is necessary.

People are bewitched by love your neighbour as yourself and they think that if you give a child a biscuit they have loved her as themselves! How arrogant! How smug! If they had to give their limbs to save the child from a life of suffering we would see how far below themselves they love her!

The Bible says that if you do not love then you do not love God for God is love. This says that if there is person who you do not love then you do not love God. If you pray and fast you are a hypocrite. But what about the people you do love? The teaching implies that can be sure one loves God and engage in religious activity to "prove" it and still be wrong. It says you must love everybody or you love nobody. That is extreme. It is nonsense. It makes light of a very serious topic. Believing that God is love is not good. People confuse God and love but they are not the same. Even if God is thought to love you unconditionally, you will not feel that you are loved just for yourself.

"Love the sinner and hate the sin" is a smokescreen. It is needed to make the religious system look innocent if its members start to hate sinners. But as human beings are not basically good, and the Church admits they are not, it is clear that the rule cannot really be put into practice. If it can be, it isn't. We like to do good that will make us fit in the community reasonably well. It is done not because it is good but because it serves our purpose. We like to hate but tend to do it in an underhand way while claiming to hate sins not the people who sin. We can be sure that people are all doing this because it is exactly the kind of hypocrisy they need to form a religious community. It is an essential.

People are dazzled by the teaching of love your neighbour as yourself. They need to probe the teaching and its application and they will see the horrific truth. The teaching is only a window display.

BOOKS CONSULTED

A CATECHISM OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE, CTS, London, 1985

A HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY, VOL 6, PART II, KANT, Frederick Copleston SJ, Doubleday/Image, New York 1964

AQUINAS, FC Copleston, Penguin Books, London, 1991

BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL, Friedrich Nietzsche, Penguin, London, 1990

BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER, Association for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, Dublin, 1960

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, Veritas, London, 1995

CHARITY, MEDITATIONS FOR A MONTH, Richard F Clarke SJ, Catholic Truth Society, London, 1973

CHRISTIANITY FOR THE TOUGH-MINDED, Edited by John Warwick Montgomery, Bethany Fellowship, Minnesota, 1973

CRISIS OF MORAL AUTHORITY, Don Cupitt, SCM Press, London, 1995

EVIDENCE THAT DEMANDS A VERDICT, VOL 1, Josh McDowell, Alpha, Scripture Press Foundation, Bucks, 1995

ECUMENICAL JIHAD, Peter Kreeft, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 1996

GOD IS NOT GREAT, THE CASE AGAINST RELIGION, Christopher Hitchens, Atlantic Books, London, 2007
THE GREAT MEANS OF SALVATION AND OF PERFECTION, St Alphonsus De Ligouri, Redemptorist Fathers, Brooklyn, 1988
HANDBOOK OF CHRISTIAN APOLOGETICS, Peter Kreeft and Ronald Tacelli, Monarch, East Sussex, 1995
HONEST TO GOD, John AT Robinson, SCM, London, 1963
HOW DOES GOD LOVE ME? Radio Bible Class, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1986
IN DEFENCE OF THE FAITH, Dave Hunt, Harvest House, Eugene, Oregon, 1996
MADAME GUYON, MARTYR OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, Phyllis Thompson, Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1986
MORAL PHILOSOPHY, Joseph Rickaby SJ, Stonyhurst Philosophy Series, Longmans Green and Co, London, 1912
OXFORD DICTIONARY OF PHILOSOPHY, Simon Blackburn, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996
PRACTICAL ETHICS, Peter Singer, Cambridge University Press, England, 1994
PSYCHOLOGY, George A Miller, Penguin, London, 1991
RADIO REPLIES, 1, Frs Rumble & Carty, Radio Replies Press, St Paul, Minnesota, 1938
RADIO REPLIES, 2, Frs Rumble & Carty, Radio Replies Press, St Paul, Minnesota, 1940
RADIO REPLIES, 3, Frs Rumble & Carty, Radio Replies Press, St Paul, Minnesota, 1942
REASON AND BELIEF, Brand Blanshard, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1974
REASONS FOR HOPE, Ed Jeffrey A Mirus, Christendom College Press, Virginia, 1982
THE ATONEMENT: MYSTERY OF RECONCILIATION, Kevin McNamara, Archbishop of Dublin, Veritas, Dublin, 1987
SINNERS IN THE HANDS OF AN ANGRY GOD, Jonathan Edwards, Sword of the Lord, Murfreesboro, Tennessee, undated
THE BIBLE TELLS US SO, R B Kuiper, The Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, 1978
THE BRIEF OF ST ANTHONY OF PADUA (Vol 44, No 4)
THE GOOD, THE BAD & THE MORAL DILEMMA, G R Evans, Lion Books, Oxford, 2007
THE GREAT MEANS OF SALVATION AND OF PERFECTION, St Alphonsus De Ligouri, Redemptorist Fathers, Brooklyn, 1988
THE IMITATION OF CHRIST, Thomas A Kempis, Translated by Ronald Knox and Michael Oakley, Universe, Burns & Oates, London, 1963
THE LIFE OF ALL LIVING, Fulton J Sheen, Image Books, New York, 1979
THE NEW WALK, Captain Reginald Wallis, The Christian Press, Pembridge Villas, England, undated
THE PRACTICE OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD, Brother Lawrence, Hodder & Stoughton, London, 1981
THE PROBLEM OF PAIN, CS Lewis, Fontana, London, 1972
THE PUZZLE OF GOD, Peter Vardy, Collins, London, 1990
THE SATANIC BIBLE, Anton Szandor LaVey, Avon Books, New York, 1969
THE SPIRITUAL GUIDE, Michael Molinos, Christian Books, Gardiner Maine, 1982
THE STUDENT'S CATHOLIC DOCTRINE, Rev Charles Hart BA, Burns & Oates, London, 1961
UNBLIND FAITH, Michael J Langford, SCM, London, 1982
WHAT DO EXISTENTIALISTS BELIEVE? Richard Appignanesi, Granta Books, London, 2006
WITCHCRAFT, SORCERY AND MAGIC, J B Midgley, Catholic Truth Society, London, 2006