

**THE CRAZY DOCTRINE: "KNOWING A PERSON BY THEIR BEHAVIOUR IS KNOWING NOT THEM BUT A SUM OF BEHAVIOURS"**

Elizabeth has written a great novel.

Some say, "Elizabeth, I love you as a writer" means you are directing your praise to her as a person.

Some say, "Elizabeth, thank you for a great novel", is directing your praise to her writing and not to her as a person.

This is like the notion that the sin is not the sinner in that the good is not part of the person. If you love good deeds and not the people that do them then you love nobody. If loving a person's deeds is not the same as loving the person then thanking her will do no good. She is not loved.

If loving a person is not the same as loving their deeds then what should we value most? The person or the deeds? That the question even arises shows there is something wrong with divorcing the person and their actions.

Now take "Elizabeth, thank you for a great novel" - you are thanking her as a person. You are asking her to be pleased as a person that you liked her for producing the novel. Deeds speak about the kind of person she is. She will want to be loved and thanked as a good person and not just as a person. So to ignore her actions in order to focus on her as a person will not help either.

To tell a person they are precious does not mean much to them unless you see their actions as part of them. Or to make it clearer, to see their actions as expressing them as persons.

The notion of some that we must love people as people without letting what they do or don't do influence us asks us to do the near impossible.

Also, it follows that if I should love me just because I am me and leave the kind of person I am out of the equation, then it is my fault if I don't love myself and I am stupid and have a moral blind spot. Those who tell me they love me like that are going to have me trying to love me like that and it will only fail for its not love but delusion.

To say we must love people as separate from what they do be it good or bad is silly. It is confusing being different with being separate. Your behaviour is different from you but not separate from you. You cannot know anybody except through their behaviour. They are not you.

Some deny that the only way to know somebody is through how they behave. They will respond that if I love you because of what your behaviour says about you and not just because you are a living person then I love only what I perceive to be what your behaviour says about you. But that is not an response. I cannot know you are a person but by your behaviour and it is your behaviour that tells me what kind of person you are. The problem is, it is all about how I read your behaviour. Its about my perception. Its a fact of life that we don't really know other people but our perception of them. I love the sum of your behaviours and not you. The response does a conjuring trick. It says that it is wrong to say you only know people from their behaviour because that would fail: knowing a sum of their behaviours is not knowing them. Therefore you know and therefore love them as persons regardless of their behaviour. That is actually a trick for it does not follow that if "Loving your perception of a person is not the same as loving a person" is wrong, that you can love the person. It does not follow that if you cannot eat a meal so huge that it nourishes you for a month that you can drink enough water in one session to keep you going for a month. Same thing.

Some say we can be sure that though we can never know anybody completely we learn enough about them from their behaviours. They can't fake everything. To say their behaviours say nothing about whether they should be loved or not is really to say they are fakes. This is true - our knowledge of them is not strict knowledge but presumed knowledge. It is better to assume people are good when you might be wrong than to simply say they are fakes which is what you are saying if their good behaviour proves nothing about them.

To deny that behaviour matters means you make no difference between Hitler and Nelson Mandela. We do not want to be seen as persons but as different kinds of persons. We communicate what kind of persons we are through our behaviour. John the computer whizz wants to be loved as a different kind of person to Jean the Oscar Winning Actress.

Loving people for being people and treating their behaviours as if they don't happen is not respectful of the people. Actions that are good should be acknowledged. Why do good if you cannot be thanked or if those who do good and those who do

nothing will be rewarded as if they are equally good?

We want to be loved for ourselves and our actions both and - that is how we are programmed even if it is irrational. Otherwise we cannot do anything that makes us feel worthwhile or make us worthwhile. People telling you that you are amazing and special and wonderful as a person and your achievements and virtues are irrelevant will not encourage you or make you confident. You will torture yourself over why you do not feel happy about what they said. You will torture yourself for seeing their love as hollow as themselves.

Well-wishing can feel real when you engage in it. But only action will prove that it is real. You feel good because of your nice wishes. But the feeling may be lying to you. Only action makes the wishes genuine. There is no other way you can genuinely care about another's well-being except by actions. Urging people to love people as people and not as the good kind of people as if their behaviour is irrelevant is implying that to care what a person does is a hindrance to loving them or a threat to that love. To dismiss actions as if they were a hindrance to loving the person is only encouraging people who feel good about praying for you and wishing good for you while not lifting a finger when they can help.

Love is working for the wellbeing of others. Ignoring the kind of people they are is opposing their wellbeing.

Loving people for being people as if their behaviours do not happen is really loving nobody. It is said that if you love everybody you really love nobody. Nobody is special because if you are that liberal with your love you only dilute it for each person so much that it is almost water and not love. It is hard to believe in the sincerity of a person who claims to love the Holy Virgin Mary and Satan himself equally. Practically speaking you may as well not love. But if you start seeing love as being about the person as divorced from the kind of person they are as shown by their actions and behaviours then you are making the problem a million times worse. You are an extremist when it comes to the fact that if you love everybody you really love nobody. A person who says they love everybody must love nobody because seeing people as persons divorced from the kind of persons they are is really loving nobody.

If loving people is not about their actions and the kind of people they are is not even to be considered then it follows that they have no reason to worry about personal responsibility. Even if I worry about my own why would I encourage or ask anybody to worry about theirs? I just love them and don't care. The motive for admitting responsibility is taken away from them. They are left with no reason to care.

If all I care about is being loved as a person I will not care if I commit murder and end up in jail. I will think people love me as much as if I were Mother Teresa.

When I do good, I want the other person to be really helped by it. That means I hope they see the love in me and are grateful. I cannot be motivated to help others if I see loving a person as having nothing to do with loving their behaviour. It would mean I would expect others to see that too and put it into practice.

If a person's behaviour tells you nothing about their lovability and has nothing to do with knowing them then you know stranger and friend equally. And why stop with people? Why not include dogs and pet rats and worms too? Surely they are persons in their own way. Perhaps they deserve even more love and help than people do for their bodies and minds restrict them and endanger them. At least we can do something to protect ourselves from some evils. They cannot. Their situation is more serious than the human situation.

What about God then? If we are to avoid loving a sum of behaviours for it is not loving a person then it follows that nothing God does should inspire us to love him. We should just love him. If your love grows for your girlfriend and child the more you get to know them then that cannot be real love. It means you are getting better at simulating love and self-deception.

We cannot know God unless he reveals himself to us in a relationship kind of way. Knowing the king through arguments is no substitute for knowing the king as a friend and person. It is knowing about him not knowing him. Only God can make God known. And it is easy for us to wrongly think we know God when we think we know ourselves and actually do not.

A person consists of consciousness - he or she senses things. That alone is behaviour. The intent of the person and her or his thoughts are also behaviours. A person is a form of behaviour. To say you must love the person and forget about behaviours makes no sense. You have failed to grasp what a person is and thus you are showing no real respect and cannot respect the person deep down.

Loving people as if they do not express themselves in what they do is denying them their right to be helped to express themselves. It would imply that the person who loves his wife for her beauty and wit does not love her as a person.

If you should love yourself as a person and not as a person with qualities then you do not love your qualities. You do not

love yourself. You are simulating love. Suppose the love is real just for the sake of argument. Then when you suffer guilt or a lack of self-esteem you are being stupid. Believing that about yourself will mean you are stuck with them forever. It is when you see your guilt and self-esteem lack as understandable that you can take steps to address them.

No wonder religion with its over the top quest to be do-gooder, really leads to aggression and intolerance and bigotry.