

Eckhart Tolle: Messenger of "Love"

Eckhart Tolle, author of *A New Earth* and *The Power of Now* and couch sitter for Oprah, has a message. The message is not new. He is trying to make being normal and what he sees as wise compatible. He advocates living in the now which supposedly helps you find an inner core of passive awareness where nothing bad can reach. This does not sound practical but he says he can make it practical. He links this power of now concept to concern for the earth and sees the message as our salvation from an eco-catastrophe. This lends great appeal to his teachings. The link between mystical meditation which historically has always lead to mystics not caring what happened to society or the world is broken or so it seems. The break however as we will see later is fake. The link is still there but denied.

Tolle may use the word love but the word is emptied of any real meaning for he denies you have any responsibility for anything. Real love involves responsibility. Evil deeds happen in something to do with the person but have nothing to do with the person that does them for only the spirit and the good are real. Your real self is perfect. "You do not become good by trying to be good, but by finding the goodness that is already in you, and allowing the goodness to emerge. But it can only emerge if something fundamental changes in your state of consciousness." But trying to change how your mind works would be trying to be good.

Tolle virtually commands accepting the present and what is in it as if you have chosen it. You turn your psychology about the moment into a psychology of choice. Critics say that that seems to be okay as long as you know you are not the creator of the present moment and all in it or that makes you responsible for what you simply are not responsible for. The present moment includes Hitler being dictator. Is that your fault? No unless you are God the creator or have knowingly chosen your lot before you were born into this world. But that does not mean you cannot intend to make it your fault so you end up in your heart the same as one who can actually make it your fault and has done. If you create your existence and all it brings and you are the root cause and complete cause of all then you have an infinite amount to be guilty about. The responsibility you are accepting is terrible. If you attempt by intention to be as if you were doing so then you are still accepting all that responsibility.

Tolle is not an apostle of love but cold hearted hate for he blames victims for their plights, *QUOTE: How much time do you think you will need before you are able to say, "I will create no more pain, no more suffering?" How much more pain do you need before you can make that choice? If you think that you need more time, you will get more time - and more pain. Time and pain are inseparable.*

This is worse than the Christian doctrine that the worst suffering comes from sensing that God is not with you - at this point it is not about him helping or not but about his being with you. This blames the victim too for if God is there then you should be letting yourself sense it.

Tolle stresses the importance of LIVING in the present moment to the expense of everything else. While it is true that the present moment is the most important moment that demands acting in it not wallowing in it like a pig in mud. Yet Tolle disagrees "allow the present moment to be... Whatever the present moment contains, accept it as if you had chosen it. Always work with it, not against it. Make it your friend and ally, not your enemy. This will miraculously transform your whole life." (*The Power of Now*, pages 35-6).

The downside is that while we are trying to live in the present moment and feel one with everyone and everything the distractions still have to happen. We have bread to put on the table and doctors to go to. We have mortgages to pay. Already we see the spirituality is implicitly demeaning normality. His philosophy remains a teaching for those who want to ignore reality even if they don't hide in a monastery. Living a normal life will only make you angry if you want to be trying to meditate on the present moment a lot or all the time.

Succeeding in living only in the present moment will not take away your problems magically despite Tolle praising it as miraculous. You have to come back to reality. You will still need your psychotherapist. You will definitely need her or him if you find out Tolle's scheme does not really work but only seems to long enough to get you hooked.

While you can worry about the past and future too much this does not warrant not caring about them at all! You can have joy in the present moment without going that irrational. Irrationality will not help you but hinder and harm you. While you are ignoring the future you are ignoring the future of others too. He even wants you to let the past go and not bother solving the problems it has caused (pages 139-140). This is doing away with any chance of learning.

Tolle would answer that living in the present brings you a good future. So it is good practically. But that turns the good future into a side-effect not a goal. And if you are trying to find peace and joy in the present moment how can you

concentrate well enough.

The philosophy can be understood as saying let the present be. But that means letting the future be what it will be which means he is contradicting himself by saying we must care about the environment.

He seeks to numb death and insults the bereaved by denying that death is really a bad thing or matters: "it is only tragic because you projected a separate self where there was none." (The Power of Now, page 100). If "past and future obviously have no reality of their own" as page 50 says then death should not be allowed to matter. He not only teaches that the past and present do not matter but that they are not really connected to the present for the present exists and they are fictions.

Tolle writes "when you live in complete acceptance of what is – which is the only sane way to live – there is no 'good' or 'bad' in your life anymore. There is only a higher good." (The Power of Now, page 178) So you must continually engage in "refusal to judge anything that happens." (New Earth, page 197) because when you consider the present moment "observe how the mind labels it and how this labeling process, this continuous sitting in judgment creates pain and unhappiness" (The Power of Now, page 35). Living in the new requires not judging anybody or anything but the reality is we need to judge and want to judge and do judge all the time. The stress of trying not to judge will only make you think you may as well judge after all. Tolle is very judgmental himself as we will see. His philosophy judges harshly. The alternative to judging is to accept but he certainly does not do that.

Far from an equality campaigner, Tolle promotes eco-feminism which blames maleness for all that hurts women and the world: "What is it that suddenly made men feel threatened by the female? The evolving ego in them. It knew it could gain full control of our planet only through the male form, and to do so, it had to render the female powerless." (New Earth, page 156).

Look at this for a remarkable judgement about human beings: "now they are engaged in destroying nature and the planet that sustains them. Unbelievable but true. Humans are a dangerously insane and very sick species. That is not a judgment. It's a fact." (The Power of Now, page 81). But it is a judgment and a fact. Those who do not judge are replacing good careful honest judging with stupid judging. Judging that you should not judge is not fair on the victims of the person who needs judging.

The Power of Now is almost proclaimed to be the infallible divine word for it "is not derived from external sources, but from the one true Source within, so it contains no theory or speculation. I speak from inner experience." (The Power of Now, page 10). It is clear that there is indeed a lot of speculation in his doctrines. It is not obvious that male energy is like the devil. Tolle denies his philosophy is a belief system. He thinks that he offers an experience that has nothing to do with beliefs and transcends them. But his books proclaim a lot of beliefs.

Tolle sees problems with the idea that God or the divine is love. He writes, "God is the One Life and beyond the countless forms of life. Love implies duality: lover and beloved, subject and object. So love is the recognition of oneness in the world of duality". To love another is to love yourself for they are you. That is clearly a form of religious or spiritual selfishness. You intend to be selfish if you help another thinking that somehow they are really you.

Love is redefined as realising that you and the universe and other people are really one spirit and not really separate things. You are God and God is the urine in your bladder. That is not love at all. It is disguising scary mad mysticism as nice by calling it love.

There are no two people in love with each other. The ultimate reality is that they are one person and one self. Love only happens between person and person so love is not ultimately true or real. This totally contradicts the Christian notion that God is three persons united by love.

He denies that evil is real. "If evil has any reality – and it is relative, not an absolute reality – this is its definition: complete identification with the forms – physical forms, thought forms, emotional forms". As all is one there is no evil.

Some believers in Christ say that nobody goes to Hell forever for doing wrong but for not doing right. The difference is that you are not going for breaking a rule but for having the chance to make good and not doing it. But for Tolle all circumstances are good in the sense that they evolve you! That is a total contradiction of Christian doctrine.

Unsurprisingly according to Tolle "all religions are equally false and equally true, depending on how you use them". He must have omniscient knowledge of all those complex religions with all their differences. To think you religion alone is right is being in the "service of the ego". But to say no religion is true is to say that the religion is true that says they are not true. There is more sense in claiming to be the true religion than doing that!

Tolle tries to make out that the you that harms others or yourself is not the real you. This is very neat and convenient. It

allows you to feel righteous and smug no matter what you do. Also while you are concentrating on your real self your bad and devious side will thrive. How can you feel responsible for your bad side and the bad things you do with that attitude? This is love the sinner and hate the sin in so far as it argues that the real you is not the sin or in any way harmful. Any doctrine that teaches such a delusion is worthy only of disgust.

If you pretend the bad things you did in the past do not matter any more you become a hypocrite. Tolle makes out that we must treat the past as nothing. Christianity does that in its own way by saying that because of Jesus' sacrifice fake enlightenment means that if you have bad qualities you will still have them. The more you are in denial the more powerful you make them.

Finally, Tolle's teaching is unrealistic but gets its popularity from its veneer of good sense and starts people on an wild goose chase for getting a spiritual placebo.