FAITH AND SERVICE Andris Heks 22.01.2021

I am now in my seventies.

The older I have become, the more important faith and service became to me as the sources of the meaning of my life.

My FAITH is in inexhaustible divine love.

My SERVICE is in accessing, reciprocating and passing on to others such love.

My faith is not blind. It is based on my experiential evidence of divine love being there for me to embrace, 24/7/365.

Faith provides the key for me to experientially access such love.

The less my faith is, the less I experience such love.

And the less I serve, the more socially meaningless my faith becomes.

James goes even as far as to saying that:

‘Faith without works (service) is no faith at all.’ (James 2:17)

To identify myself as being beloved by God and to claim that love daily, is deeply meaningful to me.

As I practice daily the ‘Yoga of Song and Dance’, that I developed through 44 years of experimentation with Yoga, I feel beloved and blessed.

But this is only half of faith and service in practice.

The other half starts with the awareness, that even in the height of experiencing such ecstatic love and bliss, I am broken and I can only fulfil the meaning of my life by giving my broken self away through compassionate, loving service.

And that my ultimate event of faithful service will be my death, by which I will have bequeathed the gifts I received during my life’s journey to others to build on.

In his song ‘Anthem’, Leonard Cohen sings:

‘Ring the bells that still can ring. Forget your perfect offering. There is a *crack*, a crack in everything. *That’s how* the light gets in, that’s how the light gets in.’

The analogy is the broken Christ on the cross. And through his brokenness he gave the light of his love in service to God and humanity.

He is not asking people to express their faith in him through worshipping him.

Rather, he pleads with people to express their faith through loving service to the ‘least of our brothers and sisters’ by quenching their thirst, satiating their hunger, visiting the prisoners and the sick and by taking in the refugees. (Mathew 25: 40)

And he implores us to love God with all our beings and to love our neighbours and even our enemies.

Gandhi writes that to love people who also love us, is no love at all.

Even scoundrels can do this.

Love is when I can love someone who hates me and whom I do not trust.

Faith is my bridge to a reciprocal vertical relationship of love with God and a horizontal relationship with others, where I love the others irrespective of whether they reciprocate.

Vertically, through faith I access unconditional divine love for which I am very grateful.

My service is in reciprocating this love to God, ideally with all my being, but in reality alas, I only do so in my limited way.

Horizontally, faith motivates me to serve others by passing on that love to them as much as I can.

Again, in practice, I do a very limited job.

Why love God?

In God I have my ultimate role model-teacher: God loves me and everyone else unconditionally and through such love, God is the ultimate servant to me and to the rest of God’s creation.

So faith motivates me to serve: to attempt to love God with all my being and to try to love others as myself.

Why love others as myself?

Because my identity is made up of both others and of my unique individuality.

My uniqueness can only flourish spiritually as part of my ‘other halves’; vertically my Divine Provider and horizontally, all the other human beings.

When Christ says:

‘Love your neighbour as yourself’, to me, he literally means that others also make up my identity.

So my identity is my being the UNIque, beloved child of God as well as mystically also being the other half of all other human beings as my ‘UNIversal’ self.

Hence, I am only one whole, if I love my Divine Lover and potentially all the other children of God as my other halves.

Alas, this is virtually impossible in practice. As a teacher remarked to us once:

‘So, you want to love the whole of humanity? But to love even a single person is difficult.’

That of course does not mean, that I should not try to love God with all my being and another person and all others as myself.

I will always fall short of doing justice to such task.

Yet it is this goal alone that gives spiritual meaning to my life, no matter what an impossible dream it is to achieve.

I see my liberation in becoming a voluntary, loving, servant-slave of such unconditionally loving Ultimate Servant Being to us all.