

Every Gay person at some time or another feels loneliness and isolation, a very painful void inside that can become an unbearable prison. We have all felt at some time alienated from others, separated from the group, and alone. By its very nature this loneliness, like a headach, centers the focus of attention on ourselves. We seek to fill this void, to satisfy this hunger... we go out to find others who will love us.

We know that our loneliness can be filled only by the love of others. We know that we must feel loved. The paradox is this, that if we seek to fill the void of our own loneliness in seeking love from others we will inevitably find no consolation but only a deeper desolation. Most of us, driven by our own aching needs and voids, approach life and other people as seekers. Most of us know our need to be loved and try to seek the love that we need from others. But the paradox remains uncompromised; if we seek the love which we need, we will never find it. We are lost.

Love can effect the solution of our problems, but we must face the fact that to be loved, we must become LOVABLE. When a person orients his life towards the satisfaction of his own needs, when he goes out to seek the love which he needs, no matter how we try to soften our judgments of him, he is self-centered. He is not lovable, even if he does deserve our compassion. He is concentrating on himself, and as long as he continues to concentrate on himself, his ability to love will always remain stunted and he will himself remain the perennial child.

If however, a person seeks not to receive love, but rather to give it, he will become lovable and he will certainly be loved. This is the immutable law under which we live; concern for ourself and convergence upon self can only isolate us and induce an even deeper and more torturous loneliness. It is a vicious and terrible circle that closes in on us when loneliness, seeking to be relieved through the love of others, only increases.

The only way we can break this circle formed by our lusting egos is to stop being concerned with ourselves and to begin to be concerned with others. This, of course, is not easy. To relocate the focus of one's mind from self to others can in fact mean a life time of effort and work. It is made more difficult because we must put others in the forefront, in place of ourselves. We must learn to respond to the needs of others without seeking the satisfaction of our own needs.

In other words, love means a concern for, acceptance of, and an interest in the others around me whom I am trying to love. It is a self-donation which may prove to be an altar of sacrifice. I can love others only to the extent they are truly the focus of my mind, heart, and life; and I can find myself only by forgetting myself. Love is indeed costly and demanding. Because of the inward pains that all of us bear, the scar tissues that are part of our human inheritance, because of the competition and example of a self-grasping world, it will be difficult for us to make the sacrifice of ourselves that is involved in loving. Loving always means at least this sacrifice, the orientation of my thoughts and desires towards others and the abandonment of my own self and self-interests. Needless to say, such abandonment always involves a high cost to self. The lovable person is, in the last analysis, the only one who has made the consent to LOVE.

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For better or for worse Christ has taken us as his living symbols in this world. The world that is asking whether God is dead or not, the world that is asking who Christ is can find its answer only in the Christian. For better or for worse, we are Christ to the world. To love, one must have enormous motivation. In a world which is gouging and clawing for material gain and every kind of gratification, the Gay Christian by his love must stand forth as a breath-taking exception. Love will always be his most eloquent argument and effective means. It is difficult, and yet it is the Christian imperative: "By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, that you love one another."

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For continuity it seems as though it will be necessary to have monthly meetings of DIGNITY both in Los Angeles and San Diego. Thus our San Diego meeting will be at Paul's (3020 Reynard Way) on Friday, May 22nd at 7:30. Our L.A. meeting will be at George's (6816 Verdun Ave.) on Saturday, May 23rd. at 7:30. See you then.