

Chapter 17

The happiness which brings enduring worth to life is not the superficial happiness that is dependent on circumstances. It is the happiness and contentment that fills the soul even in the midst of the most distressing circumstances and the most bitter environment. It is the kind of happiness that grins when things go wrong and smiles through the tears. The happiness for which our souls ache is one undisturbed by success or failure, one which will root deeply inside us and give inward relaxation, peace, and contentment, no matter what the surface problems may be. That kind of happiness stands in need of no outward stimulus.

-- Billy Graham – Evangelist

Our walk back to the house was solemn. I guess we both needed some quiet time. It's funny. When you don't really know someone silence can feel awkward. I guess that's the way you can tell that you really know someone; when silence is not uncomfortable. There was so much to consider. I felt like I needed to wrap things up; bring some closure to our discussion.

"So, where have we come in our discussion? Where has our journey taken us? Can we summarize what we have discussed and our conclusions?" I asked.

"I think we can."

"Concerning God?"

"That the existence of God is logical and reasonable, far more than the alternatives available to us, but it goes beyond reason. God must be experienced if we are to get a glimpse of this awesome Energy, the Shekinah glory of the Indescribable One."

"So, does this logic eliminate the need for faith?"

"Not at all," Samuel stated. "In fact, belief in God is still very much an act of faith. Logic and reason give us evidence that such a Being exists, but it takes a great deal of faith to

actually accept the fact that It does exist. As I mentioned before, trying to conceive of the inconceivable, to comprehend something that is far beyond our comprehension, and accept that this Being is real, given that it is not physical or tangible, takes faith. Actually, believing in this Great One requires our whole mind: logic tells us that its existence is reasonable, faith enables us to accept this deity as being real. But it is experience, putting our trust in the existence and reality of this incredible God, and then living with that knowledge everyday, being sensitive to Its presence in our life and experiencing what It is doing in our life that ultimately gives us the assurance and definitive proof that this Great God is indeed real.”

“In regard to God as the Creator?” I asked.

“Once again, when considering the theories concerning the origin of life, the belief in an Intelligent Designer is far more reasonable than the alternative option of spontaneous generation or the evolution of life from non-living matter. Our conclusion is based on the complex organization of the universe as opposed to the chaos that would be the result of chance. We have agreed that it is logical that evolution, as proposed by Darwin and others, is also reasonable with the exception of several problems that Darwin, himself, admits. However, if one admits that the variations that appear problematic were designed into evolution by a Creator these problem areas make sense. Darwin believed in a Creator. He concluded his book by saying,

‘There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that, whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved.’⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Darwin, pp. 459-460.

“It’s really not important how God created this wonderful world and everything in it. It is just important for us to know that God did it.”

“In regard to the character of God?” I asked.

“We have concluded and agreed with all great thinkers in history that God is incomprehensible. We can never, in our limited understanding know who God is or what God is like. However, by examining God’s activities in the world such as nature, the laws of nature, action and consequence, we can understand, in some very limited way, who God is and what God must be like.”

“And our conclusion based on these indicators is that God is perfect. That is, that God is consistent and dependable and without contradiction.” I stated.

“Yes. But God is this way not because God cannot be another way, but because God, being perfect, always makes perfect decisions and is, therefore, consistent because God chooses to be.”

“In regard to current religious theology?” I inquired.

“That there are basically only two guidelines: love God and love others, including all of God’s created things. If we do these two things, we will live in a world that is conducive to life now and in the future.”

“In regard to contemporary religions?” I asked.

“That there is truth in all religions,” he continued, “however, there has been so much human involvement and enhancement that one must search diligently and patiently, using creation as a standard when examining those sacred documents to accurately find the truth in each.”

“Concerning the presence and participation of God in the world?” I wondered.

“That God’s amazing intelligent creative energy is present in all things universally and it is that energy that gives life.

Since God is present in us and in all living things, we have the ability and opportunity to tap that Power within us to achieve great things. My theory is that we have two non-physical entities within us: the energy that is God's presence and the intelligent creative energy that has been created by God and contains our personality. It is God within us that gives us unity with the world and it is our personal energy or spirit that makes us unique individuals. These two energies work together, the extent to which is determined by how much we, as individuals, have been able to grasp the reality of God within us and tap that amazing Power. These two spirits constitute who we are."

"Concerning life?"

"That life," Samuel said, "should be a very positive experience, free from guilt. If we could only grasp the unbelievable power available to us, as Jesus did, as the writers of the Vedas did, as Buddha did, as great philosophers and inventors have done then we, too, can impact the world in a very positive way. But we must also remember, that we are responsible for our actions and our destiny. We cannot pass the buck by blaming God for our actions or the actions of others that cause great problems in the world. We are responsible for taking care of God's wonderful creation."

He paused, and then thoughtfully continued.

"In short, we humans are the real problem in the world today and in many instances, religion is fueling the fires of destruction. With the concepts that attempt to make each religion exclusive, the battle to own God is creating the greatest division among people in the world today. Wars, hatred and discrimination are a direct result of the doctrines that inspire and rouse Godly people to commit ungodly acts. Unity is what our world needs; the understanding that we are one, made one by the powerful bond of the great inconceivable Deity who created us and lives in all of us. It is this oneness that, when realized, will give us a greater respect for all life, motivate us to care for one another and our universe and lead us to a place of peace,

prosperity and promise. This is the world that is within our grasp.

“Let me read one more thing for you,” he said. “There is a short verse that contains a great truth from the Upanishads. As I mentioned, the Hindus call the supreme God, Brahman. Those who call the One ‘God’ or ‘Allah’ or any other name can substitute that name for Brahman.

‘Brahman cannot be realized by those
 Who are subject to greed, fear, and anger.
 Brahman cannot be realized by those
 Who are subject to the pride of name and fame
 Or to the vanity of scholarship.
 Brahman cannot be realized by those
 Who are enmeshed in life’s duality.
 But to all those who pierce this duality,
 Whose hearts are given to the Lord of Love,
 He gives himself through his infinite grace;
 He gives himself through his infinite grace.’”⁸¹

⁸¹ *The Tejobindu Upanishad.*