Liberation into Unconditional Humanity

Two millennia ago humanity was offered a great exodus from darkness and slavery and invited to a promised land of truly human existence. An unprecedented discovery had been made that would liberate the human spirit from fear, shame, and anxiety as never before in the history of human consciousness. It would liberate humanity from endless cycles of violence. It is not possible to overstate the critical stature of that discovery and its ramifications for human freedom and progress.

A Palestinian sage named Jesus (not the Christian Jesus) had come to the realization that the universe was grounded in unconditional love and therefore every human person was the beneficiary of an incomprehensible unconditional love. This led him to advocate for the treatment of all people with the same unconditional love that he had discovered behind all reality and life. The embrace of this uniquely new form of love would take people into the most authentically human/humane forms of relating and existence possible, ending the age-long cycles of insider group exclusion, retaliation, domination, and payback violence that had hitherto plagued human civilization. It would take humanity into an entirely new world which Jesus called the kingdom of God on earth. It would be a liberation into a truly human existence and civilization.

The most fundamental issues of human liberation tackled by Jesus had to do with the things that keep people from living as truly human. I refer to the practices that have been most enslaving and burdensome to humanity, practices that relate to our primitive background with its dark impulses to retaliate, to exclude (small band mentality), to dominate others, and to punish or destroy. These barbaric impulses have repeatedly dead-ended humanity in endless cycles of revenge or payback.

As the ancients developed their worldviews they embedded and validated these base impulses in systems that we know as payback or punishing justice. These systems are based on the elements of wrongs committed (attack, assault, offense), offended or wounded parties, deserved revenge (the impulse to retaliate in kind), and just punishment (get even or destroy the offender). This has also been called eye for eye or tit for tat justice. While often couched in high-sounding legal language, these payback responses are still at core just base vengeance and retaliation.

The discovery of unconditional love challenged this primitive payback thinking and offered humanity an unprecedented liberation to something better, to a more humane form of relating, to a more humane existence. It rejected payback response as inhuman and destructive and no longer acceptable for shaping human relationships and societies. In the place of the payback approach, unconditional love urged the forgiveness of every one for every wrong done, especially so-called enemies. And it urged forgiveness even if forgiveness was not sought by offenders and wrongs were not made right. It held to a higher ideal of breaking cycles of tit for tat payback and the endless cycles of punishing response that payback produces.

Unconditional urged people to not retaliate against wrongs done but instead to respond with mercy and kindness. And we are not talking of some mushy pacifist softness here. Try employing an unconditional approach and find out for yourself the courage it takes to live as truly human in this manner. No wonder unconditional love as taught by Jesus has been called a hard saying. It calls forth an entirely new and advanced breed of steel-spined human beings. It calls for, at times, an intense struggle against the hard-wired grain of our old animal core brain. Most of us tend to instinctively take the easier route of responding in kind to others- good for good, bad for bad.

But on the plus side of an unconditional approach, the real human self, a reality separate from the old brain, resonates with the ideal of unconditional response. That authentic human self is itself an entity of love.

Unconditional sets offenders free. It does not try to dominate and control others with guilt, fear, shame, and a sense of obligation. It chooses to bear the personal pain of any offence and in so doing squash the impulse to get even. This reverses the potential for relationships to slide down into tit for tat cycles of payback. Unconditional love courageously chooses to start new cycles of positive human response that rise toward something better in relationships. And this gets us to the smallest details of interpersonal relationships as well as to larger relationships of societies with one another.

Let me add a disclaimer here that urging unconditional love as a guiding principle for life obviously does not mean letting dangerous people go free to continue destroying the lives of others. Any valid common sense love will protect others from harm by those who cannot control their worst impulses. So also with nations taking action to protect their citizens from attack by irrational aggressors. There are complex factors to consider in wrestling with what unconditional response means in any given situation. I add this qualifier because there are always people trying to invalidate some overall ideal with a few counter scenarios that call for discretionary applications.

But to continue- unconditional love includes and honours every person equally, no matter what their status, reputation, or lifestyle. It is a love that gives generously to both good and bad (Matthew 5: it sends rain on good and evil alike) and expects nothing in return. It is an entirely higher level of humane response than what most of us have ever experienced. But it takes us to an entirely new level of liberation from animal-like response and the slavery and misery of such response. To express such love is to manifest the very image of God in human form. It reveals to others what “God is love” actually means. Jesus said that anyone exhibiting such love would be just like God (again, Matthew 5).

Unconditional love was more than just a dominant strand in the message of the historical Jesus. It provides a unifying background to much of what he said and did. I would argue that it was his central and primary message. He expressed this new ideal through precept, story, and his own treatment of others.

In order to get a good foundational sense of what unconditional response means, take a look at the main precepts of Jesus that first established the basic meaning of unconditional love. I would refer to other sources than Jesus if I could, but for the fact that no one in history has stated unconditional better than he did. And I refer to the historical Jesus, not the Christian Jesus (see forums such as the Jesus Seminar for more detail on this important distinction). The teaching of the Christian version of Jesus in the gospels has significant amounts of conflicting material due to the fact that early Christians put all sorts of contradictory statements in his mouth after he was gone. For instance, they have him damning Capernaum to hell (Matthew 11) after he told his disciples to love their enemies. No one advocating love for enemies would then turn around and damn them to hell. That sort of contradiction makes nonsense of the core message of the historical Jesus.

What exactly was the central message of Jesus? Look at his main precepts such as the statement to give freely to others and not expect repayment. Or his urging people to forgive endlessly (7 times 70, which points to unlimited forgiveness). And his precepts to not retaliate against offenders or not judge or condemn others. He summarized all these varied precepts in the more comprehensive saying that urged people to love their enemies and treat them as intimate family. Other precepts urged people to not dominate and control others like pagans did. He also urged people to be merciful and kind to the ungrateful and evil. After all, God sends sun and rain to good and evil alike.

Where contexts related to these unconditional sayings appear to advocate conditions of some sort, we are justified in employing the Jesus Seminar logic that what contradicts some other clear saying of Jesus is not an authentic saying of his. It has been put in his mouth by his followers after he died. You can clearly detect the central theme of unconditional running all through his teaching and then rightly reason that anything anywhere else that appears to contradict this central theme is not authentic to the historical Jesus.

And look at Jesus’ actual treatment of others. He welcomed all people equally with no regard for status, reputation, or lifestyle. Note the story of the Prodigal son, or the accounts of the ‘sinful’ woman who washed his feet, his eating with ‘sinners’, or his forgiveness of the woman caught in adultery. His life and message repeatedly highlighted full forgiveness, full acceptance, and unlimited generosity toward both the so-called good and evil. He rejected all barriers between people, disregarded all forms of separation and opposition, and accepted absolutely no distinctions among people. Every person was regarded as human only and a full member of the family of humanity, no matter what they had been or done. He set no conditions that would limit his generosity toward any person.

He presented a coherent message of liberation from primitive payback thinking with its endless conditions and pre-requisites and rigid consequences for right/wrong. Jesus, in all he said and did, made a clear break with the conditional payback justice that had enslaved human consciousness over previous millennia.

That dark justice of payback had shaped human relating in terms of an eye for eye approach to others. It had burdened people with fear and shame over their imperfection and subjected them to exclusion and punishment for failure to meet the rules and expectations of various social groups such as religious insiders. It had relegated many people to outcast status, to lower status as law breakers and infidels.

Jesus extended his unconditional approach to all areas of life. For instance, he told the story of David and his hungry men entering the temple (forbidden to average citizens, limited to an ordained priesthood) to eat religiously prohibited food. The point of this story was to show that human need and well-being was to take precedence over any religious condition or prohibition. Jesus was restating what Old Testament prophets had intimated in their statements that God did not want sacrifice but mercy. The account of David could have just as easily communicated the primitive anti-human nature of much religious belief and law and the ridiculousness of subjecting humanity to such law in the first place.

All human law should be subject to re-evaluation in terms of an unconditional approach to people and their well-being. If so, one can see the threat that an unconditional approach poses to religion and human authority or law. A rigid conditional or payback approach can no longer serve relationships in a truly human existence.

Unconditional as taught by Jesus meant that no conditions were to be set to block the full acceptance of anyone, no prerequisite demands were to be presented to anyone, no payment was to be expected or made before offering full forgiveness, and no barriers were to be set between people. Conventional payback consequences were to be set aside for generous mercy and kindness. There was to be no pre-requisite or post-requisite in our response to and treatment of others. Absolutely none. Everyone was to be fully accepted and loved just as they were.

Jesus redefined the highest human values- forgiveness, acceptance, love- in an entirely new manner freed of all payback or condition associations that had previously degraded their meaning.

Let me take unconditional to an arena where payback thinking has caused the most damage and enslaved the human spirit most profoundly and that is in the very depths of human perception and consciousness. It can be argued that the most fundamental issues of human freedom have to do with the very core of human being, the mental and emotional depths of the human psyche. Enslavement of this core of humanity- the mind or spirit- has profound ramifications all through the rest of life. Real freedom must engage this liberation of mind and spirit.

This then means liberation from the ideas, concepts, or perceptions that shape and enslave minds. This would include freedom from any ideas that prevent people from understanding what it means to be truly human in the sense of unconditional as taught by Jesus. It would include emotional liberation from the fear engendered by payback systems of thought.

The enslavement in the human psyche arises from the way that people have defined their views of ultimate reality and authority- what they call God. For millennia people have defined divinity in terms of payback, thereby embedding payback in ultimate authority and protecting it under the canopy of the sacred as something untouchable, eternal, and ultimate. The embedding of anything in deity then acts to validate that thing all through life. This is seen, for instance, in the human appeal to vengeful deity to validate human vengeance. We remember that what people believe about the divine or heavenly they tend to replicate in their relationships and societies (thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven).

Embedding payback in ultimate ideas such as divinity and holding these in our belief systems and worldviews has a horrific cost on our mental and emotional lives. It is damaging because it violates our essential self which is an entity grounded in love. Defining divinity in terms of payback has been intensely destructive in darkening human consciousness profoundly with fear, anxiety and despair. This is evident in such things as the still too widespread belief in and fear of divine judgment, retribution, and punishment in hell.

In response to this religious endeavour to embed barbaric payback in God, we need to throw off all fear, stand up before the ancient edifice of a religion like Christianity and, even employing the standards of its own holy book, state clearly and forcefully that unconditional love means that there is no list of wrongs kept in some divine book to be remembered and punished (1Cor.13- love keeps no record of wrongs). There is no coming divine retaliation, no future threat, no judgment, no punishment, and most importantly, no hell. Did you hear me right? Let me repeat- there is no such thing or place as hell. It never existed. We need to collectively abolish now and forever this most disgusting form of terrorism ever invented, the terrorizing of minds and spirits with this barbaric myth of hell. Hell is nothing but the perverse concoction of overheated religious imaginations gone completely insane with hate and revenge. This particular myth has brought endless unnecessary fear and misery to humanity. There is nothing more cruel to inflict on another person than to threaten them with such a perverse thing as hell. It is payback thinking at its most grotesque extreme. It is entirely incompatible with love, by any decent definition.

A grasp of unconditional love as taught by Jesus will help anyone stand up to hell, along with any related payback themes, and refuse to back down. Some things are just false and need to be called out with courage and finality. This is exactly what the historical Jesus did. He had a vision of God as unconditional love and then took that same approach toward all of life. This stiffened his spine to call out and expose all the religious hocus pocus of his day that was counter to authentic unconditional love, such as the systems of sacrifice to obtain forgiveness.

Liberation, as Jesus grasped it, involved the understanding that ultimate reality was indeed love and then holding fast to that truth, to approach all of life with that assurance. We ought to take inspiration from his courageous example and stand against all the darkness and misery of payback thought and practices.

Religious belief systems have distorted and buried this liberating insight and ideal of unconditional love with varieties of payback thinking and conditions. Christians in particular are responsible for missing the greatest opportunity in history to embrace this new discovery of Jesus that would have delivered humanity from the ancient darkness and bondage of payback thinking. The great irony here is that Christians have claimed to follow the very person who made this incredible discovery and found it so amazing that he told people to sell everything they had in order to obtain and embrace this treasure of a kingdom of unconditional love. But instead of embracing his new breakthrough insight with the same enthusiasm that Jesus possessed for it, right after his death early Christians reverted back to the old pagan payback views and interpreted Jesus’ teaching and life in those terms. This was an act of historical ignorance or cowardice (or both), to fall back with the opponents of Jesus in rejecting the scandalous message of unconditional love. Christians consequently missed the greatest opportunity ever to liberate human consciousness and instead retreated to the safety of conventional payback beliefs. This has to be classified with other great crimes against humanity, to have not seized the opportunity to liberate people from the fear, anxiety, and endless violence produced by payback worldviews.

Christianity has not offered salvation to humanity as it claims, but instead took the grandest form of salvation ever offered to humanity- liberation from a payback existence, liberation to live in an existence of unconditional love- and threw it away. It repudiated unconditional love entirely and thereby damned humanity to further enslavement in the darkness and misery of payback thinking. This is the only hell that humanity suffers from, and is brought to you by the Christian religion.

How exactly did they do this? You hear it repeatedly everywhere today. Christians will state that God loves unconditionally this element in Jesus’ teaching is acknowledged as Christians sense something of the divine in this unconditional theme) but then they add that because of his love, God sent his son to pay for our sins. This is a profoundly contradictory statement and hence various Christian writers, recognizing this contradiction, will dismiss the unconditional element altogether as heretical to the payback Christian belief system. Others still try to maintain unconditional as part of the Christian theological complex but only up in muddled contradiction.

Where Christians have gone wrong here is in re-interpreting the death of Jesus in terms of a payback sacrifice. They claim that Jesus’ death was a grand divine sacrifice to pay for sin. This introduces a supreme payback condition that distorts entirely the message of Jesus about unconditional forgiveness and love. This sacrifice, state Christians, was necessary before God could forgive anyone. This doctrine of sacrifice or payment has been explained with all sorts of theological/legal reasoning- in doctrines of atonement, propitiation, expiation, reparation, or satisfaction. But what this does is introduce a great supreme prerequisite condition of payback that obliterates entirely the meaning of unconditional love as taught by Jesus. If the debt first had to be paid in full, then unconditional forgiveness is rendered meaningless. The debt has been paid. Forgiveness of any form is no longer needed, much less unconditional forgiveness. You cannot claim that God demanded full payment and at the same time loves unconditionally.

Authentic unconditional forgiveness does not demand any payment first. This was made clear all through Jesus’ teaching on this and related issues. He urged people to lend without expecting repayment. Forgive seventy times seven, or endlessly, he said. Don’t expect anything in return. Don’t retaliate in kind. Don’t hold grudges. Don’t keep a record of wrongs. Don’t judge or condemn. There is nothing in these statements of any demand for a payment or compensation before you forgive and love another person, even an enemy. Add to this the powerful comment, noted earlier, of the Old Testament prophets that God did not even want sacrifice which is to say he did not want any conditions to be met.

A God who would demand payment first would know nothing of true unconditional forgiveness. And a God who demanded any conditions be met first would then be held to a lower standard of behaviour and response than we imperfect humans are held to. If we are told to forgive and love unconditionally without expecting payment first, then let us not wrongly conclude that God meets a lower standard of forgiveness and love than we do. That is distorting nonsense.

A God of authentic love would not exercise a lower standard of forgiveness and love, a conditional love, by demanding full payment for wrong before he forgives. This is a straightforward denial of the nature of unconditional forgiveness and love. The parable of the Prodigal son makes clear what unconditional is pointing toward. Never mind grovelling in repentance or begging for forgiveness or making plans for restitution, said the father. Let’s just celebrate without any pre-requisite conditions. You are fully forgiven and accepted aside from anything you might want to do.

Christianity in making this pagan argument for divine payment first has made a frontal assault on unconditional love as taught by Jesus. Nowhere is the rejection of unconditional love and the retreat to payback thinking more clear than in this Christian demand for a sacrifice to pay for sin before God can forgive. And this Christian interpretation of the death of Jesus as a divine sacrifice is payback condition taken to an infinite extreme. It is an unprecedented embedding of payback in divinity. It is an unprecedented contradicting blow to the unconditional message of Jesus. The Christian belief in the death of Jesus as a great infinite payment for infinite offense against God has introduced a supreme pre-requisite condition that clouds and nullifies entirely the meaning of unconditional as taught by Jesus. If the debt first had to be paid in full, then unconditional forgiveness if rendered meaningless. The debt has been paid. Forgiveness is no longer needed. But authentic unconditional forgiveness does not demand any payment first. Christianity in making this pagan argument for divine payback has made a direct assault on the meaning of unconditional love as taught by Jesus. It has rendered the core message of Jesus meaningless.

And let me add that the Christian condition of blood sacrifice or payment establishes the basis for all the other conditions of Christianity. Conditions such as you must believe in the sacrifice of Jesus or perish; you must convert or be denied heaven; you must live by Christian rules or be damned to hell, and on and on. It supports the entire system of religious conditions.

Christianity needs to be held accountable to the fact that it missed a unique historical opportunity to liberate humanity from the darkness of payback thinking and it has missed a grand opportunity to lead humanity into a new promised land of light, freedom, and truly humane existence. Christianity failed to bring humanity the liberating core message of Jesus. Its payback worldview is an historical display of cowardly retreat and woeful ignorance of the core message of Jesus.

Despite the grand institutional roadblock set up by Christianity over subsequent centuries, many people have still found their own way into the freedom of unconditional existence.

Today the Christian religion continues to propagate a primitive payback system that is based on myths of an offended and retaliatory deity, demands for blood sacrifice or prerequisite payment, exclusion of unbelievers, and ultimate divine retribution for all who disagree (hell). This package of inhuman beliefs- retaliation, punishment, exclusion, endless pain and suffering- suited well the surrounding pagan belief systems and made the Christian system more acceptable to surrounding pagan peoples. But it was hardly different in kind from any of those other ancient belief systems. It was nothing more than primitive retaliation and revenge (getting even) dressed up in the robes of divinity and high-sounding legal terminology. It has even taken payback to new heights in its theology of an infinite payment for infinite offense. The Christian system does not represent a truly humane response or advance. It is not an advocacy for genuine unconditional forgiveness or love. The Christian system in its entirety is perhaps the most damaging blow to the unconditional message of Jesus that has ever been concocted.

These payback beliefs have fostered endless misery and fear over ultimate rejection and punishment associated with death. This is the strength of religion- to employ the fear of dying and facing punishment for sin/wrongs committed in life. All for being imperfectly human. This is the burden that conscious human persons throughout history have found unbearable. It darkens human life with threat, fear, and even terror. It is the worst form of terror- the terrorizing of the mind and spirit. It enslaves people with guilt, shame, and despair. The Christian solution to human imperfection focuses humanity right back on violent payback conditions, which is no actual solution or salvation.

This payback thinking has even driven people mad. I think of the Christian man who jumped to his death believing that he had committed the unpardonable sin (an incident related to the Prairie Bible College in the early 1970s). Authentic unconditional love liberates from this insufferable fear and anxiety engendered by payback justice and its categories of wrongs committed and remembered, offended parties demanding payment, deserved revenge, and horrifying punishment.

And remember also of the historical evidence of the outcome of the payback approach in human relationships and societies. Payback justice is at the root of the base drive to get even, to punish, and to engage in cycles of violent reprisal. Payback thinking has shut down entire sections of the human family for years at a time in the chaos of war. And note also that a Christian nation like the US, strongly oriented to payback beliefs, has some of the highest known imprisonment rates in the world.

So is everyone just waiting to embrace the liberation of unconditional love and enter a new world of unconditional treatment of all human persons, no matter what they have done or not done?

Not so much.

Authentic unconditional love has always been highly offensive to people who consider themselves good, moral people committed to systems of payback justice. Such people take offense at the authentic unconditional love that shows mercy to enemies just as Jonah became upset when God showed mercy to his enemies. They respond like the older brother in the Prodigal Son parable who was offended when the father turned away the son’s offer of repentance and instead freely welcomed and celebrated his wayward son. The older brother felt the wasteful son should not have been treated so generously but should have been reprimanded and suffered for his wrong behaviour. He deserved just consequences. They also respond just like the hard-working labourers who worked all day and were offended by the generosity of the vineyard owner toward the latecomers who put in very little effort, granting them rewards equal to those who had worked all day. The generous spirit of the owner was highly offensive to them, upsetting their strict payback worldview.

Unconditional love offends people who are oriented to the conditions of a payback existence that rewards good and punishes bad according to strict conditions of fairness. The ultimate expression of this payback response is the selfish religious wish for a heaven limited to good people and the related exclusionary wish of eternal hell for unbelievers.

The Christian response to the unconditional message of Jesus has distorted that message utterly and defused its explosive potential to liberate human consciousness. Yet even Christians still wrestle with the ideal of unconditional love and try to maintain some remnant of it in their belief system because it resonates with the human consciousness of what is right and true. But they fail horribly by interpreting unconditional in terms of payback views and thereby render the unconditional message of Jesus ineffectual and meaningless. Christian payback has distorted the meaning of unconditional entirely.

But for those willing to accept it (those with eyes to see and ears to hear), unconditional love liberates utterly from all fear of retaliation, exclusion, and punishment. Unconditional declares that there is nothing to fear in God. A God of love does not retaliate against his enemies nor punish anyone. Everyone is fully accepted and loved. Everyone is ultimately safe in unconditional love. There is no reason for doubt, fear, or despair. There is no future retribution or hell. All will be fully welcomed into the light and love of God. Unconditional liberates people in the deepest levels of their consciousness, where perceptions of ultimate realities lodge and influence minds and hearts.

The entire human family needs the embrace of reassurance that unconditional as taught by Jesus provides. Everyone needs to hear and feel in the depths of their spirit the “Fear not” and “Don’t be anxious” of authentic unconditional forgiveness, acceptance, and generosity.

Unconditional deals with the most profound personal psychological issues that people face. It liberates people, as imperfect as all are, to fully accept themselves as they are and to unconditionally love themselves. It meets the deepest needs of people for unlimited acceptance and approval. Unconditional means that every person is fully accepted and fully loved no matter what they have attained or not attained in life. This liberates people to then treat others with the same unconditional approach, unconditionally forgiving, unconditionally accepting, and granting unconditional generosity to all. Unconditional also liberates people to embrace life here and now fully as a great venture in learning how to love. This liberation from payback existence unleashes human consciousness into the unlimited potential of progress toward something better.

Unconditional deals with the most important social issues. It does this by liberating humanity from the base animal drives that have enslaved us in the dark world of enemy versus enemy with its endless cycles of revenge, domination, small band exclusivity, violence, and retaliatory warfare. Unconditional is the very foundation of all true liberty, especially the liberty of mind and spirit. It drives out the darkness of payback thinking and brings in the light that only unconditional forgiveness and acceptance can bring.

This truth of unconditional love is the most profound insight ever discovered and it is the most liberating ideal ever conceived of by conscious people. It is also the core nature of God and hence the universe. And it explains the reason for the existence of the universe and the purpose for the existence of conscious persons (to experience and express something of unconditional love).

Let me just add these comments from a lady named Peggy, presented in Kenneth Ring’s Lessons From the Light. She provides some sense of the true nature of unconditional love from her Near-Death experience: “(I was shown) the all-pervading and primary nature of love in the universe...’The light told me everything was love, and I mean everything. I had always felt love was just a human emotion people felt from time to time, never in my wildest dreams thinking it was literally EVERYTHING!...I was shown how much all people are loved. It was overwhelmingly evident that the light loved everyone equally without any conditions! I really want to stress this, because it made me so happy to know we didn’t have to believe or do certain things to be loved. WE ALREADY WERE AND ARE NO MATTER WHAT! The light was extremely concerned and loving toward all people...if only people could know how much they’re loved, maybe they wouldn’t feel so scared or lonely anymore”.

“Then as if to drive home the incomprehensible immensity of this love so that she would never forget it, Peggy received an infusion of the light’s energy: I vividly recall the part where the light did what I felt like switch on a current of pure, undiluted, concentrated unconditional LOVE. The love I experience in the light was so powerful it can’t be compared to earthly love, even though earthly love is a much milder version. Its like knowing that the very best love you feel on earth is diluted to about one part per million of the real thing. As this stream of pure love went through me, I felt as if the light was saying simultaneously, ‘ I love you COMPLETELY and ENTIRELY as you are, BECAUSE YOU ARE...It was like being bathed in energy particles of pure love....I knew there was nothing wrong with me in any way. NOTHING! ...I WAS PERFECTION”.

This same incomprehensible love that Peggy experienced was also expressed toward people who had committed suicide, toward atheists, toward killers (one man shared that he had been a sniper for the US military and killed many people, including innocents), and all others. None are excluded and no pre-requisite conditions are demanded of anyone. All are fully accepted and loved just as they are, in all the imperfection that is human life.

Does a grasp of this unconditional forgiveness and love then produce carelessness in people about their behaviour? No. Absolutely not. People who have grasped something of this love then want more than anything to love others in the same manner. They want to love with the same unconditional love that they have experienced.

Unconditional love liberates from all fear about our own acceptance and standing and reveals the incomprehensible divine generosity toward us. And all it asks of us is that we extend to all others the same unlimited forgiveness, acceptance, and generosity.

And I would end with the encouragement that whatever we can imagine of how good this unconditional love might be, the reality is infinitely better than the best that we can imagine. We are just beginning to explore an incomprehensible and transcendent reality that surrounds us all. But be prepared to have any remaining elements of payback in your consciousness exposed for the darkness that they are. We are so hardwired to respond to wrongs all day with a get even response that we hardly realize how ingrained payback is in our consciousness, and subconscious even. But the liberation that unconditional love brings is worth any unpleasant self-discovery that we may endure.

I would add that one can spend all sorts of time looking for excuses as to why unconditional is just too impractical and therefore should be dismissed outright. Or one can embrace the opportunity to rise to something better. We can do as Christianity did and retreat to payback of move forward into a new freedom of truly human existence. And this calls for creative new ways of applying unconditional that will move humanity forward to a better future. I would rather err on the side of getting the point of human existence right rather than spending time validating the failed payback approach to life.

The essence of human liberation and progress is to be free of our primitive payback inheritance and its impulses that have been so destructive to human relating. Impulses to retaliate, to exclude, to dominate, and destroy. Unconditional response most effectively checks these base impulses and takes humanity in a new more humane direction. This is freedom.

It is also essential to liberation that our consciousness be freed from the darkness of fear and anxiety that is produced by ideas of divine vengeance, divine exclusion, and divine punishment. These fears have also darkened and restrained human progress. Unconditional most effectively liberates us from such fear and anxiety by telling us that we are already unconditionally forgiven, accepted, and loved.

A new generation needs to take up the opportunity that Christianity missed; to take up the great adventure of promoting the grand exodus from slavery that was aborted by Christianity. To proclaim the great liberty that Christianity missed. We need to encourage people to move into the promised land of a truly human existence. Christianity failed utterly at the most critical juncture to bring this liberation to human consciousness. It has never rectified that gross failure by abandoning payback/payment/conditions theology.

We all deserve better.

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