

## On Love

Archimandrite Lev Gillet the French, who converted to Orthodoxy in the late twenties in Paris, taught me that one of the best methods to destroy someone's hatred is to mention his name in your prayers. If you raised his name to the Lord several times, you would be able to bring him into your heart too. He used to tell me: "mention the Lord's name on him", this way he will be embraced with the Lord's presence and might change. As for you, you must change.

In our daily life, we go against someone because we misunderstood a word he said, a behavior he did, or because he hurt us and we considered this as a sin from him. In front of this, blaming might not be beneficial and must be postponed until he calms down. Meanwhile, embrace the offender's name to Christ's chest for this shall make you see him on your chest too. After that, you are allowed to blame him mercifully.

When I used to ask one of the faithful if he carried love towards a person that harmed him, he used to answer: "I don't hate him". This isn't love, of course. This is simply being polite. Loving him means paying attention to his tiredness, to his complexes, to his sorrow and joy; it means that you should serve him in the situation that he is in. Love doesn't wait, love initiates. Remember the Good Samaritan and how he healed the wounds of the wounded and took him to an inn (or dispensary in today's language) and asked for him to be taken care of. He fully committed to the left-alone person. Of course, you cannot carry the responsibility of tens of people, but you can do that towards those who God put in the path of your life: Starting from the members of your family, the people you work with, friends, and especially the sick and sad. These are your parish, don't neglect them. Any small gesture towards them, especially during their hardship and when they are hurt or had a shock, would give them a lot of happiness. Every one of us lives in an attention after another. The spiritually strong person is the only one that is satisfied with God's looking after him. However, God wants us to take care of each other: Wondrous bonds attach our hearts as if we are one person separated through different figures.

Do not consider an incident that happened with your relative as silly; it might be very important for him. Do not say in your mind that you shall visit your friend if he passed through a big distress only. He might only have a small contusion: Take the phone and ask about him. When you get closer to people, they will feel comfortable with their Lord. The important thing is not to keep your friends in order to be consoled through them, but for them to live in consolation. "You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much". Daily details could be, on the level of personal bliss, the most important among all things. This bliss always carries something divine.

These details mean that you should talk gently to your wife and children in the evening and show your care. And if you were an employer and had employees around you, show a word of care concerning the health of each one of them and ask him about his family. This is one example among many. When your responsibilities grow, your soul and you work will push you to be careful from close people. This is normal in work and production. However, minimal decency is required from you: Don't say a word that has a personal nature to your assistant after a day that saddened him. Every assistant wants to be existent in the eyes of his employer. Your wife, children, and relatives love to be existent in your eyes. Moodiness is allowed only to a small extent. If you heard that a person feels left alone, put an effort to create the opportunities and methods to save him from that.

Sometimes you don't understand why a person feels that you are treating him with brusqueness. Double your effort and take the initiative to get closer to him and to make him closer to you. The important thing is for none of us to live alone.

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