

Mercy and Strictness

Mercy is the attitude of the heart towards the sinner and the abuser. Mercy is forgiving him, not carrying hatred towards him and treating him with meekness. However, all of these are accompanied with softness or strictness in disciplining the sinner. This discipline should be free from temper and decided by the mind that should examine the situation and love at the same time. "Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6: 36). This follows the expression "love your enemies", and is followed by "Do not judge... forgive" and also: "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye". God's embracing to us leads us to embrace others; And God's fatherhood to us implies our brotherhood with everyone.

However, love is not free from any discipline. "The Lord disciplines those he loves". The Holy Book that talks about God's love also says: "But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath" (Romans 2: 5). When the Lord gets angry, he continues loving you, but through his wrath he disciplines you. His fatherhood makes him bring you back to your awareness as a son. It is written in the epistle to the Hebrews that "we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it". And for the person being disciplined not to think that he is hated, the apostle continued his thoughts saying that those that are trained with discipline will be given from the Lord fruits of righteousness of peace. He also continues his idea by saying: "strengthen your feeble arms and weak knees". This treatment sometimes needs strong exercise.

Being soft is a method and not a purpose or a basis. This might work with sensitive slender natures, but doesn't give any results with thick natures that have planned for evil. These natures need strictness that might sometimes reach smashing. Of course, after smashing you have to fix, but sometimes we have to pass through smashing in order to reach the cure. Sometimes we need a moral slap, and other times we also need to cut a relation and stay away and show some anger. Yelling might never benefit us, but harsh words- without cursing, insults or contempt- might work so that the sinner wouldn't think that through our silence we are agreeing on what he did or that he didn't hurt the truth.

The important thing is to show the sinner that we are not being rebellious because of our pride but for the truth and because we care about the sinner and want him to come back to the truth. He might not recognize that he deviated from the truth unless he became spiritually mature in order to understand that. We have, therefore, to bring back to him his spiritual feeling or remind him about the divine commandment that he violated if he could sense it. We can show him the wrong side in his behavior and the deviation that he did.

All of this indicates a patient calm treatment. Being silent towards what is wrong means that we don't want to be annoyed and disturbed, and this way the sickness will continue and we won't be loving the person that we diagnosed. Neglecting the situation and depending on time might not work, because time doesn't always bring calmness and mistakes will be repeated and accumulated until they explode. However, waiting for a little time is beneficial for the person disciplining and the one being disciplined to face problems calmly.

The great person is the person that once he recognizes his mistake, he leaves his stubbornness and confesses. The person that we conciliate is the one that reconciled with truth and accepted his soul in this truth. We should teach people that truth saves them and that if they existed in this truth, they would be in peace and joy, and this one big face of love.

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