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Following is a presentation made by Jan Linthorst at a recent Research Seminar on the theme “What does God want?”

Motto: “Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

What God wants has always been a puzzle for people. The question is: Do we know what God wants? Who are we to say what God wants? Is it not arrogant and presumptuous to even second-guess God? Other questions may be: What does God want from me? Is this (a trip, a job, a new dress, a fancy car, a good cause, like helping alcoholics, etc.) what God wants, and how can I be sure? Both categories of questions are based on an immature God-concept and on the immature assumption that God is a character in our personal life and drama - that God is here for us.

We are reluctant to seek the will of God if our concepts are immature. We are afraid that the will of God could be opposed to our best interests. Let us begin with establishing the existentially valid concept of God and man. God is the creative principle of the universe. The main attribute of God is Love-Intelligence. What God wants is not of a material or of a personal nature. What God wants is based on what God is. It can only be infinitely good because God is infinite good. It is the will of God, therefore, to express goodness, to manifest His Being through His creation. What God wants from Man can be expressed in spiritual categories, not in human categories. Thus, what God wants from man is more likely to be to heal, to express love, to be here for God, to know Him, that there be harmony, etc. Dr. Hora’s interpretation of the Lord’s Prayer states: “Heavenly harmony is available, here and now, to the shouldless.” That means it is available to those who give up personal willfulness.

Looking at it this way, God’s will becomes something liberating. It redeems us from the limitations we have put on our lives. Maybe we have lived in a way that we incurred illness of some sort. It isn’t God’s will for us to be sick. Now here is the confusion. We jumped to the conclusion that God wants us to have a healthy body. What God wants is health, vitality, life. So, when we wholeheartedly turn to what God wants, we find health, vitality, and life. As proof that we have found this, we are healed and have a healthy body. It is not a healthy body that God gives us but an elevated understanding of Life. God does not give money, but if we have a lack of anything, we can turn to what God wants and let it elevate us to higher altitudes of consciousness and see the harvest which is already there in abundance. As

proof that we have seen the spiritual riches and wealth of God, we will manifest abundance in our human experience.

A woman formulated the following points to bring herself into harmony with what God wants. She was in charge of a complicated operation which required many people to cooperate and many things to be collected and channeled to the people who needed them. On her desk, she placed a cue card, and every time things didn't work out, she would turn her thoughts to it. It read:

1. God is All in all.
2. Infinite Love-Intelligence is present and omniactive.
2. Everything is perfect and only good is unfolding.
4. Unlimited resources are available through the divine Mind.
5. Rejoice and behold the perfect unfoldment.

In conclusion, when we understand that God's will is infinitely good, there is much to be gained in abandoning ourselves to what God wants.

Excerpts from the dialogue with Dr. Hora on the above subject:

Dr. Hora: In order to know what God wants, we have to get acquainted with God. The Bible says, "Acquaint thyself now with Him and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee." In order to know what God wants, we have to know what God is. What is the metapsychiatric name for God?

Student: Love-Intelligence.

Dr. Hora: Omniactive Love-Intelligence, the harmonizing principle of the universe, the source of all wisdom and energy and life. If we understand what God is, then we will understand what He wants. The Creator of the universe wants to be manifested through his creation. Holiness refers to wholeness and wholeness refers to at-one-ment with God. We are only whole when we are holy. When we are in conscious union with God, then there is wisdom and love, beauty and PAGL. Holiness must not be confused with piety.

Student: It seems to me that one of the difficult or confusing aspects of the question is that often we believe that what God wants means that God has a particular detail of human experience in mind. For example, "God wants me to move to California" or "God doesn't want me to move to California." The belief that it is so hard to know what God wants has to do with the belief that God has some specific detail of experience in mind for us, and then we never know whether it is God or ourselves who wants that for us. Does God ever want a detail of personal experience for us?

Dr. Hora: God doesn't care whether you live in California or anywhere else.

Student: So it is always a good idea to remember that the experience is irrelevant. It is the motivation or values involved that is what God wants?

Dr. Hora: Absolutely. That's what God wants. Actually, the phrase "what God wants" is misleading because, by implication, it anthropomorphizes God. Language is inadequate to do justice to the concept of God. God actually doesn't "want" anything the way a human being would want something. God is an IS system and this IS system has its own built-in intentionality which requires Itself to manifest its qualities in the universe. When we speak about "what God wants," it is just a way of using language to talk about something which cannot be expressed in a clearer fashion otherwise. It is not that God is some kind of a person who wants things like another person. We are talking about a universal Mind, an Intelligence which underlies all Reality. It is like saying, "What does gravity want?" Does gravity want us to kill ourselves by jumping out of the window? Now this is a silly way of talking but, unfortunately, it is necessary because we cannot express it in the English language differently. So we talk about what God wants. We would have to say, "What is the built-in intentionality in the universe?" That would be a very cumbersome way of talking, right? Let's not fall into the error of anthropomorphizing the will of God.

When we speak about what God wants, we speak about the nature of ultimate Reality and in what way it is relevant to human consciousness and existence and fulfillment. It is a strange thing that we consider ourselves human beings, yet when we seek fulfillment in life we can only seek it as spiritual beings. A human being can never find fulfillment and still we try to find fulfillment in this human condition. This is impossible because it is just a dream. The human condition is a dream and fulfillment entails waking up to a realization that we have never been human beings, that we have always been living Souls, spiritual beings, and we exist in infinite Mind or omniactive Love-Intelligence. By attaining conscious at-one-ment with this, what we call God, we find fulfillment. "What God wants" is a metaphorical way of speaking. Unfortunately, frequently, there arises a contention between man and God over what God wants and what we want, and such things mislead us into very childish ways of thinking about God. That is essentially what religious education accomplishes. Even the term "children of God" is unfortunate but rather unavoidable. It is possible to transcend the limitations of language, to understand God in non-dual terms. God is not a person but a cosmic Principle. We don't have a personal relationship with God. There is no such thing. There is the possibility of awareness of at-one-ment with God, and that is highly desirable.

Student: Thank you, Dr. Hora. That is very clarifying. I found the phrase very beautiful where you said "the built-in intentionality of the universe requires Itself to manifest its qualities." That would seem to suggest that actually true being – if we can individualize it, our true being – always is "doing" what God wants, that is, always is manifesting those qualities. Is that correct?

Dr. Hora: That's right. But imagine if we were to talk to someone in these terms, someone who had never been exposed to such words. It would be very difficult to understand.

Student: Yes, definitely. I found it very encouraging to think that if it is not I, as a person, who has to try to do something specific that God wants, but rather that I need somehow to always see that that is what is going on all the time anyway. Thank you.

Student: When I was looking at the title for this day, “What God wants,” it occurred to me that whenever there is doubt about what God wants, I am in a very operational mode of thinking. In other words, I’m not really asking what God wants so much as asking “What does God want me to do?”

Dr. Hora: Very good, excellent point.

Student: My question is, is it possible to live without concern for doing? How do we do “not doing?”

Dr. Hora: Nobody has recommended “not doing.” The right way to do has been expressed by the ancient Chinese sage, Lao-Tse, when he said, “The way to do is to be.” What do you think he meant by that?

Student: Pointing back to what God wants, it would be to be peaceful, assured, grateful, loving, to be a spiritual being.

Dr. Hora: Yes, when we know what we are in the context of God, then our activities are responsive, intelligent, wise, efficient, effortless, and effective responses to the task at hand. We are not “doers” any more, we are responders. There is a great difference between a responsive individual and an operational individual. In Metapsychiatry, we are blessed because we have a way of knowing that we are responding. This is called PAGL. When we are aware of PAGL, then we can know that we are on the beam. Then we can respond to life situations with genuine assurance, without anxiety, without doubt, and without fear or excitement. Peace, assurance, gratitude, and love are the indicators that we are on the right track as far as the will of God is concerned.

COMPASSIONATE SEEING

By Charles Gourney

Now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so he went to the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. When a woman who had lived a sinful life in that town learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee’s house, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume and as she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them, and poured perfume on them.

When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is – that she is a sinner.”

Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” (Luke 7:36-39, 48 (NIV))

One of the most distinctive and endearing characteristics of Luke’s gospel is the compassion that it shows toward women. In the present example, Jesus not only demonstrates compassion, he gives us a profound lesson in spiritual maturity.

Although she does not speak even a single word, the woman in this story draws our complete attention. Her tears speak for her: they are at once an expression of her pain and an offering of gratitude. These tears are a symbol of a universal problem, whose appearances vary only in degree: the problem of self-hate. This woman's image of herself has become so loathsome to her that she is driven to seek forgiveness. What brought her to this extreme state, and what is the forgiveness that she finds? The answers to these questions tell us much about who we really are, how we really see, and ultimately what we are really here for.

The Bible tells us little about the life of this woman. Some commentators identify her with Mary of Bethany, sister of Martha; others identify her with Mary Magdalene. We cannot really be certain who she was. However, the context makes it fairly clear that she was a prostitute. The Pharisee speaks of her with subtle but deep contempt: "If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is." This woman is not merely a sinner; she is a sinner whose very touch is abhorrent, whose body is offensive. This Pharisee is not to be singled out as anyone special; he merely reflects the thoughts that others in general have about this woman. To others she is either an object of desire or an object of contempt; often, she is both. This image has in fact come to define her human existence; it is the only way she knows herself. No one can live with such an image of oneself without suffering from it. This woman's suffering drives her to search for an alternative, even if it means casting aside the only identity she has ever known.

What does Jesus do for this woman? The only thing he does is tell her that her sins are forgiven, and even this he says after her transformation has already occurred. The story begins after she has already found her redemption. Her transformation was apparently not triggered by anything Jesus did, but by what he saw. For the first time in her life she found herself in the presence of an individual who did not want anything from her, who did not see her as an object, nor even as a person. Jesus judged her neither positively nor negatively; he neither approved of or nor disapproved. All he did was see her, without any personal bias or intentionality.

What exactly did he see? The woman who appeared to be a prostitute was suffering from a false sense of self. Her self was built around the thoughts of others; she identified with these thoughts and saw herself as here to be used by others, and therefore as worthless and contemptible. Jesus was the only man in her experience who held no personal thought about her. Entertaining no thoughts of his own, he saw her as God sees her – as a living Soul.

This very act of seeing was enough to heal the woman. Ironically, Jesus did not do the seeing. The healing occurred precisely because it was not Jesus' seeing, but God's. Jesus was no more than a transparency through which God's love for the woman could show itself.

Can we also become transparencies for God, and learn to see the way Jesus saw (or, more precisely, the way God saw through Jesus)? To realize this aspiration our understanding of who we are must change radically. Like the woman in the story, we generally identify with

our thoughts. In the process of spiritual maturation, we learn to observe our thoughts, creating a distance between our thoughts and ourselves that eventually dissolves the identification. We become aware of all the thoughts, likes, dislikes, judgments, and opinions that once constituted our identity, and they no longer seem part of us.

They are old scraps and rags cast by the side of the road; we pass them by but are not affected. As these thoughts drop away, our minds and our perceptions become clearer. We see past the personal mind, no longer through our own eyes but through the eyes of God.

When we see through God's eyes we behold God's thought, which we call the living Soul. The living Soul is born "not of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:13) It is not a product of wanting, as is our personal self, but an extension of divine fullness. When we see this we make a startling discovery: the living Soul is always receiving from God. The living Soul is a channel for the ceaseless flow of divinely inspired ideas that constitute our consciousness, our identity, and our supply. Therefore, the Soul cannot sin. The Soul is pure; it already has everything. How then could it trespass against another or against itself? When Jesus saw the woman, he saw the Soul that does not sin. Therefore he could tell her that her sins are forgiven, and she could realize that he spoke the truth.

If we understand this, then we understand what a sinner is. A "sinner" is simply someone who has forgotten this truth about the living Soul. God gives continuously to the living Soul, but if we do not know this we become restless, and we begin to want. Whenever we want something we make the statement that God's grace is not sufficient unto us, and we invite experiences that confirm this belief. Wanting is a denial of the Soul's connection with God; therefore, it always leads to suffering.

Only the personal mind, which has forgotten the Soul's origins in God, can have knowledge of sin. Personal mind – what we normally call the "self" – is a dream in which the Soul becomes an orphan. In such a dream, the self cannot be separated from self-hate. Only in such a dream are we ruled by the darker passions, which lead us to harm either ourselves or others.

The knowledge of the living Soul helps us understand the nature of compassion. Metapsychiatry defines compassion as "understanding the lack of understanding" and calls it the highest form of love. To some, this sounds not like love but condescension: who are we to say that we understand another's lack of understanding? The answer is that we are nothing. Compassion is a way of seeing, and the seeing is not our seeing; it is God's. Compassionate seeing is beholding God's love for His creation. When we see compassionately, we participate in God's love for those who do not know that they are loved – and this includes especially ourselves. "Understanding the lack of understanding" means that we do not collude with an individual's misperceptions of himself, just as Jesus did not collude with the woman's perception of herself as a worthless prostitute. He did not offer her sympathy, which would only have confirmed her wretched state. He offered only what was not his to give: God's thought of her as a living Soul.

Compassionate seeing is the secret of being here for God. We are here neither to want nor

to judge, but only to express the truth. We are here to be transparencies for God: places where not our thoughts but God's thoughts are visible. This was the secret of Jesus' healing ability. It is also the secret of our own individual redemption.