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THE RELIGION OF LOVE

By Maria Paula Cervera Gonzalez

In my short life of 19 years I have witnessed great changes in spirituality, globalization, attitudes toward nature, and the protection of equal human rights for all people men and women - and I'm **glad about it!**

I have seen different ways of worshipping God, and this freedom of religion has allowed membership in groups that promote spiritual responsibility for the current challenge of sustainability and environment across the planet. These communities of faith and spirit encourage us to **be part of the change process**, to stop being passive, to be strong individually and collectively, to generate feelings of compassion and solidarity with all human beings without exception, and for all of the natural world. Each day we witness natural and manmade disasters, shockingly brutal violence, religious arrogance and hatred, extreme poverty and injustice, and climate change that threatens billions of people and the earth itself. At the same time we witness acts of incredible love and healing by people everywhere, many of whom have overcome hatreds to model forgiveness and reconciliation.

Underlying the various beliefs that exist in the world, there is one universal spiritual core that we must all emphasize whatever our religion might be: the Supreme Being, the Higher Power, God, etc., is infinite love and mercy, so much greater and deeper than our shallow and fleeting human love. Spirituality is connecting with this infinite love. God is a Supreme Being like an ocean of pure love, and like a Father or Mother, God wants the best for us all as children. We were taught that **God is a punisher God** who is not fair. But within the depths of my being I vibrate with the idea of God as my Father, Friend and Teacher. I am created in the divine image and likeness, that is, with I possess within a small drop of the divine qualities of love, peace and supreme joy. These great spiritual virtues lie within each human being and are ultimately stronger than hatred, arrogance, brutality and violence.

Every religion has love at its center, and includes teachings about respect and acceptance of people who approach this center however differently. We can learn from these different approaches, and not let differences cause result in hatred and destruction. We need to focus in on how cherished each person is in God's eyes, unique in beauty, talent, creativity. If we appreciate everyone as sisters and brothers for their greatness, we can avoid destructive arrogance and live in oneness. **What great potential!**

To reach this level of consciousness of our basic oneness with the Supreme Mind and with one another requires a process of internal transformation. It can be called “spiritual intelligence,” which includes emotional and social intelligence, but goes beyond these to embrace the spiritual. This spiritual intelligence can allow us to change destructive patterns of thinking or action, and accept responsibility for everything that happens to us. Such **spiritual maturity** leads to a holistic love for all people, and forbids the spirit of violence and arrogant brutality. This is not selfish love or attachment, because this love is very common nowadays, but a deeper love in which the happiness and security of others is as real to us as our own, or even more so.

Love is such a powerful energy capable of reaching the hearts of those who are on the other side of the world, regardless of religion or gender. **Let’s use it!** With small acts of kindness such as smiling at someone on the street, a hug to your loved ones. The more we express love, the more it will grow in us. Love is the medicine that sets people free from unhealthy attitudes of hostility, jealousy, greed, and ego. These individual changes contribute to a better world and environment, overcoming a layer of negativity, pollution and unhappiness across our beautiful planet earth. Thoughts of love, peace, and kindness, without criticism or judgment, can in and of themselves contribute to a global change. **So, go and share your love!**

I believe in the universal religion of Love. Obviously, the person who defends religious hatred has his or her sad reasons, but I tell you that every life has a meaning and purpose in this world, and deserves to be protected. There is no need to feel hatred for anything because every human being is playing a role in this scenario called life. We need an elevation of consciousness, thoughts and feelings that can only come from our connectedness with a Source of pure love from a Higher Power in daily life. However differently we conceive of that Source, its love essence is one and the same.

I believe that arrogance, selfishness and religious hatred can be put aside, but not everyone wants or likes *change*. For many, change comes through suffering and repentance for having done terrible things. Every great and small transformation makes a difference. For those who have perpetrated acts of hatred and violence in the name of religion and God, you must turn away from this and have self-compassion. You will have to rebuild a tolerance of self, and a respect any living being including those who happen to believe differently than you do. Learn to love yourself again, and expand this outward to a shared humanity and the rest of the world by becoming one with the Supreme Mind of love, healed and healing, creative and giving.

As Gandhi said, **"If I change the world changes"**.

We can create a global movement/ There are many young people ready to make this change, the technology and freedom already exists, the only thing that is missing are capable and motivated leaders!

I have participated in several events that have helped me on my way, such a Eco Consciousness, Breathe Peace (organized by the UN), Spoon Revolution and the Dance of Kindness. We can integrate the young people in many ways, protect them from violent ideas and actions, and encourage loving creativity, love for mankind and the desire to create a "better world."

I grew up in a home where values such as tolerance, respect, understanding and the desire to serve others were transmitted to me. This is my religion !!! These virtues are to me at the core of the best religious teachings. More important than professing a cult or belief system is a pure spirituality of love and a real spiritual connection with God and Its manifestations.

I identify myself with the practices that lead me to a direct connection with God and I have achieved that through a wonderful eastern technique called Raja Yoga Meditation, developed by the Brahma Kumaris. This has allowed me to develop and maintain states of tranquility, cooperation, and joy, which I need in order to fulfill day after day my role as a student, daughter, friend, sister, and human being on this earth. My life project is based on this paradigm, which allows me to have a quality of integrity in my life, and a means to enjoy physical, mental and emotional health. Raja Yoga Meditation is my platform to succeed and achieve my dreams of travelling the world, sharing my peace and calmness, and inspiring the personal change in others that multiplies love. **I realize that this life is a great opportunity for me be happy and grow spiritually through the ways and power of love.**

Knowing who I am and what is my role in this world is central to me. Wherever I go, I feel a deep connection with God, the power house where I recharge myself daily to face up challenges in a positive way!

Finally, my message is that in order to counteract the high levels of greed, lust, ego, hatred, and violence in the world, we need to embrace a spirituality which leads us to look within and discovers there a source of pure unlimited love.

Love is the pathway towards transformation and the answer to all the questions.