



## Spiritual Love

by the Grand Master, Mir Hadian

*In the Name of the Beloved, the Compassionate and the Merciful.*

Say, "If you should love the Beloved, then follow me and the Beloved will love you."

- Surah 3:31

We as human beings experience various forms of love in our lifetime. As a child the first love that we may experience is the love of our parents. Later on, as we become older, that love extends towards our brothers and sisters. When we become adult, we experience our first love and this can be quite memorable for many of us. Through experiencing these different forms of love our soul experiences and remembers the existent love that we have towards The Beloved. When we remember that love we also experience the pain of separation and longing.

Worldly love, for example love that you may share with your partner or friends, involves some expectation and some give & take. With spiritual love, it is an unconditional love. You do not expect anything in return. In Sufism, or in many other spiritual paths, you first experience spiritual love while being with your teacher. Although you probably have an attraction with your teacher, it is unlike a physical attraction that you may experience with your partner. An attraction, perhaps something stronger than a father's love gradually develops. Through your experiences on the path, this love becomes more intense. You will become a student with a strong love for your teacher.

It is difficult for us to reflect upon the Beloved. Though we know His attributes and we try to visualise them, we cannot totally understand Him. On the right spiritual path, the teacher gradually projects this love towards the Beloved. By practicing this spiritual love with the teacher, we're like a child learning the first love with its mother. Either by being in a gathering or just being with your teacher, you will become fulfilled sitting quietly in his/her presence.

This would be the first step of your experience of spiritual love. If you multiply this intense love a million times you may begin to comprehend the strength of the Beloved's love for us. If you reflect upon the spiritual love that you have experienced so far with your teacher, you begin to understand this type of love. The teacher is like a magnet, trying to pull you towards experiencing that spiritual love; that is if you are a submitted and devoted student. To reinforce this, you may also experience the feeling of spiritual love in your dreams. Your teacher or an unknown person may appear to you, to whom you feel a powerful attraction and love.

Hopefully, people who experience spiritual love don't need to visualise the Beloved after a while. Beloved can be felt through their heart when the heart reaches the stage where it is purified and the purification comes through the intensity of the devotion.

In a lot of Sufi and other spiritual groups, the devotion of the student to the group and to the teacher reflects the intensity of that love. As human beings we have to have a focal point and one therefore refers to the group and, in particular, to the teacher.

Like any other love, to follow a spiritual love has its pitfalls and there are dangers on the path. In physical love, because our human aspect is involved, we may become possessive, judgemental or maybe domineering. There is a danger here that love can be misused and a couple that have been together for many years may have lost their strong love that they used to share with each other. This could also happen with spiritual love.

Our ego becomes threatened by spiritual love because it finds itself becoming undermined and losing control. It then tries its best to fight back and create anything it can to put you off. Unfortunately this can also happen with some teachers who do not project the student's love towards the Beloved, as they should. If this happens then the attraction between the student and that teacher does not allow the student to expand and progress. The job of the teacher is to remind the student that the teacher is only a facilitator and that it is the Beloved who is the guide. We all – teachers, saints and prophets – seek guidance from the Beloved.

In the Beloved's eyes, the only difference between a student, teacher or prophet is their level of consciousness and devotion. The Beloved's love is equal towards all of us. The only preference He may have is that the more attention we give to Him, the more attention we will receive. An example of this would be of a ball and a wall. The harder you throw the ball against the wall, the harder it comes back. The Beloved's love works in this way. The more attention and concentration you give, the more attention and concentration you receive.

Let's hope that the Beloved guides us all to the Right Path.

Ya Hu.

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