

Sympathizing With Others

by Herbert Henry Farmer

True sympathy and love for others can only be achieved when our internal conflicts are allayed through forgiveness and our hearts are at peace.

Scripture: Psalm 51:10, Proverbs 17:9, Matthew 9:2, Luke 7:47, Romans 7:15, Galatians 5:13, Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13, 1 Peter 4:8, 1 John 4:11

Topics: "Empathy And Love", "Gods Forgiveness"

Description

Herbert Henry Farmer preaches about the impact of sin on our ability to empathize and love others, highlighting how our own self-judgments and internal conflicts can hinder our understanding and compassion towards those around us. He emphasizes that true love and empathy for others can only flow when our souls are freed from exhausting internal struggles, allowing us to fully embrace and support others. Farmer explains that experiencing God's forgiveness can temporarily alleviate our inner conflicts, leading to a deep sense of compassion and willingness to share the benefits with everyone we encounter.

Transcript

"Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven"

(Matt. 9:2).

I do not find for one moment that my sinfulness makes it easier for me to fathom and to sympathize with the moral need of others. Quite the contrary I find that my own harsh judgments of myself continually make me pass harsh judgments on other people. I find that my own easy judgments on myself continually make me pass easy judgments on other people. Sometimes it works the other way and I cover self-indulgence by being exacting to others. I am, in short, erratic and confused. Always I read into others my moral mood at the moment, and I see them, not as they are, but through the distorting medium of my own profound dissatisfaction and conflict with myself. Furthermore, sin not only fogs the understanding, but it dries up the sympathies and the affections. Moral conflict within dams back and turns inwards the vital energies which are meant to flow outwards in sympathy with, and service to, other lives. Really to love other people, really to enter into their lives and be identified with them and stand beside them, is so difficult and so exacting, that it demands that the soul's energies should be completely released from any exhausting, internal struggle with itself. That sounds like the jargon of modern psychology but any one can deduce it from a little observation of himself. It is after some renewed experience of forgiveness, when, for a time at any rate, the inner conflict is allayed, that a man's feelings and desires are most responsive to

the need of others. When the gospel of God's forgiveness has deeply laid hold of a man he feels for the moment that he could take the whole world to his bosom and that he would do anything to share the benefit with everyone he meets. It is the peaceful heart which is the deeply sympathetic heart. There is no doubt of that. As sin gets hold of us again and the old conflict returns, so we become conscious of a re-hardening of the surfaces of personality, a withdrawal of sympathy with others, an increase of callousness. Sin is like leprosy in the sphere of the spirit. It anesthetizes the skin.

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