

Charity == four essays and letters, LeGrand Baker

Summer 2006

Josh, I understand your frustration. Dealing with scout age boys is difficult at best, but even more difficult when parents either get over-involved or just don't care. The other problem is that the Scouting program is a one-size-fits-all approach, when in reality, it just doesn't work that way.

Its like what J. Golden Kimball once said: "The Lord says we should love everybody—and I do. But I love some a hellufa lot more than I love others."

I have read two books on love, one by CS Lewis, and one by Fromm. Both were interesting. But the best book I ever read about love wasn't about love at all. It was Martin Buber's *I and Thou*. (call number at BYU should be the same as at your school : BM 732. B753) Essentially, what he says is that when we treat people like objects we are only objects ourselves. One cannot be a real person unless one recognizes that others are also real people, and treat them accordingly. I recommend you read the book. Not because you "need" it, but because it will help you to explain interpersonal relations to other people.

As far as I can tell, there are three kinds of love. Only the first two are emotions. The third is something much deeper and more real than that. It is an expression of the soul.

The first kind of love is "I want you." It is primarily selfish, though may express itself in tender and caring ways. It is "I want you for a decoration, so others will think I'm hot stuff, because I am taking the prettiest girl in town to the dance." I want you for your money, family connections, prestige, sexual pleasure, social or political advantage—any number of things. But it is essentially "I want to possess you," and the other side of that coin is jealousy or (when the need is passed) indifference.

The second is "I want you to be me." It is a form of co-dependence. It is the father who pushes his son to be a great basketball player, and chides him for just sitting around reading books. It is the doctor who wants his son to be rich and successful and belittles him for always having a basketball in his hands. The piano teacher who has discovered a greater talent in one of her students that she had—and who wants the glory of having taught that child when he becomes a success. It is the husband or wife who wants to re-shape the other to fit the preferred mold to help achieve maximum political or financial success. The flip side is that "I" get to have the credit for any success you may achieve, and "I" feel contempt for any success except the ones "I want you to have." And "I" feel betrayed if you don't succeed my way.

The third is close to Buber's idea of being a real human being. It is "I want you to be you." It is either of those fathers I just described when he is willing and happy to pay for, and encourage, his son in art school. It is Heavenly Father's insisting we have our free agency notwithstanding the fact that it is his work and glory is to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man. It is as close to charity as one can get in this world without the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Charity is (I am convinced) knowing another's truth in sacred time. When one can recognize the other person as he really is, and love him for that rather than for the artificial reasons I have mentioned above, then one has charity. If I may give you a personal example (which is about as good as I can do to be a charitable person): I was frequently criticized at BYU for treating students like my equals and not demanding from them the respect a person of my status deserved. I thought that was an asinine approach to life. I saw my young friends as the people they were, and now that they have matured and become greater than I, they treat me as their equal. But they have little respect for the professors who had little respect for them.

Another personal example. Each of my four children have told me that except for their spouse, I am their best friend. That friendship has always been there, even when they were teenagers. The reason is that I always treated them like they were mature people—not mature adults, but mature 2 year olds, or 10 year olds, or 16 year olds. I respected them, admired them, and treated them accordingly. I didn't have to fake that (just as I didn't have to fake it with my student friends) because I recognized that they are fundamentally greater and smarter people than I am. I acknowledge that I may know more than them about some things just now, but that does not make me either better or innately smarter than they.

I think the best scriptural key to all this is:

26 And when the priests left their labor to impart the word of God unto the people, the people also left their labors to hear the word of God. And when the priest had imparted unto them the word of God they all returned again diligently unto their labors; and the priest, not *esteeming* himself above his hearers, for the preacher was no better than the hearer, neither was the teacher any better than the learner; *and thus they were all equal*, and they did all labor, every man according to his strength.

27 And they did impart of their substance, every man according to that which he had, to the poor, and the needy, and the sick, and the afflicted; and they did not wear costly apparel, yet they were neat and comely. (Alma 1:26-27)

The operative word is “esteemed.” “They were all equal,” even though there were “the poor, and the needy, and the sick, and the afflicted” among them. Esteem is the key. It's back to Buber, but more especially, it is seeing and knowing others as they are in sacred time.

The interesting thing is, esteeming others as our equal is the easiest approach we can take toward other people. Otherwise we have to create masks to hid our Selves behind, and create constructs to define them as being something different from what they really are, then we have to build little pigeon holes we can squeeze them into so we won't have to think of them as real people. That is inefficient because it takes time and work, but even more so, because it creates a false world in which we have to navigate. When we deal with them as though they were something they are not, we must also be something we are not. People who do that loose sight of their own reality, and cannot love themselves, just as they cannot love other people.

That's why you and I are such good friends. We don't wear masks around each other. You don't see me as an old fuddy duddy, and I don't see you as a lowly student. We perceive each other as

equals—and when you get to be an old fuddy duddy and I am teetering on the edge of senility, we will still be equals. So will we be when we both get dead. “And that same sociality which exists among us here will exist among us there, only it will be coupled with eternal glory, which glory we do not now enjoy.” (D&C 130:2)

I do love you, and I am so very glad we get to be friends while we are in this world.
LeGrand

Carey,

Thank you for your comment about how the Lord has blessed me with so many “eternal friends.” It caused me to reflect about how real that blessing is, and how grateful I am that you are one with whom I share that love.

May I tell you my personal feelings—and these are only my opinions—about the meanings of eternal family and of eternal friendships, and why I believe that they ultimately are almost exactly the same thing.

As a boy, I remember hearing church talks about genealogy and how important it is that one be sealed to one’s parents, and they to theirs, etc., etc., in one continuous and beautiful chain until finely we get to Adam . (There was always some wiggle room stuck in those talks, saying that if some ancestor were bad, then his link would not be in the chain, but the chain would be intact anyway.) So I visualized that concept this way:

Here is Adam—who looks very funny indeed—from him comes zillions of chains of people, so he looks much like poor old Jacob Marley in Dickens’ Christmas Carol, with chains attached to him in every direction. That imagery didn’t make a lot of sense when I was a boy, but it was what I was taught, so I believed it must be right somehow.

As I grew older, I realized that the idea of chains was very misleading. The sealing relationships do not work that way. Rather, it is like this: I am sealed to my parents. My mother is sealed to her parents. Grandma is sealed to her sister, my mother’s Aunt Rinda, who is sealed to her son, who is sealed to his wife, who is sealed to her brother, who is sealed (through his wife) to her parents, *ad infinitum*. It wasn’t a chain at all. It was a beautiful pattern like a spider web with everyone ultimately sealed to everybody else. I really liked that idea, and I still like its implications.

The practical application of that idea is that because everyone is ultimately related to everyone else, then everyone is also sealed to everyone else. For example, there is a point (probably there are many) where your genealogy connects with mine. That point creates a sealing link, so that you and I are sealed together by the same priesthood power as seals me to my children. An extension of sealing is that your son David and I are also sealed together. While the sealing is the same, the relationships are different. By that I mean this: I hope that someday David and I will be as close friends as you and I are, but however close our love that is called “friendship” may

become, it is not the same as the love that is intimate family.

Nevertheless, I strongly believe that friendship bonds have similar roots to our family bonds, and that both kinds of love have a much firmer base than our short relationships in this world's experiences. I believe that both kinds of love are founded on eternal covenants, originating a very, very long time ago. I believe that friendships that seem to originate here, and become projected into the future eternities, are strong here because they actually began in past eternities. That is, in this world we don't make new friends, we only recognize old ones.

Similarly, I have been wondering about the marriage covenant relationships. Again, please understand that what I am about to write (like the rest of this letter) is only my opinion, but it makes a great deal of sense to me. I think there may be two possible legitimate eternal covenant relationships that result in marriage in this world: (1) The first is that two people who are very much in love in the pre-mortal spirit world, and who have the blessing of living in this life at the same time and the same place as each other, covenanted with each other that they will marry in this life, and that their marriage relationship will continue into the eternities. (2) The second might be that two people who had a great respect for each other in the pre-mortal world, and who shared a mutual love for people who would become their children, covenanted with each other that they would marry in this world in order to give those children the genetic possibilities, and the home environments the children would need. Perhaps, if that is so, when the conditions of their covenant is completed, their marriage may end—sometimes in this world, sometimes in the next. But the important thing in this analogy is that the conditions of the covenant have been faithfully met, and the people have done what they promised to do. I presume in that case, having sacrificed their ultimate happiness in this life for the sake of their children, they will have the full opportunity to receive that happiness in the next world, if they are faithful to their covenants with their Heavenly Father. (3) There is a third arrangement also, but I cannot see how it could be covenant based. It is this: Given the attitude that many people have toward sex and marriage, I suspect that most of this world's marriages are not built on eternal covenants at all. Why that is, and what the ultimate consequences may be, I do not pretend to know. But this I do know. Our Father's object is to give each one of us the greatest happiness that one can appreciate and share—and that in the end, there will be nothing that one truly wants, and is worthy to receive, that will be withheld.

I liked the spider web imagery of our sealing relationships for many years, but after a while it asked questions it could not answer. The most pressing of those questions was also the most simple: Why was it flat like a spider web? What would happen if it were not two dimensional? The question answered itself. "Flat" really makes only a little more sense than "chains." It had to be a ball with everyone in the ball connected to everyone else. But then there were other questions: Are Adam and Eve in the center? Or is the Saviour? The answer has to be the Saviour. Then the next question was, "In this sealing relationship, who is next to him and who is on the outside edge? That question, in that form, does not admit to any answer: because the answer to the first part has to be "everyone," and the answer to the second part has to be "no one."

So my theoretical imagery broke down and had to be altogether reconstructed. This is where it is now: A way to visualize our sealing relationships is still as a ball, but not a three dimensional ball—a multi-dimensional ball that is so complex that every individual is next to the Saviour, and

every individual is also in the center, and every individual is next to every other individual. It seems to me it has to be that way. Even though my mind does not know how to visualize such a ball, that doesn't matter because what I have tried to do is use the imagery of physical proximity to describe one's attitudes of love. So even though the physical juxtapositions I have tried to imagine is not adequate, that analysis is still the only way I can understand the meaning of charity, and the value of Adam's children being sealed to gather as one eternal family.

The next question is "What is the sealing power." Obviously, the first answer that comes to mind is the priesthood. The reasoning behind that answer would be that God is a God or order, and the sealing authority must be the ordinances of priesthood authority. But that answer does my address the question. Authority and power may not be the same thing. The question is, what is the sealing power. I do not think the power that seals us to the Saviour is his authority. I believe the power by which he seals us to himself is his love for us. If it is true with him, then it must also be true with us—the power that seals the Saviour to one's Self is one's love for him. If it is true of that relationship, then it must be true of all relationships—the eternal sealing power is the love that emanates from each individual—called in the scriptures, "Charity."

The Saviour's love for us is the eternal constant. The variable is one's love for God and his children. If that statement is correct, then the power to be saved in the Celestial kingdom is equivalent to one's individual power to personify—to respond to and to be an expression of—to BE—love.

If that is true—and I am convinced it is—then the whole matter boils down to the simplest of all possible formulas: Said one way it is this: "If you love me, keep my commandments." Said another way it is the conclusion of Moroni 7, "But charity is the pure love of Christ, and it endureth forever; and whoso is found possessed of it at the last day, it shall be well with him."

I truly believe that love is not only and the ultimate sealing power, but that, as such, it is also the final qualification for Celestial glory.

Essentially all I have written says only this: All one has to do in order to be saved in the Celestial kingdom is to be the sort of person who is comfortable being sealed to everyone else who is also a part of that multi-dimensional celestial relationship that is called charity.

I hope that makes sense to you, because the ideas are important to me. My writing all that was just a very long way of saying that I am grateful for the love that you and I share as friends, and I am grateful for the eternal value of that love.

Thank you for being my friend,

LeGrand

16 June 2003

Ashley, I wrote this Monday, after I got home from having lunch with you, but decided to let it rest awhile before I sent it

Thank you for having lunch with me today. On the way home I thought a lot about what you said, and in that context tried to analyze what I felt about the nature of one's relationships with other people. One of the great blessings of my life is that it is full of young men like you whom I dearly love – my family and many friends. Some of those associations are short-lived, and others have survived the years. The time-span is only partly related to the quality of my feelings, which cover a broad spectrum affections – the full spectrum I call “love” – but the feelings themselves are markedly different for different people. As I drove home, I wondered what those differences are. I decided that my fondness falls into two general categories, but the categories seem to blur at the place where they come together: One, by far the most common, is a kind of focusing on another individual, being more or less concerned about his or her welfare, and rejoicing to a greater or lesser extent in his or her presence. The intensity of those feelings vary a great deal. As J. Golden Kimball so rightly observed: “The Lord said we should love everyone, and I do: but I love some a damn sight more than I love others.”

The other kind of love is different from that: It is much more rare and therefore more difficult to capture, define, and encapsulate in a few words. Consequently, until now, I had not considered it seriously enough to give it a separate identity and name, but it is expressed to me in the feelings I was trying to analyze as I drove home today. You called it to my attention when you projected one's ability to love into our most distant past – well before “the beginning.” My trying to identify that kind of love – I suspect its name is “charity” – is the subject of this note.

As I thought, I realized that if I were going to analyze that unique feeling, I would have to begin by isolating it from other similar feelings. And the best way to do that would be to identify the persons who evoked such feelings. So the first question that had to be answered was: Who else, besides Ashley, do I feel that way toward. I went through a long list of friends and used very carefully chosen criteria: the answer surprised me because the final list is very short: the Saviour, of course; some members of my family; the Prophet Joseph; David King; Olig Penkovskey; and Sigmond Mowinckel. That's a remarkable list because many of the people on it are not my this-world contemporaries. They not only no longer live in this world, but when they were here, some of them lived on a different side of the earth from me. The most obvious things they have in common is that the feeling of comradery I have when I consider the Council, I also have for them individually. As I mentioned above, the line is quickly blurred between these and other people. That is so because other people (George Washington, Orson Pratt, members of family, and some friends who are still very much a part of this world) probably ought to be on that short list also, but I deliberately made it a “for sure” list, rather than a “probably” list because the conditions of thee primary question would be easier to analyze if I could find fewer, but more precise, examples.

You recall during our conversation at lunch, when we projected the beginnings of one's “sociality” (as in D&C 130) to long before the Council, and you suggested that such friendships must be as eternal in their continuance as intelligences are eternal in their being. I observed that when I projected the reality of friendship back that far beyond time it stirred in me feelings I didn't quite understand. Then I tried to explain that, by saying that when I think/feel about the Council, I feel there must have been an extraordinary closeness among its members – friendship

actualized as pure charity – and that what you had just drawn on that paper pushed those same feelings back for me to the origins suggested by our pencil sketch. To me that concept – as you said it and as I understood it – was by far the most important idea to come out of our conversation, and one of the most important ideas I have had for a very long time.

So as I drove home today I tried to fit what we had discussed into the context of what else I had already known. I recalled the Saviour's statement "love thy neighbor as thyself," and for the first time I wondered what that really means. Before today I had understood it to mean that one should love others the way one loves oneself, and that one should demonstrate that love in the same way one would demonstrate one's love for one's Self: that is, by being alert to their needs, looking out for their safety, seeking to make them happy; and when one makes a decision that would impact their lives, make that decision according to their best interests.

As I thought about it, I concluded that the definition I had just drawn was of what I earlier described as focused love, but it does not describe this new, integral feeling I was trying to identify. After some thought, I came to an understanding that is compatible with the feeling, so I now take it that the "as yourself" is quite literal: it does not mean "like yourself" it means "as one's Self." It is a concept that approaches the same idea as the word "comprehend" in John 1, or perhaps more closely to Lehi's "encircled eternally."

When this concept first occurred to me, I was hesitant to accept it because it seemed to me that the only way it would be possible to love another as though he were one's Self would be if one could somehow obliterate the distinction between Self and non-self. That distinction is as eternal as we are, so a definition cannot presuppose such an obliteration. So I had to think further. I concluded that I was correct in the original idea, except that it could not mean to blur the personality differences of individuals, or to cloud one's sense of Self as is proposed in the notion of a universal Nirvana. Rather, it must mean to experience a sense of completeness in one's Self by being in the other person's presence so that one is more completely one's personal Self when he finds "sociality" with another. That idea was appealing, but it would require a good deal of exploration before it would make much sense.

The words both convey and distort the idea I was trying to grasp. They conveyed the correct idea because they suggested a oneness *in fact*, rather than a focused love; but at the same time, and for the same reason, they distorted the idea because they suggest a oneness *in fact* rather than only an embrace. To make sense of it all, I had to discover how both ideas could be true, and retain the necessary individuality that would also make both ideas false. I had grasped the correct notion during our conversation, but now I had to solidify it in my own thinking.

No idea is born in a vacuum. There always ideas that surround it, and that must be accommodated if a new truth is to be identified as truth. For me, one such idea is this: I believe the priesthood is the legitimizing sealing mechanism, but not the sealing power. In other words, the priesthood ordinances are necessary, but not sufficient to achieve an eternal bonding. Rather, I believe that charity – the pure love of Christ – is the actual sealing power that, after the sealing ordinances of the priesthood, is sufficient to achieve an eternal bonding. Any new understanding of love I was to come up with had to conform to that notion.

Now the explanation – it begins with the mutually contradictory premises I mentioned above:

The love that seals souls together is an embrace of persons, and a combining of their souls into one (those ideas are deliberately expressed as apparently mutually contradictory concepts). I am using “soul” in a way that I think is consistent with the scriptures – that is, an embodied intelligence, whether that body be spirit, earthly, or resurrected.

Now let me try to wiggle out of the contradictions I have imposed upon my definition. (It will not be hard, because these ideas are as much yours as they are mine.) A “person” consists of many different “parts,” (“Parts” is an inadequate word. I tried “elements” and “stuff” but neither worked any better. So “parts” will have to do, but even so, its meaning here will only be relevant within the terms and in the context I use it here), and that some of those parts can be united with similar parts of other persons in a perfect unity, but that at least one part of each individual must, by definition, remain in tact and separate, in order for the individual to remain an individual, and therefore that part cannot be united with any other person. (There is one major exception, of course. I do not understand it beyond simply knowing it is there: and that is the fact that we are made by, through, and *of* the Saviour’s light. These ideas seem to be related to that relationship, but that is a unique relationship between each of us and the Saviour, and that uniqueness puts that relationship on a completely different scale from the others I am talking about.)

Much of what I am about to write will be “old hat” to you, but a review of these ideas was a necessary part of my thinking process, so I will also review them here. One always has to build from the foundation up, so back to the basics we go!

As we have discussed, a fully developed person consists of the following parts – and one generates, receives, and/or assimilates those parts in the following order:

- 1) At the beginning of cognizance a “person” (called Truth) is a recipient and user of truth – truth is knowledge of eternal reality.
- 2) A Truth assimilates truth, and thereby emits light (“which truth shineth.”). Thus an individual, in his earliest development, consists of the core person and an aura of light. A person with such an aura of light is called an intelligence – intelligence is “the light of truth” The light can grow to be very great, but I have not sufficient information to know in what way the core individual also grows. The only example I know is the Saviour. In his case, on this earth, his person was able to be housed in a body like ours, but his light extended throughout the entire realm of pre-earth spiritual universe and whatever preceded it, the physical universe, and it continues on to encompass all the degrees of resurrected glory – sufficient for us to come home to the Celestial world. He is different from us, but even so, the example suggests to me that the “size” of the deity who is now housed in the Saviour’s resurrected body is substantially different from the size of the light which shines from his eternal person. – But I can’t conceptualize what I just wrote, and suppose it will be a very long time before I understand it. (The author of the Hymn of the Pearl seems to suggest the same notion, but he doesn’t try to be explicit.)
- 3) an Intelligence (the core person plus his aura) receives, as a gift from the Saviour, a different

kind of light – that light is formulated into the spirit matter that makes up his spirit body. He is now a “Spirit” – that is, an intelligence housed in a spirit body – which body is made of spirit matter – which matter is made “of” the Saviour’s light, rather than of the light of the aura which the person generated himself. That is significant because it implies a different relationship with the Saviour than our first one. (It also causes me to wonder at the use of the word “soul” in the concluding story of Abraham 3.)

4) a human – earthling – is a spirit person who has been given – again, as a gift from the Saviour, but through this world’s physical processes – a mortal body made of physical materials derived from the elements of the world we live on – and also made “of” the Saviour’s light. These physical materials are apparently of a greater variety than the materials that make up our spirit bodies. I gather that, because they include the course stuff we can see and feel (the matter the Prophet Joseph described as being less “refined” than the matter our spirit bodies are made of.) However that is not all – these physical bodies apparently also contain elements of substantial power – that is Celestial, Terrestrial, and Telesstial matter (see D&C 88:25-32). That idea is substantiated by the facts that the earth itself will become a celestial orb, and that the Saviour’s celestial resurrected body was made of materials gathered from our beautiful world.

5) After one leaves this world through death, one becomes a “post-mortal” spirit person – but I don’t know what kind of “spirit body” he has. It may be that it is the same as the pre-mortal spirit body. But in that case it seems one would just have to wait until the resurrection to have whatever advantages one might get from having once had a physical body. Or it may be that when a person dies, his spirit takes something of the elements of this body along with him into the post-mortal spirit world. If that is so, perhaps one of the major steps in our individual evolutionary process is to come here so we can pick up that additional stuff so we can take it with us into the post-mortal spirit world. If that is so, then a baby who is only on this earth for an hour or so, and then dies, might leave here with that “something” which enhances one’s spirit body so that one can do things and learn things in the post-mortal spirit world that one could not have done or learned in a pre-mortal spirit body. If that is true, then the post-mortal spirit world has an experiential value that the pre-mortal spirit world could not have – and the way one responds to those new experiences apparently have as great an effect upon one’s eternal salvation as the way one handles such experiences in this mortal world. If that is so, persons who die in any state of un-accountability – whether one is younger than eight years, or a mature person who never had the law – such a person will be able to do things and experience things – and respond to those things – in the post-mortal spirit world, in much the same way as he would have done on this earth if he had lived a hundred years with a knowledge of the gospel.

5) An intelligence with a resurrected body. The resurrection is apparently both a sealing together and an enhancement of all of the qualities or elements of light mentioned above. So a resurrected person is an intelligence who has acquired a spirit body made of the Saviour’s light, a physical body also made of that light, perhaps an enhanced post mortal spirit body with additional material made of the Saviour’s light, and now, through the resurrection, has a fully developed body of pure light – and also has a substantially enhanced aura of light.

I presume as a Truth passes through each of the experiences prerequisite to achieving that end, he/she encounters different tensions through different kinds of experiences, and that the way one

deals with them further defines one's nature, personality, ability to love, and the quality (interesting idea, but I'm not at all sure how to define the word) of the light he emits – is appears to be the combination of those lights which makes up his final (?) aura. I assume that with one's accumulation of both a variety of lights and truth (“truth” here means correct information rather than the personified Truth), one's aura would grow and shine according to the way one handled each of those tensions and experiences.

Now, after all that big, long and drawn out introduction, let me tell you what I remember we concluded about the nature of that second kind of love.

As two persons came together their bodies (whether it be spirit body, earthly, or resurrected) are capable of colliding or of touching each other, but they are not capable of occupying the same space at the same time. However, I assume that the aura around each of those bodies would be capable of interacting or interlacing, rather than colliding, and therefore would be able to occupy the same space at the same time. Thus the auras of each would become a oneness – each enhanced by the other – without compromising the unique qualities and personalities of the individuals who produced those auras.

In this way two such persons could become one – not in unity and purpose, but in actual fact – merging light to light (adding grace to grace) in perfect love (loving another *as* one's Self) without in any way compromising either the individuality or the unique personality of one's core Self.

If this is correct, then the bonding which we call “sealing” in the Celestial glory would be an absolute unity – a oneness – perfect love – but not a merging of unique personalities into a single personality, or of an individual person into a universal person – but a fulfillment wherein each participating individual is more fully onself because he could not be complete without partaking of the glory of the other persons whom he loves.

If that made sense, my earlier deliberately contradictory statement that “The love that seals souls together is an embrace of persons, and a combining of their souls” ought to make sense also.

What I have described is what I believe to be the quality of love that existed in the Council and before, and the same quality of love that will exist in the celestial world. It seems to me that the Abraham 3 discussion of the differences in the greatness of the intelligences is not only about the extent of their light, but it is also about the power of their love to reach out to others. If Truth can know truth, and that truth shines, then it seems to me that the truth it knows about others ought to be part of what shines – but that the extent to which it shines is determined by whether its primary focus is outward or inward – if inward, then ultimately it becomes a black hole. If outward, then the radius of one's light defines the extent to which one may be sealed to others.

But that is not all.

It seems to me that if that is true of our interactions with others before and after this life, then it must also be true that during this life, to some lesser degree, that same kind of love can exist among people in this world. (H. C. Kimball's talk on the disk I gave you is an example.) If that is

so, then the love which is the ultimate sealing power (both in this world and in every other) is a “oneness” with, rather than a focused attention toward one’s beloved, is an eternal embrace.

Notwithstanding what I have written, my own experiences teaches me that what I have called “focused love” is very important and very valuable. It is the necessary beginnings of directing one’s attentions outward rather than inward, and is probably the source of almost all of the good that happens, not only to and by me personally, but also to and by everyone else in the world as well. For me it is, and I suppose has always been, my primary source of happiness and fulfillment. In the course of my life I have known hundreds of people whom I love – some I have known for only a short time, others are long-term friendships, but the love seems equally real. Still, as I mentioned, the list of people who give me a sense of completeness is very short. So as I write this, I sit here, wondering what am I going to do – what must I become – to expand my soul so that it may embrace “many, yea, very many” others ? ? ?

Thank you for being my friend.

LeGrand