

Published: March 3, 2013

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Does true love really exist?

T. T. Srinath

An irascible young man, who carped at men of God, once encountered a preacher who said he often spoke to God. Seeing an opportunity to taunt the man of faith, the young man approached the preacher and asked him, "The next time you speak to God, ask him if he remembers the time I insulted my friend George and also ask him what punishment he is going to hand out to me." After a few days, the young man chanced on the preacher, on the road, and asked him, "Did you speak to God?" The preacher replied in the affirmative. "What did he say about punishing me?" asked the young man, to which the preacher replied, "God says he has forgotten and does not recall your wrong deed."

Such is the nature of true love; it keeps no record of the wrongs.

Unconditional acceptance of another happens only when I unconditionally accept myself. As I judge myself, and very often poorly, so do I, others. Therefore, when I cannot accept myself the way I am how can I accept another the way he or she is?

There is much good in me, yet along with this exists my warts. If I have to accept you unconditionally I must accept you with your warts, as I must myself. Very often we tell another, "I like you when you are gentle or kind but I find it hard to accept you when you are angry." What we are in effect saying is, "I like you subject to conditions you meet or satisfy." This is not love, it is manipulation. True love accepts the other without prejudice. Yet for me to be accepting of you as you are, I must accept myself, my bright side as well as my dark side. I shine because of my darkness. So if I accept myself as I am, I become human, humane, patient and compassionate; all qualities that will help me become the person I was born to be.

(The writer is an organisational and behavioural consultant. He can be contacted at ttsrinath@vsnl.net)