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CALMNESS, TOLERANCE AND FORGIVENESS

**(Three attitudes of the christian military
man for the sowing of peace)**

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CALMNESS, TOLERANCE AND FORGIVENESS

Calmness instead of rage, tolerance instead of permissiveness and forgiveness opposite revenge signal the right way towards peace within the personal sphere of coexistence as well as the institutional sphere of international relations. We could declare, that any advance in favor of a peaceful coexistence among calmness, tolerance and forgiveness is worth the frequent relapses in wrath, permissiveness and revenge and releases mankind of the risks of war. The first line is straight and clear. The second one is a broken line full of shocks. The angry man, then permissive and finally vindictive is exactly, -if his attitude becomes widespread in a community-, the leading role of the great warlike convulsions that mankind has suffered.

CALMNESS

In principle, the attitude of calmness states the personal or social reality of a shared benevolence. Calmness means something more serious and deep than the roots of a friendship for mere liking. Calmness is more for moderating the relationship between opponents than companions. Calmness works in man's life as something essential in the stage that goes before the true search of a fertile dialogue which will only fecund when aimed towards truth and the knowledge of Truth.

Calmness is needed in the matters when the contrast Truth-Error is put at stake. Dialogue is used to establish the content of truth. The castilian expression, <<people understand each other talking>> points to the right direction. Naturally, all dialogue is (or should be) without wrath and studying the reciprocal arguments with no room for irritation. But irritation can burst in at any moment, if one of the speakers expresses a lie, an expression of falsehood which has skillfully been ornate with the appearance of truthfulness. The lost of calmness (therefore the disastrous result of the dialogue) does not occur by the presence of what is erroneous or mistaken but by the assault of lie that burst into the hands of a manipulator of vague ideas.

WRATH

The unwanted presence of wrath, when one of the speakers in apparent dialogue lies artfully, makes calmness disappear as the temperament that would reach the agreement, the consent or at least the mutual respect. Calmness is fed by the need to achieve an agreement from the start. We should again remain calm upon lies as long as the differences between true and false are apparent. There will be no need to calm down, or calm down the opponent, if at the end of the dialogue both parties agree with the same ideas.

TOLERANCE

Tolerance is another matter which substance is ethical. It does not refer to the contrast Truth-Error and does not apply to the substantial improvement of the shared knowledge of truth. Tolerance does not repair the decay on those who seek truth. With or without tolerance, nothing is questioned in a personal or international environment by virtue of this tolerance to be true of false. In the game of pure tolerance, doctrines, ideas and beliefs barely have an impact. Tolerant human beings are not affected by differences in judgement. What is tolerated from the start, is something we do not share and do not mind our opponent to defend. Tolerance moves through the subtle hiatus that mankind has laid between Good and Evil.

What tolerance accepts is not a different way of thinking but a different behavior from the one I recommend. The question of tolerance makes sense regarding acts we consider wrong by others not regarding ideas or thoughts expressed as truths. When tolerance operates as a virtue it exerts itself preventing mankind from being shocked by acts that follow. Tolerant human beings show with a nonchalant attitude that he will do nothing to disturb or interfere with the type of conduct he condemns and would never recommend. Tolerance is silent towards what we consider to be wrong. It is a temporal an subjective acceptance of what we consider wrong. The game of tolerance is interrupted by scandal, by the cynical cover of an indignity masked by virtue.

Every mutual attitude of tolerance in the civilized world is by definition, virtuous according to a possible change in conduct. Whom at first is merely tolerated by me could later on be better known to me and perhaps what now looks bad to me could be understood as not so bad. Equally as likely would be that he might change his way of procedure on his own initiative when he notices the true clues of my appreciation for what is best. And vice versa, two people that acknowledge to be imperfect though with the right idea in mind and ready to tolerate and endure each other, remain open to self-reform. Tolerating each other, they commit themselves to work better each day. Tolerance, because of the change that goes from what looks bad to us to what looks less bad, compels us to an exam of conscience, indirectly conducted through good faith.

PERMISSIVENESS

The collapse of tolerance -permissiveness- takes place when within a sphere where there is no more interest for good as good and for evil as evil. The horizon of tolerance is always Goodness, although the merciful look stops in Evil. The sound tolerance requires my resignation to become arbiter between Good and Evil. It brings in my conscience the doubt that I may be mistaken and for the sake of this possible confusion, the most sensible act would be to postpone a final judgement about other's evil, letting it rest on the apparent evil of some particular actions. Permissiveness, breaks the sound meaning of tolerance because it eliminates both poles in tension. Nor Good or Evil exists, should they exist my position would be on the favorable side therefore the position of others opposite to me would be unavoidable. <<Hell is constituted by others>>. In fact, Evil's permissiveness always turns up together with resentment or even better, with Good's intolerance. But the permissive being does not perceive his situation as such, but different to the highest degree.

Permissiveness declines to watch anything as objectively bad. For the permissive being everything is allowed in its root. To prohibit is prohibited. Nothing is observed by him as objectively evil. There is no ethical change expected in others nor in his own conscience of reality. If there is anything that should not be allowed, it exclusively refers to the human attitude that points out wrongdoing from any point of view. There is no other way to correct the situation than the abolition of the inquisitions. The repeated shameless acts of the licentious demonstrates their arbitrary perspective. Everything is beyond Good and Evil. <<If God does not exists (or God is dead) everything is permitted>>. Wherever permissiveness reigns, the adverse trials and the condemnation of evil are excluded. The reality of the fault and the sin has previously been completely avoided. The tolerant patient assumed what was tolerated might be wrong. The impatient permissive being proclaims that only what aspires to be known as good is wrong. Permissiveness heads towards Good's intolerance.

Permissiveness does not want to put any limit to its indifferent attitude towards the goodness or towards the evil of some deeds. In fact, it has full lucidity for the perception of a protective barrier of itself. The barrier or the limit of what is allowed by me, somewhat permissive, is located in pain, in suffering and in the harm that is infringed to me. Permissiveness is basically self-compassionate and for that reason is discriminatory against whom he designates powerful ones. Only the powerful man can and wants to hurt me. The pains and sufferings of the weak, that is me, come from the pleasures and joys of the powerful. Permissiveness is anarchist and because of it introduces the passion of hate in the only direction in which is requested that the weight of the law should be applied in a hurry and straight to the point. The problem of Good and Evil, which is seen but denied through permissiveness, takes on the appearance of the problem of Pain and Joy, since it is never subsumed by the permissive being regarding the problem of Truth and Error.

Nor the dialogue that looks for a better knowledge of truth, nor patience that delays the clear perception of Good, so to speak, nor calmness or tolerance becomes a question of Pain or Joy. The aesthetic of what is pleasant and joyful that we call happiness, naturally subordinates to the logic of truth and to the ethic of good, two basic questions to be happy and that are worth winning with effort. Truth deals with the correct practice of reason, Good suggests the adequate practice of the will and Pleasure (Joy or Happiness) opens itself to the warm practice of sympathy. None of this has sense when permissiveness becomes absolute.

FORGIVENESS

There is nothing more serious at the instance of human experience of pain or joy than the contrast between Forgiveness and Revenge. The happiness of knowing that one is forgiven opposes the fear of being punished that we identify with sadness. But in an awful way for mankind, it has been more usual in literature the quotation "pleasure of the God's" that would be avenged in reference to forgiveness. In short, Peace would be a final order where all is forgiven, -let us note that it does not say that everything is allowed- and War would be an almost permanent state where everyone would feel threaten by a cruel destiny. To feel Peace means to walk towards well being, towards holy life or peaceful life. To suffer War is a synonym of discomfort, of fear of death or condemnation in short.

The way to forgiveness is through a straight path of calmness and tolerance; unfortunately, men seek revenge from the broken path of wrath and permissiveness. The clue to happiness is to know and to correctly value what will be the passion that has the winning hand in men's hearts: their wish to be completely forgiven or the eagerness to make others pay for their errors. In short, what is emphasized in the contrast Peace-Revenge is the improper and undesirable operative presence of resentment; in a hurried synthesis the most probable outcome would be a catastrophe, the victory of hate upon love.

Forgiveness, is the feeling with which once and for all, a series of valid attitudes to achieve Peace close, similarly revenge blocks all possible exits from the War that is suffered. The time for forgiveness always arrives at the end of the most grave events. Nothing begins in history forgiving. Ahead of forgiveness, opportunities to prudence and justice should be given and also to fortitude and moderation peculiar to dialogue and tolerance. Following forgiveness there is no place for revenge, permissiveness or wrath. Achieving a sincere forgiveness of a fault, Truth prevails upon Error, Good upon Evil and Peace upon War.

REVENGE

Forgiveness has no place among us when every one is placed at the starting point of a tense situation or a conflict. It has its preferential place at the arrival point of the juncture . Forgiveness overcomes the crisis of mutual violence when the offender and the offended, at last, both agree on the fact that harm was inflicted and that the explanation to the alleged harm is the result of a previous fault and of an error previous to the conflict. The remedy, or in other words, - the return of fairness- should never take the route of the settling of scores which we call revenge, but the benevolent path of the reciprocally given indulgence.

To forget is not the same as to forgive. Forgiveness is based upon the personal experience of the memory. To honestly ask for forgiveness, to truly apologize for oneself a misdeed, we should resort to the art of remembering all. The one that forgives is the one that decides nobly, to forget or to have to account that that offended him so much. The act of forgiving does not divide mankind into those who forgive and those who are forgiven. The Church teaches us with the Gospels, mankind itself is not the City of God, nor a Communion of Saints, but a Communion of Sinners. Forgiveness does not imply a dichotomy where an innocent victim opposes a guilty offender. Forgiveness is a need that everyone should feel as his own, not exclusive of the other. Only God forgives upon innocence.

What the habit of forgiving seeks primarily is the act in itself of being forgiven. Not only is the one that wants to forgive the guilty innocent, but also the one that knowing himself guilty is on the point of receiving absolution. The easy excuse as a system of polite life does not belong to the deep dialectic of forgiveness. In the middle of the dialectic of true forgiveness is the pain made evident by the pain inflicted on someone else, not exactly not willing it, that is, not meaning it, but willing. The binomial Pleasure-Pain -as well as the binomial War-Peace - is the space where men suffer and cause pain, just because they renounce the plan that God drew up for their lives. Whoever asks seriously for forgiveness knows that he has wrongly acted against a norm, but he should know that in fact, he has parted even more from a more serious rule, the one of obedience to the Word of God, to the Will of the Father, as Jesus of Nazareth repeated to reveal the secret of his infinite goodness.

It is evident that from wrath and permissiveness, it is practically impossible to apologize to any fellow being and of course, to request it from God Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ. The deliberate absence of calmness (typical of the angry being) and the absence of interest towards what is considered on its own good or bad (typical of the permissive being) deprives the avenger of the fervent desire to be himself forgiven. Wrath, permissiveness and revenge ignore that the person that walks this path may be at fault, while emphasizing the existence of other human beings to whom condemn. At the most, they limit the ethic to the problem of the Pleasure-Pain binomial. For them pleasure means Goodness and Truth and pain means Evil and Error. We will obtain similar results when we point out the simultaneous reality deep in their sick souls of lie, hypocrisy and resentment where there should be more calmness, tolerance and forgiveness.

The undesirable appearance of wrath in the tension Truth-Error (which attempts to be palliated by the dialogue in calmness) prevents the agreement of what could definitely be true. The no less repugnant appearance of hypocritical scandal of the permissive in the tension Good-Evil (which attempts to be palliated with the patience of tolerance) prevents the personal experience of what is definitely well done. The resulting confusion about Truth and Good makes more likely the reign of revenge as well as the repudiation of forgiveness which unfortunately is what is more usual in the tension Peace-War and what will prevail in the resentments of the social groups exposed to the contrast between happiness and suffering.

Every war, every armed conflict, each violent fight have in their prehistory a breakdown period in favour of wrath mixed with stages of increasing permissiveness. The advantage of wrath (opposite calmness) and permissiveness (opposite tolerance) always comes from the outbreak that turns into the unforgivable, by all judgement, that the enemy carries out just to hurt us.

The spirit of revenge (in contrast with the spirit of forgiveness) appears when both of them are placed next to the spirit of justice with totally opposed intentions. Forgiveness wants peace and revenge wants war. Whoever knows himself to be historically forgiven once and for all, wants peace for the two human beings that were formerly combatants; it wants happiness for both, and finally (in short) wants the extent of pleasure and the enclosing of pain so that they can share joy in a common home.

Man's education for the positive improvement of the contrast forgiveness-revenge is not easy, because what is immediately pleasant or joyful and what is immediately painful or sad does not appreciate at first the real, the good, the clean or the extremely beautiful. It must mature step by step to achieve self-improvement through an experience of life and deep wisdom that at the end will harmonize Truth, Goodness and Happiness in a unique eagerness, in an only hope.

Thank you