**The Cross and the Crucifixion**

The Cross is the symbol of fullness of Truth and it represents the radical love of God and the radical love of neighbour. The radical love of God means the highest possible relationship with God in which a person affirms oneness with God. A person declares, ‘God and I are one' or God alone is.

The radical love of neighbour means the highest possible human to human relationship in which a person realizes oneness with the whole of humanity and of creation and feels whatever is done to others is done to himself or herself. A person realizes that everyone and everything is the manifestation of God. The vertical line represents the love of God and the horizontal line represents the love of neighbour.

The Circle

We can look at the Truth as a big circle. Our spiritual journey can be described like a small dot that begins at the center of a circle and moves circularly, vertically and horizontally until it reaches the chime of the circle.

There can be four important circles in this process: individual circle, collective circle, universal circle and the divine circle. They also can be described as individual cross, collective cross, universal cross and divine cross.

The individual circle represents individual love of God and individual love of neighbour. The collective circle represents collective love of God and the collective love of neighbour, the universal circle represents the universal love of God and the universal love of neighbour, and the divine circle represents the radical love of God and the radical love of neighbour.

The Jewish Tradition

The Jewish tradition, in which Jesus Christ was born and brought up, very much remained in the collective cross or collective circle. Its whole spirituality was focused on the love of God and the love of neighbour.

This love of God was the collective love of God, God being only the God of the Jews; and the love of neighbour was collective love of neighbour, the neighbours being fellow Jews.

This understanding built a wall between the Jews and the non-Jews and became the source of conflict and violence.

Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ, in his spiritual journey, elevated the love of God and expanded the love of neighbour. In him the love of God grew from the collective love of God to the universal love of God and from there to the oneness with God.

He said ‘the Father (God) and I are one'.

Consequently the love of neighbour also grew, from the collective love of neighbour to the universal love of neighbour, and from there to the divine love of neighbour, in which everyone and everything is seen as the manifestation of God.

Jesus said, ‘whatever you do to the least of my brothers and sisters that you do unto me'. In Jesus Christ the individual circle or cross grew into the divine circle or cross.

Breaking down all barriers

This journey is the journey of dying to all the identities that separate us from God and one another. It transforms our limited, separating identities into functional identities rather than essential identities. It is a breaking down of all the barriers.

Jesus Christ had to die internally to all the identities that separated him from God and others. He was one with God and one with every human being and every creature.

In him the love of God and the love of neighbour reached one hundred per cent. Thus the cross of Jesus Christ is the symbol of the fullness of Truth. It represents the radical love of God and the radical love of neighbour.

No individual is excluded from this cross and no religion is excluded from this cross.

But no religion, in as much as it is a belief structure, can contain this fullness of Truth. Religions, as belief systems, belong to the collective circle or cross.

Religions, like a nest, can only offer a platform where individuals can prepare to move into the fullness of Truth. It is the responsibility of individuals to grow into this fullness of Truth and become the Way, the Truth and the Life.

I am the Way

Only in individuals can this truth become alive, dynamic, creative and original.

This realization may become a mission in one's life, if that is the will of God, to help others to realize this truth.

Jesus said, ‘I am the way, the truth and the life and no one can come to the Father except through me'.

No one can come to the fullness of Truth that Jesus realized, except by his way of realization. And his way was to grow into the radical love of God and the radical love of neighbour.

This is the only way for everyone.

This truth and this way are not an invention of Jesus. They are there from all eternity. He only discovered them.

Jesus invited his spiritual tradition and the individuals that were both in his spiritual tradition and outside, to grow into this fullness of Truth, which he described as the Kingdom of God.

Crucifixion:

The Crucifixion has to be understood from two perspectives: from the perspective of Jewish religious leaders and Political leaders of Jesus' time and from the perspective of Jesus Christ.

Jewish Religious Leaders

From the perspective of the Jewish spiritual leaders and the political leaders of Jesus' time, the crucifixion is the consequence of a refusal to accept the invitation of Jesus to grow into highest divine-human and human-human relationships.

It is the refusal to realize, to be sons and daughters of God, and even to be one with God. It is the refusal to break down the walls of division and create one God, one creation and one human kind.

It is the determination to remain in their collective circle or collective consciousness. The statements and claims that Jesus made were considered to be blasphemous. The political leaders of his time, representing Pilate, looked at him as trouble maker and needed to be eliminated for the common peace.

The Fullness of Truth

From the perspective of Jesus Christ the Crucifixion is the consequence of his refusal to deny the fullness of Truth that he has discovered.

He stood for one God, one creation and one human kind. He stood for the dignity of human beings who can realize that they are one with God.

He stood for breaking down the barriers.

He stood for growth, liberation and unity.

He willingly accepted his crucifixion in order to bear witness to the fullness of Truth.

He refused to conform to the collective truth of his belief system that divided human beings and made human beings to be at the service of belief systems.

Christian Churches

Since Christian Churches also confine Jesus' message into different belief systems, which are exclusive and divide human beings into Christians and non-Christians, they also cannot escape the blame of refusing to accept the message of Jesus, which is the message of growth and unity.

The crucifixion of Jesus, which is refusal to grow, did not happen only two thousand year ago but it is happening all the time.

Whenever we refuse to grow in divine-human relationship and human-human relationship we are crucifying the Truth.

Whenever we reduce the truth into belief systems that divide human beings we are crucifying the Truth or refusing to accept Jesus' message.

Thus the cross as the symbol of Christianity, as understood today, does not represent Jesus Christ; rather it is just opposite of what is intended by him.

The Cross of radical love

Jesus admonished his disciples to take up his cross and follow him. This cross is the cross of the fullness of Truth, the cross of unity, the cross of radical love of God and the radical love of neighbor.

The cross that embraces the whole of humanity and of creation, the cross that breaks down the walls of division and creates one God, one Creation and one human kind.

Bearing witness to unity

If carrying this cross brings one to crucifixion let him or her accept this crucifixion for bearing witness to the unity of human mind.

Jesus Christ carried this cross and accepted crucifixion.

He did not die for any one particular religion or people. He died for the unity of the whole of humanity.

If wearing the cross meant to show that we belong to a particular religion, excluding others, then it does not represent the vision of Christ. It may even represent counter witness to Christ.

If Christians want to wear the cross they should wear it as the symbol of one God, one Creation and one human kind. They should wear it as the symbol of unity and inclusivity.

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