

# ***A New Hope***



***Reflections on  
Natural Love and Divine Love***

***Ron Shoemaker***

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Natural Love and Divine Love**

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**Dedicated to those  
who are seeking a New Beginning  
beyond their present condition.**



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## **Introduction**

During my last year in high school, my father received a book from his sister that claimed to have messages from Jesus and Celestials. The writings were received through Mr. James Padgett via automatic writing. The book's title was *Messages From Jesus And Celestials, Volume Two*, (published by Dr. Leslie R. Stone, Copyright 1950). The messages received through Mr. Padgett eventually became a set of four books.

As I read through the book, I found many of the ideas presented to be original – points that I had never read or heard before. One point the spirit writers emphasized was that mind and soul were two different things, not two names for the same thing. The writers also spoke of love as a substance, an essence that was just as real as what we experience in the material world. They claimed that the soul was the real person and was possessed of a love made in the image of God's Love. Further, while the two loves might appear to be alike, the writers proclaimed that human love, a natural love we are born with, and God's Love, a Divine Love we can receive upon asking, were in fact vastly different.

And so I began to wonder just what that difference was. What was it that made the Divine Love Divine?

What did image mean when it referred to man's natural love? I began the quest to find some answers to these questions and more. If this stirs your interest, please continue reading to see what my experience has been.

Ron Shoemaker

January, 2019

## **The Soul and Its Love**

Not long after I became aware of the Padgett messages, I had a dream. I was looking through a pair of binoculars at an object that was in perfect focus. It was crystal clear. I could not imagine anything being more precise. While I continued to peer through the binoculars, someone reached over my shoulder and ever so slightly adjusted the focussing nob. To my astonishment, the object I was looking at became ever more acutely discernible. I would not have believed this possible if I had not experienced it.

What I took from this experience was that my spiritual condition need not be incarcerated by the walls of immutable dogma. My spiritual growth could always be ever expanding and insightful: no matter how clearly I experienced a spiritual truth it would always be possible to engage and discover in greater depth the dimensions of its personal meaning for me.

Printed in volume one, *Messages From Jesus and Celestials*, pages 40-42, is the Prayer received by Mr. Padgett. In it are the words "All Holy". The meaning of these words for me were unclear and lay hidden in a haze of fog.

I was reminded of my earlier dream, when in a moment of epiphany, like the sun breaking the morning horizon, I

realized “All Holy” meant the Great Soul was the perfect embodiment of Divine Love, where the infinite number of possibilities seated in the Divine Essence are fully manifested and each infinite possibility, brought to fruition. It is this perfect embodiment of Divine Love that is the template of all other loves. Think of a bouquet that has an unlimited number of different kinds of flowers where the uniqueness of each flower is fully displayed. This is what makes the Deity All Holy; the one perfect Being in reality and the owner of an Original Love whose purity and intense richness is unique. This authentic Love is the pristine Essence of Immortality, a state of Being that cannot experience death or its possibility. It is a love that is self-sustaining and is not constrained by the parameters of time. It is a love that has been the same in the past as It is in the present and will be in the future.

When thinking about the time the Creator called forth the human soul and its natural love in His image, I realized it was like a painter who decided to paint a self- portrait. No matter how perfectly the painting appears to represent the painter, it is still only an image. Like seeing a reflection of yourself in a mirror, no matter how exactly the mirror reflects your appearance, it is only an image of your appearance, not the authentic you.

So I asked myself what some of the differences are when comparing the Deity's Divine Love to our natural love? Both

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loves can demonstrate similar characteristics such as forbearance, humility, empathy, mercy, forgiveness, compassion and kindness. When the first parents refused the offer of the Father's Divine Love, they must have seen that they already appeared to have a love with many of the same qualities as the Love that God displayed. From their perspective, there would be no great advantage to receiving something they already seemed to possess.

Then I thought about what happens when someone's actions cause me to feel unnecessary pain. My first reaction was to withhold any expression of love toward the perpetrator. I found feelings of anger and resentment coming to the surface. That was when I realized that I was no longer conscious of feelings of kindness toward that individual. Feelings of love had seemingly disappeared. They were not self-sustaining; characteristics of natural love were finite images of the authentic ones found in our Father's Original Love, the template for all other Loves.

I came to realize my natural love and its finite characteristics could be influenced by the temptations of surrounding circumstances. At any one time my natural love might not be strong enough or present enough in my consciousness to withstand or counter the prevailing challenges.

As I thought about this it came to me that the image I saw in the mirror would cease if I left. It would not matter how

exact the image was; it had no staying power on its own. My image in the mirror was dependent on my presence. The qualities of natural love, as finite images of the Divine, are not self-sustaining in the same way that the image you see in your mirror is not self-sustaining. These images are not immune from death or the possibility of death; they are dependent on the will of their Originator to continue.

Thus I came to understand that those who have reached the highest spheres in the development of their natural love possess a love that is finite. This love as an image of that which is Authentic has no more staying power than the reflection you see in the mirror.

And so it is with our soul's natural love, an image of the Great Soul's Original Love. Our soul's natural love is not self-sustaining. In its finiteness it is not beyond death or its possibility. As an earthling, Jesus discovered there was a distinct difference between the genuine Love of the Great Soul and the created natural love of the human soul. In the unfolding of his transformational experience Jesus further discovered the "Good News" that His Father's Love was being made available to humankind; that the human soul could become the repository of a Love that is authentic and self-sustaining, sovereign with infinite possibilities.

And so, as I learned to allow His Love to enter my soul, the transformation began. It is a process of becoming more at one with the Great Soul's Essence, an experience of

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continually becoming, always becoming more at one with the living Repository that is the embodiment of the perfect manifestation of Divine Love.

## **Difference Between Natural Love and Divine Love Illustrated**

One morning at work, I had a vision that must have lasted a fraction of a second, but felt like a lifetime. I found myself standing in a house, viewing a painting that covered the biggest part of a wall. The picture was an image of a beautiful natural setting with deer grazing in a meadow and a small stream flowing from the meadow into a quiet pool. Deciduous and evergreen trees swayed in the gentle breeze along with a few flowers in the grass. A number of birds were flying overhead, while others sat on branches, watching. In the distance rose beautiful snow-capped mountains.

Enjoying this scene, I discovered that I could step into the picture and become a part of it. No longer standing on the outside looking at a two-dimensional image, I found that as I stepped inside, the painting transformed into a three-dimensional animated experience filled with life. I noticed the scent of fresh water and could see and hear the stream as it gurgled and bounced around and over rocks, splashing as it tumbled into a placid pool dappled with light. The stationary birds became active, singing and flying here and there. Some sat on branches, while others watched from an old snag. I sensed the breath of a gentle wind and felt its soft touch as I listened to the soothing, hushed whisper of stately

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evergreens caressed by a nascent breeze. From time to time, the deer, peacefully grazing in the meadow, raised their heads, canvassing their surroundings. The majestic snow-capped mountains glistened in the sunlight, standing vigilant as white-tinted clouds with fluffy peaks and deep canyons floated by, silhouetted against a cerulean sky.

When I first gazed at the painting, its beauty was enchanting. However, I soon saw that it represented something other than itself and that it had not existed until someone decided to paint what they saw. It had a beginning and was finite with limited possibilities. Later I realized that the painted image allowed me a glimpse of the authentic scene it sought to depict. I couldn't experience the genuine setting, but was able to imagine what that experience might be.

The experience of looking at a picturesque two-dimensional landscape and discovering that I could step into the painting was, to say the least, astounding. To have the inanimate image of length and width come to life and transform into a three-dimensional animated setting was even more astonishing. With this transformation, I had become a part of the authentic natural scene that the picture so beautifully sought to portray – with all its sights, sounds and aromas. Each tree, rock, blade of grass, and mountain now possessed its own space. I could walk among the trees or hike to the mountains. The limited still painting had

transformed into the real setting it portrayed – genuine and alive with hope and anticipation.

As I pondered the spiritual meaning of my experience, I came to see the two-dimensional picture as a model of the natural love. Stepping into the picture and having it transform into a three-dimensional authentic scene then portrayed the transformational experience of a soul as it becomes filled with the Divine Love. This transformation is so unexpected and unusual, that Jesus referred to it as a New Birth.

Thinking about this further, I saw that one of the purposes of the natural love is to provide a glimpse into attributes of the Divine Love – the original Love. The natural love mirrors Divine characteristics such as empathy, kindness, forgiveness, mercy, and forbearance. It is through these qualities common to both kinds of love that I can have a glance at aspects of the Divine Love.

When we receive the Divine Love and It becomes a dominant presence in our souls, in terms of love, I repeat, *in terms of love*, it is like stepping for the first time from a two-dimensional setting into a three-dimensional world. At this point, it becomes clear that the apparent oneness of the natural love and the Divine Love is an illusion.

Both spiritual paths, one founded on the natural love, the other on the Divine Love, are real. Both will lead to concrete

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results, but there will forever be a radical difference between them. The natural love and its characteristics, no matter how pure, will always be only images of the same attributes seated in the Divine Essence. This Essence of Immortality has the unique quality of being sovereign and self-sustaining. It is the womb from which spring infinite possibilities. For example, empathy in the natural love will always be a finite image of the empathy in the Divine Love, which is genuine, self-sustaining, never fading from our consciousness, and never dying.

In his time on earth, Jesus, as the first person since the original humans, discovered the Love that the Great Soul possesses and how it differs from the love that humankind naturally has. As he allowed his Father's Love to permeate his soul and become dominant, Jesus experienced the New Birth transformation. Through his life and teachings, he was able to bring immortality to light. The Divine Love, the one original Love – authentic, self-sustaining and the source of infinite possibilities – was once again available to humankind.

As God's Love begins to fill our souls, we will pass from the shadow of His Love into the real experience of It and find that we have been touched by infinity in all of Its purity, intensity and richness.

## **Nurturing the Seed of Divine Love**

I stood under a giant sequoia tree for the first time, staring transfixed, trying to take in its immensity. Nearby, lying on the ground, was a sequoia cone, less than three inches long. Curious, I bent over and picked it up. Surprised how small it was, I opened it and discovered the tiniest of seeds.

Later in life, in a moment of repose, I recalled that first experience of standing at the foot of this immense wonder of nature. Remembering the awe the tree engendered and how small and non-descriptive was its beginning, I marveled at the potential ensconced in each seed. Residing therein rests the source of what makes a sequoia tree unique. Thinking further, I realized that if each seed had the right conditions of sunlight, moisture, warmth and soil quality, it would germinate and develop into an icon of nature, a fully-grown giant sequoia tree.

Further consideration led me to see the natural love as a seed planted in the soil of each human soul. This seed carries the essence of what it means to be human – the capacity to love one another as we would like to be loved. Like the sequoia seed, the natural love needs an environment that will allow and encourage its manifestation. Without this, the qualities residing in the natural love will find it difficult to express themselves. When our surrounding conditions are hostile and don't provide a safe haven, it can become hard, if not impossible, to treat others

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the way we would like to be treated. If our focus is on personal survival, characteristics such as self-centeredness, arrogance and vindictiveness will likely find fertile soil.

The sequoia seed is destined to always produce a sequoia tree when the right conditions are present. By contrast, humans have a free will to choose whether or not to become loving individuals. As young children, we don't have set feelings and thoughts about the uniqueness of our country or family. In the process of growing to adulthood, we accept the assumptions and traditions that history brings to our time. As these beliefs become a part of our being, we decide how to interpret the events of history and which values to hold dear. Each person can participate in choosing their destiny and the path taken.

When I first became aware of the Divine Love as distinguished from the natural love and sought to receive it, I wondered why I wasn't more conscious of its presence. Eventually I came to realize that the Divine Love, like the sequoia seed and the natural love, also needs an environment that will allow and encourage its development. The newly arrived seed of Divine Love requires conditions that are compatible with its manifestation. Otherwise it can become stagnant and inactive in my soul.

The Prayer Perfect states: "Let us never cease to realize that Thy love is waiting for each and all of us, and that when we come to Thee, in faith and earnest aspiration, Thy love will never be withholden from us". "Thy love will never be withholden from us". This is what I call the "*Great Promise*".

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The human soul can be likened to a house with several rooms, with each room having a purpose. The quality of each room is like a window into the soul. Assuming I had come in faith and earnest aspiration, a seed of Divine Love should have found a room in my soul that was compatible to its existence – a place it could call home. So why was I not more aware of its presence?

When I hiked into the back country to camp, I always gathered wood for a fire. In starting a fire, I would prepare the kindling, strike a match, and attempt to light the wood. There always seemed to be the proverbial ember underneath the kindling that glowed, but didn't light the wood above. To help, I would get low to the ground and gently blow a breath of air towards the glowing ember, watching as it became more and more intense, until suddenly, it would break into a flame and ignite the wood.

The Divine Love can be seen as the glowing ember, and prayer as that gentle breath which helps keep this authentic Love from God in my soul active and open to growing.

When that small ember of divinity found a room in my soul that was harmonious with its needs, it was like the new kid on the block having to deal with the well-established order of suppositions, feelings and thoughts. With the complexity of the human being, there are many demands of everyday living requiring resolution every day. These include, but are not limited to, the lingering, but unnecessary anguish of injustices.

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Without the necessary conditions, this small ember of Love could become buried under the multitude of needs and desires seeking to capture my time and energy. With my mind's capacity to reason and rationalize, I am free to make decisions independently of the needs of the newly arrived ember of Divine Love. I might feel that the acquisition of material wealth is a worthwhile goal. Or I can dedicate my time and energy to the pursuit of intellectual knowledge, or campaign for a political office. This, in addition to the urges, needs and desires of my physical body, along with other interests and hobbies, could make for a menagerie of incessant demands seeking to influence my daily and longer-term priorities. In such case, the ember of divine essence might be placed on the back burner and even become inactive.

So, if I want to feel the presence of the Divine Love in my soul, it becomes my responsibility to create an environment that allows and encourages the qualities of the authentic love to flourish – the ember's warmth to light the fire.

Prayer, whether formal or informal, even a break in the daily routine for a moment, helps to intensify the ember's glow till eventually it will break into a flame of faith, flooding the room it occupies with light. As the fire of self-sustaining Love becomes all encompassing, filling every nook and cranny in the room it calls home, it will seek to occupy an additional room. Upon becoming dominant in the new room, it will then seek to add another room, and another and another until it possesses the whole soul.

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As the Divine Love fills all parts of my soul, the vestiges of old assumptions – the old guard – are gradually replaced. This authentic, self-sustaining Divine Essence, the once new kid on the block, becomes of such vibrant intensity that harboring a feeling or thought of ill will toward another will be impossible. Qualities such as vindictiveness, arrogance and selfishness will be forever obliterated, never again to raise their ugly heads, and only love – unconditional love – will prevail.

## **Little Children**

One of the most beautiful pictures in the synoptic gospels is found in Mark 10:13-16. A crowd of people has gathered around Jesus and some of his disciples. Parents are bringing their children to Jesus that he may touch and bless them. When some of the disciples try to prevent the little children from reaching him, Jesus is emphatic that the little ones should be allowed to come.

“Let the little children come to me, do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”

Jesus then proceeds to put his arms around the children, lays his hands on them, and gives them his blessings.

In Matthew 18:1-4, Jesus was asked who would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. His answer was,

“I tell you solemnly, unless you change and become like little children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. The one who makes himself as little as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

Luke 18:15-7 presents a similar picture. Jesus is heard calling the little children to him and saying, “anyone who

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does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”

It seems that in Jesus' view, little children have qualities that adults do not – characteristics that would enable us to enter the kingdom of heaven. I wondered what it was that gave little children this advantage.

As a small child, before I was able to reason and rationalize abstractly, I was always curious, exploring my world, relishing in the joy of discovery. In the purity of my innocence, I learned to trust my parents and others as they took care of my physical and emotional needs. I grew up in an environment of openness and acceptance that encouraged my natural love to flow freely to others.

When I played with other children, it was because of our common interests. I did not notice gender or skin color. As I continued to assimilate the customs, traditions and values of my culture, I began forming a frame of mind that helped me understand and make sense of my world. Later I began to sense a difference in the opposite sex, the first twinges of sexual desire. I became aware that some people were considered more important than others and that my country expected my allegiance. I learned that others did not always look at the world in the same way as I did. Views ranged all the way from conservative to liberal. Some had a mindset strongly influenced by religious thinking, science, or the need to pursue intellectual development. Others needed to

be successful in business or to accumulate material riches, while still others were strongly influenced by political convictions. Some chose to follow their talents in the creative arts.

In my life, various influences shaped the flowering of my mindset. The family I was born into, the schools I attended, my everyday experiences with people and events all provided a sense of direction. History, customs and traditions brought to me the assumptions of the tried and true – the wisdom of the ages. As my impressions of these pure and genuine truths solidified, I noticed that I was building walls with my learned understandings that tended to separate me from others. I found myself judging others on the basis of our respective views. I was learning where my allegiance ought to be, who the important people in society were, and what organizations were beneficial. As my culture left its imprint on my mindset, I assimilated the values and attitudes that history handed me.

I found that the universal application of my natural love had become incarcerated. No longer was my natural love flowing freely – it was being channeled in certain directions. I questioned the value and self-worth of some people. Somewhere along the line, I had lost track of my humanity and the humanity of others. The capacity to universally treat one another as we would like to be treated had seemingly disappeared. My acceptance of others had become

subservient to my prejudices. My ability to trust had receded. Others were now accepted based on the compatibility of our mindsets. Our common humanity was no longer on the horizon.

When I became aware of the Padgett messages, I found it exciting to think that God's Love was of a unique nature. According to the messages, His Love is not the same as the love humans have from birth. The messages claim that human love is an image of the Love God possesses, the Divine Love. When comparing the two loves, I saw that they both had similar qualities such as empathy, forgiveness, kindness, forbearance and mercy. I wondered what it was that made the Divine Love divine. I continued to ask what the advantage was of experiencing the Divine Love.

During a moment of epiphany, I realized that the Divine Love was the Original Love in all reality. It was the one authentic and genuine love that was self-sustaining and universal and therefore the template for all other loves. I came to see that the quality of empathy arising from the Divine Love is authentic, self-sustaining and universal. By contrast, the empathy arising from the natural love is an image and may not be self-sustaining; its reach may not be universal.

To better understand the difference between the authentic and an image, imagine that you are surrounded by a beautiful natural setting. As you amble along, you feel a

gentle breeze and hear its whisperings in the majestic pines. You hear the songs of birds and watch as they go about their daily lives. You hear a brook as it meanders through a meadow, and watch a deer quenching its thirst. As you kneel by the stream and place your hand in the cool, flowing water, you feel its smoothness as it glides around your fingers, hear it as it tumbles over rocks, glistening in the sunlight. The scene you are a part of is alive with possibilities, vibrant with expectations. You can decide to hike to a nearby mountain or enjoy the shade of an ancient tree. This is a description of an authentic scene. It is three-dimensional and has myriad of possibilities. It gives us a glimpse of what the Divine Love is like.

By contrast, the natural love is like looking at a painting of the above scene. It is a two-dimensional image of an authentic three-dimensional setting. The picture can be beautiful with its images and colors. It can even give a sense of peace. But as you gaze at the painting, you cannot hear or sense the fresh breeze passing through the needles of evergreens, nor can you place your hand into the stream and feel the water's coolness. Everything is static – there is no movement or dynamism.

This is one way to comprehend the radicalness of the New Birth – going from the image to that which is authentic. It is not just about something new or setting off in a new direction. The experience of the transformation is about

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replacing the old assumptions and vestiges of our mindset and natural love with the Original Love of reality. When Authentic Love becomes dominant in every part of a soul, a unique reality that is self-sustaining and universal is born: a radically new paradigm touched by the eternal.

So what does this have to do with little children and entering the kingdom of heaven? As a child I did not have a rigid and complex mindset to help me make sense of my world. My world was rather simple. I was not yet tempted by the notion of the original sin or of being depraved, nor was I captured by the myriad of pleasures and allurements beyond my world. In my humility and trust, I was experiencing my world from a child's innocent perspective.

What then does it mean for us to become like a little child? Above all, there must be an unconditional trust in our Father's Love for each of us. This kind of trust tells me that I will never be forsaken. With this trust, in the sublime moment of sincere prayer, we will be able to let go of the reliance on our mindset as far as preconceived suppositions, beliefs and attitudes. It is in the demise of the mind's dominance, that the New Birth can take place. Through humility and trust, our souls will become receptive to the promptings of God's Love for us and we will become empowered to unconditionally accept it. As we allow that first nascent ember of the Divine Substance to enter and lodge in our souls, the transformation begins ... one that will

continue ad infinitum. We have to be open to that possibility and its materialization.

Our Father has conditionally made His Love available to us. It is left in our hands to discover how to unconditionally trust in His Love for us and to unconditionally accept it. When His Original Love fills every part of a soul, that soul becomes self-sustaining and universal, all embracing and boundless. Then the vestiges of our natural love and mindset will recede into the background and eventually disappear – no longer being dominant. It is with the reception of that first tiny ember of God's Original Love that our soul's transformation will begin and eventually come to fruition as a unique work of art – a new being born into the reality of the Father's Original Love – the one-of-a-kind collaborative work of God and a human individual.

## **Glass of Water**

The Divine Love is self-sustaining and universal in its inclusiveness. It flows unrestricted to all people. The natural love that all humans are born with is an image of the Divine Love our Father possesses. This image is the pure and sublime expression which embodies the essence of what it means to be human -- the capacity to love one another the way you would like to be loved. As a being that has free will, my soul filled with natural love provides me with a sense of direction as to how I ought to feel, think and behave. If I accept my natural love's desire, my soul becomes my compass and pole star, seeking to influence my choices. Unlike the Divine Love, though, the natural love is not self-sustaining. It is finite. Its qualities such as hope, empathy, kindness and wisdom are finite. The natural love and its characteristics are like the reflection I see in the mirror. The only reason the image in the mirror continues is because I am there. If I leave, the reflection disappears.

When we step onto this bridge called earth, in addition to a soul filled with natural love, we acquire a mind, with its capacity to reason and rationalize, a spirit body and a physical body. This bridge takes us from the realm of soul to the world of spirit. In a longer or shorter time we all complete this crossing. While my soul, filled with natural

love, may perceive the world in terms of treating others the way I would like to be treated, my mind with its capacity to reason and rationalize may choose other criteria. My home, formal and informal education and general experience all helped to form my mindset. On what presuppositions, values and attitudes will my frame of mind be founded?

Depending on these assumptions, what my mind decides is in my best interest may be at odds with what my soul desires. If the flowering of my natural love says I need to treat others the way I would want to be treated, and my mind decides it is important to acquire material wealth or power over others, a potential conflict is in the making. Both will seek to influence my free will. Will my decision be to compromise or go with one or the other?

My mind's ability to reason and rationalize may show me that my soul's aspiration of treating others the way I would like to be treated will not enable me to accumulate much material wealth. If I choose to make my mind's objective dominant, the desire of my soul's natural love will be pushed to the periphery. My energy and time will become devoted to gaining material wealth. As this happens, my soul's natural love desires may become less and less influential until they become completely subservient to my mind. When my soul and its natural love seemingly die and no longer seek to influence my free will, my mind will become dominant. As I thought about this, it dawned on me that the natural love in

a terrorist's soul had become incarcerated to the reasoning and rationalizing of the terrorist's mind to the point that it seems logical and justifiable to explode a bomb, knowing innocent people will be killed.

Like everybody else, I had to deal with what civilization bequeathed. There was the possibility for intellectual pursuit, the pressure to gain material wealth, and numerous other problems that always seem to need attention -- what to have for dinner, do the kids need a ride home from after-school activities, and on and on. In this constant competition for my time and energy, each part of my life sought my commitment. There was little time for contemplation.

With the discovery of the Padgett messages came the intellectual awareness of a distinct difference between the natural love I was born with and the Divine Love God possesses. It eventually dawned on me that the relationship between the two loves was similar to comparing a glass of water and a photograph of the glass of water. If a glass of water and its photograph are near one another on a table, from a distance they may appear the same. It is only when I approach, I notice that the glass of water is three dimensional, the photograph, two. Coming closer, I can see that both the glass and its photograph are real, but when I seek to quench my thirst by drinking from the photograph, I realize it is only an image and not authentic. It doesn't

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matter how perfectly the photograph represents the glass of water, it is still just an image. When I drink from the genuine glass, I feel the touch and taste of the water and can quench my thirst – which even its perfect image cannot do for me.

So I realized that like the glass of water, the Divine Love is authentic. The natural love, like the photograph, is a finite image of the Divine Love. The natural love's empathy and hope are finite. What it can imagine and create is limited. Beyond the natural love's hope is the unimagined -- a frontier beyond which the natural love cannot venture. God's offer of His authentic Love makes it possible for humankind to venture beyond the limits the natural love imposes.

When the first parents became conscious of their presence within the grand scheme of nature, they were not encumbered by the trappings of civilization. There were none of the amenities we take for granted – electricity, cars, computers, supermarkets, social or educational organizations, communities claiming they were special, nations that claimed land as their own. Our ancestors' lives were simple and close to nature. Their natural love provided them with a limited insight into the nature of their Creator. When the Deity offered the first parents His authentic Love, there was every reason to expect and hope they would welcome His offer. Comparing their Deity's Love to their

own, they saw that His Love and theirs both had similar qualities such as hope, kindness, empathy and wisdom.

What the first parents didn't realize was the finiteness of their love. It was this condition of their love and its hope that made it impossible for them to grasp the immortality of God's Love. It restricted what they were able to visualize. In the wisdom and hope of their natural love lay the unimagined. They could not see the infinite possibilities in the Love their God was offering them. Not being able to see beyond their finite hope, to them God's Love and theirs appeared much the same. From the first parents' perspective there was nothing their God could add to their natural love so they refused His offer -- and the offer was withdrawn.

The first parents could have asked: "Why would our God offer us the same love we already possess?" As their Creator, He knew them better than they knew themselves. In seeking to answer their question, the first parents could have reasoned that God would not offer them the same love they already possessed but that He had the capacity to offer them a Love beyond their fondest dreams with entirely new dimensions, new possibilities. Then they would have had a reason to accept their God's offer.

At a later period, God re-offered His Love to humankind. Rather than just two people on earth, there were now multitudes. A large number had already crossed the bridge. In addition, humans had created numerous civilizations,

each with varied demands and expectations. With people seeking to succeed in their respective communities, would anybody be sensitive to the re-bestowal of God's Love? Would anyone care? Who would be interested?

With the re-bestowal of God's Love, His Divine Essence once again flooded the habitations of humankind, casting its shadow over all, from the most sublime heavens to the abyss of degradation. At the first bestowal, the purity of the first parents natural love enabled them to be sensitive to God's offer. But they chose to continue with just their finite natural love. At the re-bestowal, it was the purity of Jesus' soul that enabled him to sense that something new was in the offering. Because his soul wasn't infected with the need to acquire material wealth and power, he was free to follow his spiritual inclinations. Because of his curiosity and listening to his inner voice, Jesus resolved to travel the path the first parents had not. He chose to explore the unknown and stepped into an area beyond the imagination of finite hope. As he delved into what the first parents didn't imagine, he discovered and experienced the meaning of God's ultimate hope for humanity.

As he passed by the table with the glass of water and its photograph, Jesus chose to drink from the authentic glass. During his journey, Jesus discovered the difference between God's genuine infinite Love and its image, human finite natural love. In doing so, he uncovered the meaning of the

## Glass of Water

New Heart and experienced a New Birth into an unending vista of infinite possibilities. With the New Heart, the finiteness of Jesus' natural love ceased to exist. The oneness of the qualities of Jesus' love with God's Love established a special relationship, one of Father and child. Jesus was now able to refer to his God as Father. In following Jesus' teachings and example, this privilege is available to every one of us.

## **The Prayer Perfect as The Way**

About a century ago, in a series of new and corrected revelations, Jesus gave a Prayer for the Divine Love that most in the Divine Love Community are aware of. The Prayer can be regarded as a map showing what Jesus had discovered and what his experience had been along the way; a light to illuminate the path Jesus had followed; a guide for others to follow in travelling from mortality to immortality.

The Prayer begins: *“Our Father who art in heaven”*, establishing that God is located in His heaven; that His Being is not omnipresent. He is in a specific place, although His creative energies may appear throughout creation. His creative endeavors are separate from who and what He is, much like an inventor is separate from his or her inventions.

The Prayer continues with: *“Thou art all holy, loving and merciful”*, declaring that God is first and foremost a Being of love and mercy. His Love shines brightly and consistently, shedding its illumination abroad with no hint of revenge, anger or vindictiveness.

The first paragraph of The Prayer concludes with *“... and that we are Thy children and not the subservient, sinful and depraved creatures our false teacher would have us believe. That we are the greatest of Thy creation and the most*

*wonderful of all Thy handiworks and the objects of Thy great soul's love and tenderest care.*" The Prayer suggests that we, as the creations of a loving and merciful God, are basically good and the "apple of His eye". Each of us is unique – an original. We all have value, self-worth and purpose, and are important in bringing to fruition the establishment of justice. In the end, our individual uniqueness is what will bring us together to form communities in support of one another.

The second paragraph of The Prayer points out: *"That Thy will is, that we become at one with thee, and partake of Thy great love which Thou hast bestowed upon us through Thy mercy and desire that we become, in truth, Thy children, through love, and not through the sacrifice and death of any one of Thy creatures."* Because of God's mercy and desire, He has offered humankind the privilege of receiving His Love in the hope that people will accept His offer and become, in truth, His children. This was not an offering that the Deity had to make. It is an offer He freely chose to extend to the "apple of His eye." By partaking of the Divine Love and experiencing the transformation of soul from the natural to the divine, the New Birth occurs. Our souls become one in essence with the Love of the Great Soul. This however does not mean that the transformed human soul becomes God. It does mean that the quality of Love possessed by our transformed souls is such that they will

never experience death. The Divine Love will be consciously present and forgiveness will never wax and wane.

In the third paragraph, The Prayer opens with: *“We pray that Thou will open up our souls to the inflowing of Thy love, and that then may come Thy Holy Spirit to bring into our souls this, Thy love in great abundance, until our souls shall be transformed into the very essence of Thyself.”* The soul is unique and separate from the mind, spirit body and physical body. The Father's will is that our souls become as a cathedral receptive to the entry of His Love and a repository of the truth.

To continue with the paragraph *“... and that there may come to us faith – such faith as will cause us to realize that we are truly Thy children and one with Thee in very substance and not in image only.”* As the Divine Love transforms our souls, its emanating illumination assures us of its reality. The soul is no longer just an image of the Great Soul, but has, in fact, become filled with the substance of the Father's essence.

As an image of the Great Soul, our souls appear to be of the same configuration as the Great Soul – a little like a painter's self-portrait. Just as there is a radical difference when comparing the future possibilities of the painter with his or her painting, the same is true when comparing the Deity to the human soul. The painting or image is limited to the likeness of the painter when it was created and never

changing. The painter and the Deity, on the other hand, have the option of creating a plethora of original paintings with myriad subjects and purposes.

The Prayer goes on to say: “*Let us have such faith as will cause us to know that Thou art our Father, and the bestower of every good and perfect gift and that only we, ourselves, can prevent Thy love changing us from the mortal to the immortal.*” Think of the human soul as a boarding house with many apartments and a variety of lodgers. When the Divine Love is able to find a suitable place to reside within the soul, it occupies one of the apartments. As it becomes more abundant, it gradually occupies all the apartments in the boarding house and is the only resident. With the Divine Love becoming more and more dominant, we experience a closeness and at-onement with the Love of the Father. We are able to visualize the Great Soul as the fountainhead from which flows every good and perfect gift, a consciousness that becomes unquestioned, beyond doubt.

Further, it was the mercy and desire of the Great Soul that prompted the offering of this privilege to each human soul, regardless of the state of its being. God didn’t need to make this offer – it was a free choice. The power to decide whether to accept or reject the offer of the Divine Love lies with each individual.

Next, we are reminded: “*Let us never cease to realize that Thy love is waiting for each and all of us, and that when we*

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*come to Thee, in faith and earnest aspiration, Thy love will never be withholden from us.*” Whether we are sensitive to it or not, this is a reminder that the Father's Love is surrounding each human soul, regardless of its moral condition. The human soul is capable of providing the Father's Love a secure and comfortable home where it can bring to fruition its myriad dimensions. The Love is waiting in unlimited abundance to establish its existence in our souls in its full magnitude and scope.

Next, The Prayer says: *“Keep us in the shadow of Thy love every hour and moment of our lives, and help us to overcome all temptations of the flesh, and the influence of the powers of the evil ones, which so constantly surround us and endeavor to turn our thoughts away from Thee to the pleasures and allurements of this world.”* Our web of human relationships consists of people in this world, as well as influences from those that have passed into the next world. Our world has many demands to be met if we are going to survive. We need to continually make decisions regarding our priorities and actions. With so many demands on our time, it is easy to relegate spiritual development to the back burner. With a low priority, spiritual growth may cease altogether as we become ensconced in the drive for survival, the pleasures of this world, and the desire to control and influence circumstances. This paragraph of The Prayer is a reminder that the Great Soul's Love is present,

bringing its influence and guidance, if we are sensitive to its promptings.

The Prayer goes on to say: “*We thank Thee for Thy love and the privilege of receiving it, and we believe that Thou art our Father – the loving Father who smiles upon us in our weakness, and is always ready to help us and take us to Thy arms of love.*” As mentioned, God did not have to extend to us the privilege of receiving His Love. Also, He is not some omnipotent entity, totally uninvolved with the day-to-day experiences of His creatures, but rather a loving Being who is concerned for our welfare as much or more than earthly parents would be for that of their children.

The Prayer concludes with: “*We pray thus with all of the earnestness and longings of our souls, and trusting in Thy love, give Thee all of the glory, honor and love that our finite souls can give.*” What does it mean to be finite? Like a car that can only operate within certain limits, our soul, with its natural love, has limits or boundaries beyond which it cannot go. The love, honor and glory that our finite souls can give are mere images of the love, honor and glory that a soul filled with the Divine Love is capable of offering. Keeping in mind that water will rise no higher than its source, will our soul's source be the Divine Love or will it be only its image, the natural love?

And so we find ourselves circulating back to the part of The Prayer which expresses the Father's hope that we will

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choose to become, in truth, His children, through Love, and that the resulting consciousness will cause us to understand that we are one with the Father in the essence of His Love and not in image only. The Prayer is like a map, pointing to the path or way that will enable each human soul to become free from its finite condition and experience an at-onement with the Love of the Father.

## **Prayers for Divine Love**

The following is a sample prayer for the receipt of the Divine Love. It doesn't have to be prayed verbatim, but it can give ideas how to approach the Father who is always happy when His children ask for His Holy Spirit which imparts the Divine Love (see Luke 11:13).

In effect, the prayer contains the basic truths given to humankind by Celestial Spirits. One person used the following analogy: Praying with these words, thought by thought, is like appreciating the beauty of a crystal chandelier, many little crystals of divine truth that we behold in our meditations, and throughout our day.

This longer, formal prayer can be substituted by personal heartfelt prayers and, as one goes about their daily tasks and becomes aware of God during their day, brief, even non-verbal, requests expressing the soul's desire for the Divine Love can be uttered at any time or place.

\*\*\*\*\*

Our Father, who are in heaven, we recognize that You are all holy and loving and merciful, and that we are Your children, and not the subservient, sinful and depraved creatures that our false teachers would have us believe. (Matthew 6:9; 1 John 4:8, 16)

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That we are the greatest of Your creation, and the most wonderful of all Your handiworks, and the objects of Your great Soul's Love and tenderest care. (Psalm 139:13-18)

That Your will is that we become at one with You, and partake of Your great Love which You have bestowed upon us through Your mercy and desire that we become, in truth, Your children, through Love, and not through the sacrifice and death of any one of Your creatures. (John 17:11, 20-26).

We pray that You will open up our souls to the inflowing of Your Love, and that then may come Your Holy Spirit to bring into our souls this, Your Love in great abundance, until our souls shall be transformed into the very essence of Yourself; and that there may come to us faith – such faith as will cause us to realize that we are truly Your children and one with You in very substance and not in image only. (1 John 4:7, 12-13, 16-17)

Let us have such faith as will cause us to know that You are our Father, and the bestower of every good and perfect gift, and that only we, ourselves, can prevent Your Love changing us from the mortal to the immortal. (Jas 1:17-18)

Let us never cease to realize that Your Love is waiting for each and all of us, and that when we come to You, in faith and earnest aspiration, Your Love will never be withheld from us. (Luke 11:13)

## Prayers for Divine Love

Keep us in the shadow of Your Love every hour and moment of our lives, and help us to overcome all temptations of the flesh, and the influence of the powers of the evil ones, which so constantly surround us and endeavour to turn our thoughts away from You to the pleasures and allurements of this world. (Matt. 6:13; James 1:13-15)

We thank You for Your Love and the privilege of receiving it, and we believe that You are our Father — the loving Father who smiles upon us in our weakness, and is always ready to help us and take us into Your arms of Love. (Luke 15:11-32)

We pray this with all the earnestness and longings of our souls, and trusting in Your Love, give You all the glory and honour and love that our finite souls can give. Amen. (1 Timothy 1:17)

The New Testament contains several prayers for the Divine Love and related gifts:

**Ephesians 1:16-19** – I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened [*prayer for increased soul perceptions*] in order that you may know the hope to which

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he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance [*Celestial Kingdom*] in the saints, and his incomparably great power [*Divine Love that transforms our souls from divine image to divine substance and mortal to immortal*] for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, ...

**Ephesians 3:16-21** – I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, [*soul growth and soul perceptions through Divine Love*] so that Christ [*Divine Love*] may dwell in your hearts through faith. [*Divine Love in the soul*] And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. [*all Divine Love here.*] Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us [*this is awesome!*], to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

**Philippians 1:9-11** – And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, [*prayer for growth in Divine Love and soul perceptions*] so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled

with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ – to the glory and praise of God. [*righteousness through soul-transforming Divine Love.*]

**Colossians 1:3-6, 9-14** – We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you, because we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of the love you have for all the saints – the faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven [*again, Divine Love?*] and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel that has come to you. All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth. [*Divine Love is a gift of grace*] ...

**9-14** – For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. [*soul perceptions*] And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the kingdom of light. [*Celestial Kingdom reached through Divine Love*] For he has rescued

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us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, [*Celestial Kingdom of which Jesus is the Master*]in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. [*through praying for and receiving the Divine Love*].

Eva Peck

## Epilogue

As a young adult, I was excited about the idea that life didn't end with existence in this world, that a person's thoughts and feelings passed intact into the next. Studying the Padgett messages, I found their content meaningful and recognized in the Prayer a history of the discoveries Jesus experienced, presenting a God that was all holy, loving and merciful. The spirit writers presented a new worldview that the human natural love from birth was different from God's; that God's Love was Divine and mankind's was an image. I wondered what qualities made God's Love Divine, that distinguished His Love from mine.

At some point, it dawned on me that this was what the transformation of the human soul was about. The Great Soul had extended to humankind the privilege of receiving His self-sustaining Divine Essence that embodies immortality, a transforming experience that Jesus discovered and referred to as "New Birth". In communicating through James Padgett, the spirit writers encouraged him (and indirectly each of us) to try the experiment of praying for God's Love, so I did. I encourage the reader to do the same.

The "Good News" is that God has offered His Love to mankind, a substance that enables transformation of soul from the mortal to the immortal. One's desire to allow this is the only bottleneck. God is providing everything else.

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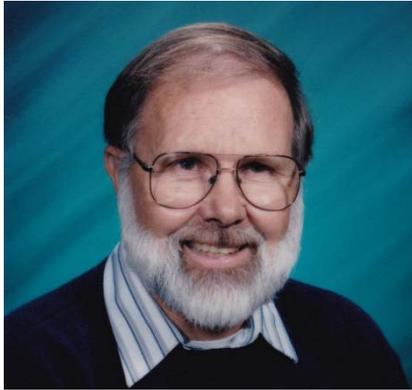
I am indebted to my wife, Francie, for reading many of my articles and providing helpful suggestions, and to my daughter, Shanti, who also provided numerous meaningful insights into clear and concise communication.

Further, Eva Peck edited my articles for the Foundation Church of Divine Truth Divine Love Newsletter and suggested they be published in book form. She did much of the work to make that possible.

I appreciate Michael Nedbal and Elizabeth Morana publishing some of my articles in their respective newsletter publications.

Last but not least, I am indebted to the mediums James Padgett and Daniel Samuels for allowing spirit writers to communicate through them, and Dr. Leslie R. Stone and Rev. John Gibson for enabling these communications to be published.

## About the Author



Ron Shoemaker was born in Santa Barbara, CA. His father had an interest in spiritualism and his mother was a committed Seventh Day Adventist. She took him and his siblings to church and to special meetings where the topic was “End Times” and “Second Coming”. His father did not participate. After a while Ron rebelled, no longer wanting to participate in church activities. The idea that God would require the sacrifice and death of one of His creatures didn’t sit well with him.

As a child, Ron sometimes went with his father to a medium, “Gramma Nichols”, and to other spiritualist speakers. During his last year in high school, his aunt gave his father a book that claimed to have messages from Jesus and Celestials, messages received by James Padgett through automatic writing. As Ron’s father read, he became

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enthralled with what the messages were attempting to communicate. He subsequently showed Ron the book.

After high school, Ron worked at a lumber mill for several years. During this time, he became very involved with the messages. He found the claim that each person is born with a soul, filled with a natural love, interesting. The messages further distinguished the soul from mind, and then went on to claim that God's soul is filled with a love unlike what mankind naturally possesses, a unique reality that is Divine.

Ron wrote to Dr. Stone, a witness to the original messages being received, and they corresponded for several years which included Ron's time in the military. When he returned to the United States, he visited Dr. Stone in Washington, DC. During one of those visits, Dr. Stone said that once again, Jesus and others were communicating and that the medium, Dr. Daniel Samuels, was receiving messages through automatic writing. Later, when Ron returned to Washington, DC. he also met Rev. John Gibson who was working with Doctor Stone. Just before one of these visits, Dr. Stone died at 90 years of age. Rev. John Gibson and Ron were the only ones attending his memorial service.

Ron met his wife Frances while they were both enrolled in the Teacher Corps Program at Oregon State University. After they were married, Ron and Frances moved to New York State where Ron had taken a teaching job. During the 1970s they met with Rev. Gibson a few times. He sent them

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several boxes of messages received by Mr. Padgett that had not been transcribed. Frances had a talent for reading automatic writing, so she transcribed and then returned the messages to Mr. Gibson.

Today, Ron and Frances live on 53 acres of a once-abandoned farm near Adams Center, NY. To date they have planted over 4,000 evergreen and deciduous trees, built a water garden and planted a number of flower beds. After retiring from teaching, Ron trained dogs in agility and obedience and built dog agility equipment. He and his wife provided an area for dog handlers and their dogs to practice needed skills individually or in groups. Their family includes a daughter, Shanti; a dog, Annie; a cat, Misty; some wild birds and a few deer.

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- *Verše pro dnešní dobu (Contemporary Verse)*, Jindrich Degen (in Czech) (2011)
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