

Wired Word  
October 2009

**Love people even in their sin, for that is the semblance of Divine Love and is the highest love on earth. Love all of God's creation, the whole and every grain of sand of it. Love every leaf, every ray of God's light. Love the animals, love the plants, love everything. If you love everything, you will perceive the divine mystery in things. Once you perceive it, you will begin to comprehend it better every day. And you will come at last to love the whole world in an all embracing love.**

-Fyodor Dostoyevsky, The Brothers Karamazov

The above quote is used by Father Richard Rohr to begin a chapter of a book entitled "Everything Belongs. This quote stayed with me most of the summer as I read it again and again about falling in love with everything that God has created. And the more I contemplated the quote, the easier it began to love things. I appreciated the grass more, I appreciated the trees more, and I appreciated the seeds that grew the fruits and vegetables that I ate during the summer. However it seemed that my mind's eye was skipping a very valuable part of the quote. My mind focused on the middle of the quote yet not the first line. Why was I skipping the very first line and finding so much further in the paragraph?

I began to think about how much difficulty the grass has caused in my life, how much anguish the leaves and sand and rain and sunlight had caused in my life and I found that the experience was rare.

Then I thought about the heartache pain people have caused me. And there, there I found the deeper reason for skipping over that line so easily.

Was simpler to love the leaves and plants because of our interaction with them? I think maybe yes. Was it simpler to interact with God through nature in a much freer manner than the intertwining of our lives with other people? Maybe.

However, love, real love comes from interaction with human beings. And that is love that accepts life whatever the weather of the relationship between people. In the Gospel according to St. John it is written "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another." (John 13:34) This is certainly not easy. Russ Hudson, a well known spiritual author said, "It is hard to love people who disappoint and hurt you. But that is all who is available."

If we look inside ourselves, we must be aware that we too have hurt and disappointed others just as others have hurt and disappointed us. The lesson from this is that each of us is broken and incomplete yet still working toward union and fullness through Christ. When we open ourselves up to the healing, we open ourselves up to others and their healing, we find that in good and bad we can love people the way we love the leaves and the ray of light because they all come from God.

I pray that we each find love in humanity, love and acceptance of ourselves and love and acceptance for others through our communion of life.