

Ethics of the New Testament.

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"Fundamentals of the World Religious Ethics"
by T. Danilevich*

Speaking of Christianity we should differentiate between two meanings of this word. The first one is the teaching of Jesus Christ. The second meaning implies the whole complex of ritual, moral and cosmological ideas characteristic of certain Christian churches and epochs.

The first one represents the supreme wisdom - all people of reason agree with this. As far as the second one is concerned, the history of Christianity saw both upsurges - of high spirituality and mass deviation from basic teachings of Jesus up to their complete distortion. The examples of the latter are the bloodshed internecine wars and manslaughter at the times of 'schisms', dissidence within churches; intolerance based on religious or national differences; 'epidemics' of mystic dread of witches, vampires and so on.

The reason of such distortions are rooted first of all in the low intellectual level 1. With the evolutionary psychogenetic principle applied to the study of a man's development [1,6], this becomes more easily understood. So some 'Christians' perceive only the idea that "Christ is our real God" and everyone who disagrees must be punished. Still others realize all ethic principles of Jesus' teaching in their lives and also strive to fulfil the major commandment of the New Testament: "...Be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect" (Mt 5:48), that is endeavor to become divinely perfect.

What is the essence of the teaching given by Jesus? What is its difference from, say, the teaching of the Old Testament? What did it add to the world's treasury of knowledge of a man's spiritual development?

The answer will start with the idea of the three lines of each man's psychogenetic evolution: intellectual, ethic and psychoenergetic ones 2. What is essential is that while Bhagavad-Gita deals with the former two, the major attention in the New Testament is given to the ethic aspect of perfection.

Considered below in brief is the spiritual concept of Jesus:

1. Strive to become divinely perfect.
2. "God is Love" (I John 4:16). This means that, first, God's attitude to people is based on love and is alike of perfect father's love to his children.

Second, if you like to bring your personal state near to the divine you have to master love. Advancement to God is impossible without love to Him, emotion of love is just that power which ensures steady union, merging of man with the object of his aspiration.

3. It is not possible to attain love to the heavenly Father at once, immediately. For achieving this efforts are necessary to develop the emotion of love in oneself: first one has to learn to love those around him here on Earth, and only when one's love is developed to the level of being able to contain all then one will become capable of true love for God.

Let us see how Jesus himself and his Apostles spoke about this:

And so I am giving a new commandment to you now - love each other just as much as I love you (John 13:34).

Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love makes up for many of your faults (I Peter 4:8).

If anyone says "I love God" but keeps on hating his brother, he is a liar; for if he does not love his brother who is right there in front of him, how can he love God whom he has never seen? (I John 4:20).

Darlings! Let us love each other for love comes from God, and those who are loving show that they are born of God and know God. But if a person is not loving it shows that he doesn't know God - for God is love (I John 4:7-8).

Darlings! Since God loved us as much as that, we surely ought to love each other too... When we love each other God lives in us and His love is perfect in us (I John 4:11-12).

God is love, and anyone who lives in love is living in God and God is living in him (I John 4:16).

Pay all your debts except the debt of love for others - never finish paying that! (Rom 13:8).

There is no fear in love, but perfect love eliminates fear... That who fears shows that his love is not perfect (1 John 4:18).

If I spoke human and angel languages but had no love, I would only be making noise... If I had the gift of prophecy and knew all secrets, if I had knowledge about everything and even if I had the gift of faith so that I could make mountains move, I would still be worth nothing at all having no love. And if I gave everything I have to poor people and my body to be burned but didn't love others, it would be of no value whatever. Love is very patient, full of mercy and free of jealousy, envy, conceit and pride, never selfish or rude. It is not irritable or touchy, never glad about injustice but shares rejoicing in truth. Love is always loyal, believing, full of hope and capable of enduring everything. Love never disappears even though prophecies will come to an end and tongues will stop speaking... (1 Cor 13:1-8).

Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who does harm to you and persecute you...(Mt 5:44).

...Let me teach you, for I am gentle and humble by heart... (Mt 11:29).

Blessed are the peacemakers... (Mt 5:9).

Come to terms with your adversary quickly... (Mt 5:25).

...Resist no evil; but whosoever shall smite you on your right cheek, turn to him the other too. And if any one will sue you at the law and take away your jacket, let him have your coat too. And whosoever shall compel you to go a mile, go with him two (Mt 5:38-41).

...If you love those who love you, what reward is there for you? (Mt 5:46). ...Love your enemies, do good to them, lend to them without any hope to get anything back (Lk 6:35). Judge not... (Mt 7:1).

...Never condemn ... (Lk 6:37).

And why behold you the speck in the eye of your brother, but see not the beam in your own eye? You're hypocrite! First get rid of the beam in your eye and then you shall see how to remove the speck from your brother's eye (Mt 7:3 - 5).

...All things whatsoever you want that people should do to you, do you even so to them... (Mt 7:12).

...Give whatever anyone asks from you, and never demand back what you gave to man who asked (Lk 6:30).

...If you forgive those who sin, your heavenly Father will forgive you; but if you refuse to forgive them, He will not forgive you (Mt 6:14 - 15).

Are there wise and reasonable people among you? You can prove it by living life of good deeds and wise humility. But if in your heart you are bitter and jealous and selfish, don't brag and don't lie about the truth: for this is not the heavenly wisdom, but earthly one, ...inspired by the devil (James 3:13 -- 15).

...Is God's will that our lives of goodness should silence those who are madly ignorant (1 Pet 2:15).

Anyone who says that he is in the light but hates his brother is still in darkness (1 John 2:9).

Love must not be pretended; turn away from evil, but approach the good. Love each other with brotherly affection; take delight in honoring each other... (Rom 12:9 - 10).

Don't curse those who prosecute you, pray that God will bless them... Never pay back evil with evil but be concerned about the good for all people...Never avenge on yourselves...Feed your enemy if he is hungry, if he is thirsty give him something to drink... Don't let evil get the upper hand but conquer evil by doing good (Rom 12:14 - 21).

Why do you judge your brother? Or look down on him?...Each of us will stand personally before God to give an account of himself. So don't judge each other, try instead to live in such a way that you will never make your brother stumble or be tempted (Rom 14:10 - 13). ...If man is overcome by some sin you who are godly should gently and humbly help him back onto the right path, remembering not to be tempted in your place (Gal 6:1).

Don't let any dirty word leave your mouth but only kind one... so that it gives blessing to listeners (Eph 4:29).

If you are invited by someone..., don't take the head seat... For everyone who tries to honor himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be honored (Lk 14:8 -- 11).

Blessed are the meek...(Mt 5:5).

Blessed are the poor in spirit 4... (Mt 5:3).

Don't store your treasures upon Earth, where moth and rust erode and where thieves break through and steal. But store your treasures in Heaven5..., for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also (Mt 6:19 - 21).

Everything may be allowed but it may not be helpful 6 (I Cor 10:23).

You can not serve both God and Mammon 7.(Mt 6:24).

...What benefit is there if you gain the whole world - and do harm to your soul? Or what can be compared with the value of one's soul? (Mt 16:26).

Beware coveting wealth, since a man's love does not depend on abundance of possessions (Lk 12:15).

...You are concerned and fussy about so many things, but really there is only one thing worth being concerned about (Lk 10:41 - 42).

I want you to be free from worry. An unmarried man takes care of the Lord's things thinking how to please Him, while a married man takes care of earthly responsibilities thinking how to please his wife. There is much difference between a married woman and a girl: a girl who is not married is anxious to please the Lord in all she does, while a married woman is concerned about earthly things and pleasing her husband (I Cor 7:32 -- 35)... Not everyone can accept this word, only those who is given this ability 8 (Mt 19:11). However if you get married it is no sin, and if a girl gets married it is no sin also (I Cor 7:28).

I want... that the...woman be noticed not for the way they do their hair or because of their jewels or fancy clothes, but for being kind and good... (I Tim 2:8 - 10).

You heard that it was said to them of old time 9: you shall not break your vows but perform unto the Lord your oaths... But I say unto you: swear not at all... But let your word be just: yes, yes; no, no¹⁰... (Mt 5:33 - 37).

Don't drink much wine for this leads to evils, instead be filled with the Holy Spirit... (Eph 5:18).

It is better not to eat meat and drink wine or do anything else that makes your brother stumble, be tempted or suffer. (Rom 14:21).

Let us be decent, never indulge in wild parties and getting drunk or in adultery and lust or in fighting and jealousy...Rom 13:13). For the Kingdom of God is not in what we eat or drink but being righteous, peaceful and joyful in the Holy Spirit (Rom 14:17).

But who refuses to share my cross¹¹ and follow Me, he is not worthy of being with Me (Mt 10:38).

...Verily I say unto you: there is no one who has ever given up anything - home, brothers, sisters, mother, father, wife, children or land - for love of Me and the Gospel ¹² and who would not get back now, in this time, among prosecutions, a hundred times over, homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, fathers, children and land; and in the world to come - the eternal life (Mk 10:29 - 30).

Serve each other with that gift that you have received... (I Pet 4:11).

Yearn for more important gifts¹³... (I Cor 12:31). Yearn for the gifts that are of the Holy Spirit... (I Cor 14:1).

Don't seek things for yourself only, but each of you seek things for the benefit of others (I Cor 10:24).

...Being humble, put others higher than yourself (Phil 2:3).

Believing in one God? You are doing right but the devils believe this too and tremble they in awe. Do not you want to know, you man of little reason, that faith resulting no in good deeds is dead...(James 2:19 - 20).

Anyone who is not saving with Me is wasting (Mt 12:30).

Don't be afraid of those who are killing bodies but unable to kill souls (Mt10:28).

There is no greater love than if someone lays down his soul ¹⁴ for his friends (John 15:13).

The good news is being introduced now that the kingdom of God will come soon, and now eager multitudes are pressing in (Lk 16:16).

God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in Spirit¹⁵and in truth ¹⁶.

I am the Gate: those who come in through Me ¹⁷ will be saved...

...Throw away...anger, fury, hate, cursing and dirty language of your mouth...(Col 3:8).

...Live within My love (John 15:9). Always be full of joy (II Thess 5:16)...Be filled with My joy, and your joy will be perfect. This is My commandment that you love each other as I love you (John 15:11 -- 13).

I demand that you love each other (John 15:17).

Afterwords.

Once after I had delivered the lecture 'On world religions' I was asked how I imagined the religion of the future. My answer was as follows: "I have no doubt that all religious trends existing now will remain close to their present for. The reason is that they quite satisfy (both objectively and subjectively) those who are just starting their religious path.

But for the people who are well advanced in their personal evolution there will exist - just like nowadays - esoteric schools, incorporating all the best created in all world's religions.

I regard as ideal such a school which is based on monotheism of Judaism, Islam, Christ and Krishna, professes ethics of Christ, Krishna, Lao-tzu and best Buddhist schools, uses practical techniques of self-perfection, worked out in Christianity, Sufism, Taoism, Hinduism, Buddhism."

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1 The depth of ethics perception directly depends on their intellectual capacities of any given person.

2 The three works considered in this book touch upon only the highest techniques of psychoenergetic development. The rest is the object of search of specific esoteric schools.

3 This is essential, so that, firstly not to be distracted by conflicts from really important things, and secondly, to do away with the 'feeling of one's own importance' (the term of Juan Matus; see [3,5]).

4 That is those to renounce possessing material goods, poor by their own conviction and own will.

5 Meant are non-material, spiritual treasures and namely, spiritual perfection

6 Implied is that each of us has the freedom of choice of his path but he has to understand that his destiny depends on whether his decisions are right or wrong.

7 Heathen god of riches

8 For those 'who are not given', that is who have to master other stages of development now, the recommendations may be quite the reverse. For example: "...A woman... will be saved through giving birth to children, if she lives in faith and love..." (I Tim 2:15). 'Giving birth to children' implies the whole complex of beneficial influences on

a person connected with reproduction [1,5].

9 By Moses

10 One must speak truth always, not only in vows

11 Cross in the given context is the symbol of renunciation in service; Jesus foretold in these words that Cross which he carried on his shoulders ascending Golgotha

12 That is when the things mentioned are insurmountable obstacles on the path of supreme service

13 That is strive to master higher capabilities through self-perfection for the benefit of other people

14 Life

15 In Holy Spirit. This is achieved through psychoenergetic aspect of development

16 That is being perfect in intellectual and ethic aspects

17 That is through my teaching



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