



REFLECTIONS

October 22, 2023

As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

John 13:34

Drawn Closer

People. Referencing a body of persons, each one unique, similar in looks, yet as different as daylight and dark. We measure each of them, a person, and a body of them, against ourselves as if each one is the same, or should be, and against our own values and experiences that shape or should shape everyone to be the same as me. But God didn't make us that way. Everyone is different from everyone else—everyone.

Doesn't it seem that the more we understand a person or a body of persons, the closer we feel drawn to them? We become united by what we have in common; and the larger the breadth of those common interests, the stronger the unity becomes.

But neither should we confuse understanding with agreement. They are not the same. To look at life through the lens of another's eyes and heart helps produce understanding. Agreement is an entirely different matter. While looking through the eyes of another may sometimes result in agreement, but the point is to gain respect for one another through understanding, not agreement.

Did God intend for us to pursue sameness with one another? Doesn't it make sense that God makes everyone different so each can use their differences for a purpose only they are perfectly made to serve? And might it be that the better we understand each person, the better we will come to understand God; and the better we come to understand God the better we will come to understand his plan for our own lives also.

Then, the better we understand God and each other, might we also be drawn closer to both God and humanity? Isn't closeness what love is about? Might that be what the scripture is telling us— "*God is love.*" Perfect in understanding, God is perfect in love. So, when Jesus said, "*As I have loved you, so you must love one another.*" might it be his encouragement to draw closer to people the way He wants us to draw closer to him. Then, one day...

With God's grace, and Jesus' sacrifice for our sins, we can be perfect in love too.

"You are the light of the world."

Richard +

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