

him, “to obtain the greatest portion of happiness for himself is the object of every rational being. Every man is nearer to himself than he can be to any other man.” Behind every act of selfless service, there is some selfish aim. The principle of self preference stands at the base of all human motivation.

The English Philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588 – 1679) also holds that human nature seeks only that which pleases him/her and is delightful to himself/herself. When ***When there is a transmission from egoism to altruism in human nature, then the ministry of evangelisation becomes authentic and brings real joy and uplifts us.***

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References

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Evangelii Nuntiandi (On Evangelization in the Modern World) Paul VI (1975)
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To be People of True Dialogue

Princy Joseph

Lucknow

Let me start with a question: *If you are a follower of Christ, what do you think is a quality you particularly like about him? Is it something he did or something about the kind of person he seems to us, through the many accounts?*

If you’re not a Christian, then I ask that you apply the same question to whoever it is that you follow/worship/honour...

Whatever your answer, it is something valuable, something you have drawn from your truest, deepest experience of life. I hope you can make it your meditation, something that inspires you.

As for me, one of the things that always strikes me as amazing and perhaps something I can’t say I fully understand is that this historically real person, whose coming was variously predicted and later recorded, whose personhood, many believe to be fully human and fully God...that this person came and comes (for those who believe) to be with us and meet us where we are, where we are in terms of our mental ability, emotional state, spiritual maturity....

Of course, life happens and it’s not always straight forward and predictable. And this ‘meeting’ between God & not-God people can look very different for each of us and at different points in our individual lives.

Another question: Which is the most important relationship

in your life? What about this relationship makes it important for you? Is it something about the person maybe? Or some value it adds to your life?

Again, while I am very curious to know your answer, whatever it is, I believe it could be very telling of not just the obvious fact but also more; I think it could be somewhat telling of you, your values and priorities, what might be deeply satisfying for you and what might be frustrating. I hope again that the truth of this may in some way enrich you.

Going back to the quality of Christ, a quality that strikes me as unique (of a person and more so of a God-person), is the ability to reach out and talk to people unlike him. A few things that lead me to think this – in his God-ness & in his sinless-ness, he is most unlike any of us. In addition, scripture and other accounts tell us that considering Jesus' social standing in those times, Jesus actively interacted with those unlike him- both those more powerful than him and many who were less.

Jesus was able to use his full person when interacting with people and situations of various shades. He interacted with truth, sometimes with questions in reply to questions, sometimes with stories, some-

times with healing, sometimes with exasperation, sometimes with a blessing.... It's hard to box Jesus' interaction type as wholly soft or hard; we can be sure that it was true to the reality of the people and situation- dove-like sometimes and serpent-like at others.

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This comes as an unusual and hope-giving quality, much needed, given that our world- the big world and our personal worlds, demand such a range of responses, and for a Christian, it can many times be challenging/confusing as to what is the appropriate Christian response to something – to wars near us and those far away, injustice in our homes to that in other homes etc.

Dialogue, the ability to keep and relate in a relationship, whether between countries or people, on fair, true and grounds of genuinely desiring mutual good and long-term interest of the relationship....is something that Jesus demonstrates throughout the accounts of his time on earth. This doesn't mean always giving in to the demands of the other side, nor does it mean trying to sugar-coat facts for personal gain or to live in denial of faults or hurts caused to us whether by family, colleague or friend. '...to speak the truth in love' seems like a neat principle given to us, for truth and dialogue based relationships. Jesus was God so perhaps he didn't need to fear losing anything when he 'spoke the truth in love...'. The same accounts tell us that he did experience agony and ultimately was crucified for the life he led and the truths he spoke.

Is this easy? Heck no. Those who have tried dialogue will know this. It often involves loss of popularity, loss of favour to dialogue like this. Like many other teachings of Jesus, this too challenges us to take the narrow but truly needed path. And like in all things, simply and truly said, his grace is available, nay needed for us to dialogue and have relationships based on truth and love.