

## GLIMPSE

### The Attraction of Opposites

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When I was a young boy I had two inch-high metal dogs standing on a square magnet. When I would move them toward each other, a mysterious force kept them apart. One was black, the other white. They were opposites that did not attract. It was for me an experience of separation between two who were alike at least in shape, size and texture.

Now in my older years, I wonder more why it is said that opposites attract most of the time. I do marriage preparation and often hear the couples talking about how they are so similar and like the same things. I fear they are more comfortable with the known and they soon will become bored more with themselves, but blame the other. This makes me worry about their futures. We love the known, because we can more easily control it. Control is useful, safe, but fatal to relationships. It would not be healthy to encounter one's self by only looking at a mirror.

Here's a thought. Among us humans, we are attracted to whom and to what are not like us so as to find out more, not only of the other, but actually more about ourselves. Is this selfish? It all depends upon what one does with the self who has found out something new and different. I have a friend who is rather serious who finds me humorous. He once asked me to teach him how to be funny. That's funny right there. His being attracted to me and my sense of humor helped him become more aware and accepting of the gift of his depth, soul, and intensity. He experienced what is different so as to be more receptive to his gifted-self.

It seems that opposites attract or repulse depending on how available we are to surprise, discovery and our openness to deepening. I have a Jesuit companion who, when having a choice, always selects French Vanilla ice cream. Even when offered a sampler-dish, he takes three scoops of his favorite. He says that when a thing is perfect, any change is an imperfection. I think he likes philosophy more than ice cream and that's humorous to me.

It does take a certain humility to be surprised and I think that is the absolute essence or center of any relationship. We do say sometimes that we surprise ourselves when we do this or that. I am not so sure of that. Others surprise us more with the flavors of ice cream they choose and are. I think that is what human perfection just might be. We allow the different, the other, the strange, and the

unusual to be more and more familiar and attractive. Then there is this Totally Other so Infinitely Opposite we call *God*!

We are so opposite of *God* and yet every, yes, every human has, is and always will be attracted to the Infinite, Who relates with us absolutely according to our degree of availability to surprise, openness and sense of humor. Yes, I mean that. Every, yes every person has, within her/himself, the attraction to the Perfect, even French Vanilla. The known we want to know more of, the love we want to experience more of, the greed we want to have completed more of: that is the essence of human relating with the Divine More. It is all depending on how deep our personal elevator can descend through the floors of frustrating-patience until one realizes that there is no bottom. This is true between persons in truly healthy relationships. It is true with *God's* relating with every, yes, every human. It is only a glimpse and it is both serious and funny.