

**TRUE,
GOOD
AND JUST**

**THE THREE MORAL
IDEALS OF HUMANITY**



**BY
Enzo Nastati**

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TRUE, GOOD AND JUST

The Three Moral Ideals of Humanity

INTRODUCTION

To speak, in our times, about what is true and good and just, is not simple. We live in a world in which, to speak generally, the truth is supplanted by convenience, goodness is subordinate to selfishness, and justice is stifled by power. This is because all that is spiritual is either refuted or, often, distorted. Of course, this is a generalization. However, it is clear that these three virtues are not sufficiently conscious in Man today, but cultivated only by those who have more sensitive values.

Without any presumption that we have completed the investigation of these issues we offer the present work, completed after a long period of study, research and spiritual consideration, hoping that it may become an instrument to help those who seek a deeper connection with the spiritual world.

To address the subject that we have set ourselves means stepping away from the purely soul world, that is the world that is dominated by the feelings we experience and is coloured by our personality, to ascend to the spiritual. A subject of this kind is difficult to follow, especially if considered in the hot season,¹ but in any case, what is assimilated into our consciousness becomes the seed for future fruit, fruit that can mature a year later, after many years, or even in the next existence. The adherent of a spiritual path must, therefore, fortify themselves with great patience and an iron belief that this will happen.

PARTS OF THE HUMAN BEING

First we can ask what lies behind the words "true, good and just" and what doors are to be opened to approach these three ideals.

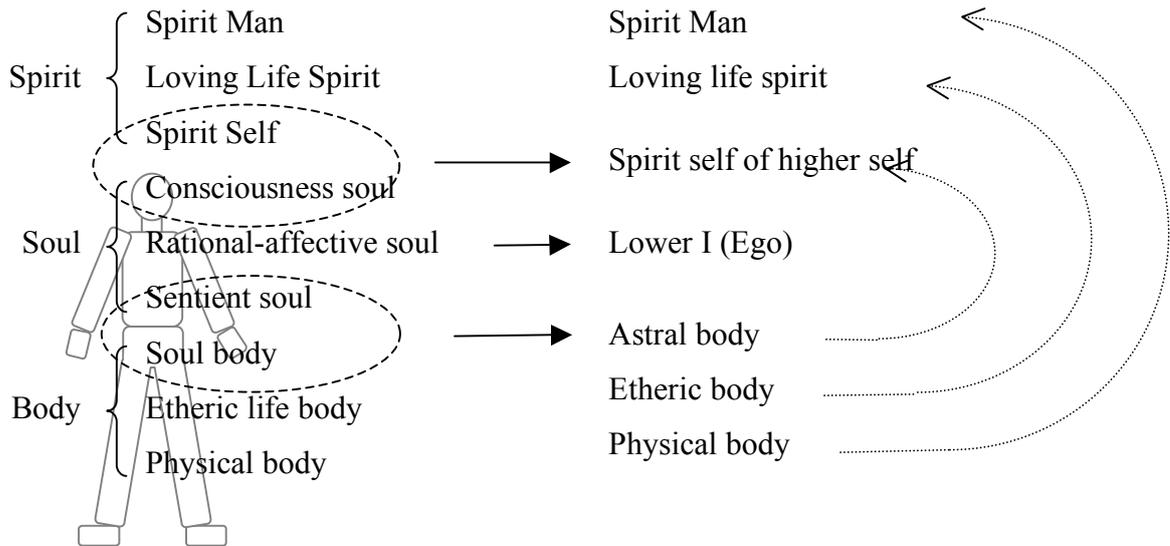
Development of the three virtues of Truth, Goodness and Justice, is the path through which we can connect with the spiritual worlds. The Spirit calls us to permeate our whole being with them, and to transform ourselves so that we can be worthy to go back to the Father's House.

Therefore, it would be useful to consider further how the parts of our being are connected and how this applies to it the three virtues.

The human being is in itself a threefold being, which does not mean merely "tripartite or divided up into three separate parts" but "consists of three parts in continuous dialogue and collaboration." These three parts are called "body" (the physical-instinctive part of us), "soul" (the creative-emotional and rational part through which we deal with the outside world) and "spirit" (the highest part of us which often is not consciousness). In turn, each of these three components is threefold, thus forming a total of nine parts, nine "bodies" that can be distinguished in humans.² We will try to simplify all this through a schema in which we can highlight how certain parts tend to form a whole thus leading to the sevenfold consideration of Man. For our work, therefore, it is necessary to investigate further the characteristics of these nine parts.

¹ The course, of which this text is a transcript, was held in Naples, Italy, in June.

² For more on this assertion see Rudolf Steiner's Theosophy³.



The *physical body* is the part that man has in common with the mineral kingdom, which is in us is solid and tangible and which, after our death, remains on earth. In practice it is the corpse. Through it are manifested our most powerful forces: the instincts (survival, reproduction, hunger, thirst, etc).

The *etheric body* is that in Man which is common with the plant kingdom, and is the body that presides over life processes and that brings life to the physical body, protecting it from the disintegration processes to which it would otherwise be subject. Upon a person's death, the etheric body dissolves into the cosmic ether and the physical body, lacking the living organization that pervaded and that "held it together", begins to decomposes.

The soul body can be seen as one with the sentient soul, and together they are called the *astral body*. The astral body is that which we have in common with the animal kingdom, the part of will in us, which is carried away by feelings of sympathy and antipathy. We might observe the attitude of a child: "I like it, I want it." The child does not ask themselves whether it is possible to have what he wants or whether it is right or possibly damaging to him, nor can you teach an animal that it is wrong to steal food left on the table. The astral body does not trouble itself with morality, but works with single purpose to get what it wants.

The rational soul is the part of us that puts thinking at the service of the needs expressed by the lower bodies. To give an example, it is the part that tells us that if we really want an object must not steal it, as our astral body would urge us without further ado, because then we'd have an injury. The rational soul leads us instead to work to be able to buy what we want. This part of us, as we can see, is still a selfish part, because it does not ask whether it is right for us and for our health to buy it (albeit honestly) when it would do us bad.

The full name of the rational *soul* is *the rational and affective*, because there is within it still profoundly linked to the sphere of feelings. The fact that most of the time this attribute is left behind shows us clearly how the sphere of feelings today are relegated to the background. The rational affective soul can be considered as the part

of us which unites our male/rational pole with our female/emotional part, namely the rational and intellectual part (which, if left to itself, would become desiccated by materialistic thoughts) and the creative and imaginative part (which, if left to itself, would drift off into a fruitless dream.) As we have said this part is still a selfish part, and it is the sphere in which the modern man normally lives - the Ego, or lower self.

The consciousness soul is the soul who wonders if the needs expressed by the sentient soul and satisfied by the rational soul will lead our being towards what is true and good and right, ideals that are inspired by the presence of the Higher Self, the first divine spark that lives in us. It is this soul that decides that in fact certain experiences or foods are not the "right" thing for us, and thus limits us in certain practices.

In a similar way that the soul body is penetrated by the sentient soul and becomes unified with it, so the consciousness soul unites with our Spirit Self, in as much as it is the sphere in which our Spirit Self is manifested. This team that is created is commonly referred to as the Higher Self or Spirit Self.

As we can see by the previous scheme the Higher Self is related to the astral body, because it is the purified astral body (the origin within us of all our wishes, desires and passions) so the astral body is the necessary condition for the birth of Higher Self within us. Our Higher Self can be born from the substance of the purified soul as the result of transformation, just as, at Christmas, the child is born from the pure heart of the Virgin.

The Higher Self is characterized by Steiner with a very apt example. He defines the Higher Self as a part of God that is individualized, that is present in everyone of us. He invites us to imagine a sponge in a basin of water - which corresponds to the Spirit - so that the sponge is full of water droplets / spirit so that they are separated from the free liquid in the basin but seamlessly part of it. Likewise, the Higher Self is individualized spirit.

To use another example, Genesis (2:21-22) tells us that in the Garden of Eden God took a "rib" from the sleeping Adam and created the woman with it. Instead of that "rib" God inserted the ego (the meaning of the greek word *Sarx* is not exactly "flesh" as it is usually translated, but the process by which, through the blood, the spiritual element is embodied in us. In other words we are dealing with the principle of the ego which is embodied in humanity), and from that moment Adam could name Eve (as "woman") because from then on the principle of the individual ego was present. The Higher Self is the "Holy Spirit" principle in us.

The Loving Life Spirit is the second spiritual part of Man and is born from the transformation of our etheric body, namely the transformation of our temperament and the habits that are entrenched there. It is the true healer in us, because it corresponds to the "Son" principle.

Spirit Man is the highest spiritual part that man can achieve today and arises from the transformation of the physical body, the body in which the deepest instincts are rooted, and which are inserted in darkness, that is in matter. To awaken Spirit Man means coming to the house of the Father, to do His will, and means having purified ones body of light from matter and this is the glorious body of Catholicism, the Phantom or imperishable body of Anthroposophy. So far only one man, Jesus, has been able to completely overcome the forces of death in the physical body and then to rise again in his glorious body. The Spirit Man is the "Father" principle in us.

We see then that man lives in a sort of equilibrium between the forces that want to chain us to the Earth, to the depths and to materiality (instincts, habits, inclinations), linked to our lower nature and to which one is usually subject in the first half of life – between these and spiritual ideals which tends upwards (the True, the Good and the Just, or that which brings hope in the resurrection as its fruit), for which one looks especially in the second half of life.

The True, the Good and the Just

Moving on let us now try to understand what it entails to develop truth, goodness and justice and which parts of us come into play in this process.

3.1) *The Truth*

Truthfulness is a virtue little pursued today. Just think of how three people recount the same occasion in three different ways, adding to what really happened from their point of view, each adding his own "colour". Or often one "modifies" the truth for personal gain, distorting it. Think of how many times we tend, if not to lie, to not tell the whole truth, or give a different nuance to a particular, for a thousand reasons. One only has to change the accent on a spoken phrase to invert the effect.

Truthfulness is a means by which we can educate our astral body, the seat of the desires and passions to which we are subject. In this part of us, in fact, the first evil entity acts, the entity of Lucifer, the tempter, the "fairest angel of all" who proudly refused to serve Man according to God's plan, because he could not accept that Man was to be given such a great gift as Freedom. Lucifer thus became an obstructive force, an opponent who acts in us through seduction, temptation, causing us to seek pleasure and divert us from our true spiritual mission. He wants to make sure that Man distances himself from the Earth because it is nothing but *Maya*, an illusion, to bring us into the spiritual world ahead of time, before we have developed the necessary power of Love and Freedom, that only squaring up to the conditions of the Earth can achieve.

When we lie, in most cases is to gain some advantage, to pursue our passions, to get something, perhaps even for a simple inflation of our pride. However, one cannot deny that we weave a vast tapestry of lies around us which requires constant input to sustain. In this context we can understand the phrase, "*The truth will make you free*" (Jn 8:32), because if we were truthful we should not worry about anything: it is self-perpetuating. You can find a second meaning in this phrase, as "liberi" [the free], in Latin, are the "children". Truth is, therefore, the first tool with which to gain freedom, and is also the means by which, at the same time, one can go back to being children of the Father.

Rudolf Steiner, speaking of meeting the entity of Christ, tells us that in His presence one cannot lie. With a lie we feel that something comes within us which is called the '*abomination of desolation*' (Matthew 24:15) in the Gospels, and when our consciousness is sufficiently elevated to allow us to encounter Christ, a lie makes us feel a pain feel like a tearing of the heart, we feel we are dying, and for three days we feel abandoned by the spirit.

It could be said to be possible to be always sincere with others, but the more subtle and difficult to avoid lie is the one to ourselves. We tend to justify what we do and believe it to be right and without error, and often our pride blinds us to manifest errors against people with whom we live. Being able to see oneself objectively is undoubtedly a very difficult struggle against our ego.

To not lie to oneself involves always being aware of one's limitations, and always being aware of one's degree of moral evolution: the "who I am" and "whence do I come".

Translated into a word, this means to live in the present, in the here and now where one can meet the Christ.

The present is characterized spatially and temporally, it is "here" and "now". *Space*, in this instance, is not meant as an outer space: it is the space of meditation and prayer, and if that space is achieved in the present instant (ie one's mind is not turned to the past nor the future but fully aware of the instant being lived) this is being present for the Meeting. In the course of the year, for the Being of the Earth, the "here and now" comes at a definite time: at Easter.

Always telling the truth enables us to grow and be strengthened by faith, the virtue which belongs to the astral body, which is nourished and supported by purification. And the truth will set us free.

3.2) Goodness

Development of the virtue of goodness leads to victory over the second force of evil, the entity of Ahriman, who is known in our culture known as Satan or Mephistopheles. This entity is the force that inspires our hatred and materialism, and is the spiritual entity that is active in our etheric body. The strength with which we can oppose and overcome hatred is, of course, the power of love. The Italian word love [*amore*] hides in itself a profound meaning which normally we do not stop to consider: it is composed of "a" and "more". In Latin, *more* or *mores* are the laws, the conventions and customs through which we become a-moral (which is not to say immoral) so love means to be out of the scope of the law. With love one no longer acts as one must or to avoid punishment, but in full freedom, having chosen what is true and good and just. After transcending earthly morality and reaching Love one enters the world of the sacred. Only in the sacred realms can we really overcome the barriers between individuals created by culture and different religions, because when something is "sacred" it is instinctively recognized and respected as such in any context. Every culture has a different sense of morality: what is fine for one a culture may be considered offensive or despicable by another, or in a different context. If we all come to Love - understood as Love with a capital "A", not the sensual-sexual love but the spiritual Love between two egos who meet and unite - laws are no longer needed, since each of us tend to do the same thing for others, namely the will of the Father.

So here's what we mean by goodness, not the do-gooders, not those who find justification for the bad actions of others, nor forgiveness, but those who are active for the Good: the collaborators for spiritual evolution of the kingdoms of Nature.

3.3) Justice

Justice is the virtue related to the forces of the Father: He who gave the law is now active through Justice. He who judges is the Father, not the Son. The Son came down to bring the truth and grace (Jn 1:17). The law to which every man must answer is the law of karma. Every action has a consequence, and if in this existence we do not learn, then the remedial action will reoccur in a future existence until we have learned to be just, to be fair. From existence to existence we will continue to face the trials that we ourselves have "caused", until the purification of our being and the complete victory over the darkness in us. This implies a complete purification is a triumph over the forces of evil in us, even the most powerful: the most powerful forces of evil in us

Mark Moodie Publications

Telephone - UK: 0207 1934697 Email: mark@moodie.biz

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