

Name: Vania Zeeshan

Age: 14 Years (2018)

Nationality: Pakistan

Religion: Islam

Love is a term which means affection, care, kindness, compassion and sacrifice. But greater than all worldly and human love is the love of and for God. Divine love. Love is what brings us closer to people, things, nature and places - all of God's creations – and bringing us close to God himself through them.

Kindness itself is a form of God. Be kind to God's people and you will find God in them. When a person finds God in his heart and fills every part of his body with Divine love, that's when they can understand what Divine love is. That's when a person realizes that God lives in hearts of all his creatures and can be found when you open your heart towards strangers and embrace them with kindness and love. When you can feel the pain of others, be happy in their happiness and help them when they need help – this is when you forget yourself and find God. No matter what religion you belong to, if you are capable of true love you will surely find God. “You can study God through everything and everyone in the universe because god is not confined in a mosque, synagogue or church. But if you are still in need of knowing where exactly His abode is, there is only one place to look for Him: in the heart of a true lover” (40 *Rules of Love*)

An example of a person who found Divine love is Dr. Ruth Pfau. She was travelling to Paris, but somehow she got stuck in Karachi. When she came across people suffering from a disease called leprosy, she was so overwhelmed and could not leave Karachi. She said these

people needed every bit of help they could get and that is why she stayed. She left her family, country, her way of living and devoted the remaining fifty years of her life working for these people. She took care of these patients and did their treatment for free. This is Divine love. She valued humanity more than her life and spent her years working to ease people's sufferings. She even left her fiancé, a man she loved, just for these people who could not even give her anything in return. She believed that when you encounter anyone in pain and can help them in any way; you should help them without excuses. She has said, "When you receive such a calling, you cannot turn it down, for it is not you who has made the choice..... God has chosen you for Himself."

Her life taught me that when you help people, you don't divide them as Muslims and non-Muslims, but help them as humans. She left her people and helped those of a totally different religion and race. We all may not be able to change the world on our own but even if we help one person whole heartedly we can change the world for them. She has written, "Not all can prevent a war; but most of us can help ease sufferings- of the body and soul"

An incident that changed my opinion about people of different religion and culture is the episode of the people of Thar. Our cook lives in Thar. One day he asked us if we could build a well in his village so that people over there could get water. My mother collected money from people living abroad, relatives and friends. My father built up a well in the village with that money. When our cook returned from his village, he showed us videos of the people. Those people were so thankful for this water; they made us feel as if we gave them life. A Hindu woman travelled two kilometers to the well so that her twenty to thirty goats could drink free water. When my mother saw their reaction she was so touched that she started a project for making wells for people across Thar to give them free water. These people were not of our

religion and culture but still helping them was the right thing to do. This was a life changing experience for me and I learned that all you have to do to find Divine love is to put yourself in other people's shoes, feel their pain and help them. If you want God to smile at you make his people smile.