



Many times we realize that when we want to reach an agreement on one issue or another, we invest a great deal of time clarifying what are the meanings of the terms we wish to discuss.

When speaking of Love we are not exempted from this process; and as soon as the debate starts, words like feelings, affection, love, etc. are placed on the board, and it is hard to agree on what each of them mean.

The truth is that all of these terms are to be used to talk about love, but it is not useless to give some of them a meaning that will let us explain ourselves. To get it right and to match the definitions chosen by the reader is complicated, but in any case, each one of us will be able to interchange them as wished, without losing the ultimate meaning of what we want to express.

When using the word “feelings” we want to indicate the processes of two persons falling in love. These are not possible to “regulate” and they are beyond our control. They make reference to an almost instinctive affection and have much to do with passion.

When we speak of affection, we also deal with feelings, but these are more appeased and molded by the way of experience.

If we use the term “being fond of,” we are dealing with the will. The subject that is fond of someone else exercises his/her will towards that one person to whom the feelings are directed, overlapping these sentiments to the permanence of his/her act.

In short, when someone “Loves,” with a capital L, almost always makes decisions motivated at first by uncontrollable feelings. However, later on, the validity of these decisions is not subject to the duration of the emotional passions. Then, to love someone involves a commitment that one voluntarily assumes, because of the value of the other person and not because of the circumstances in which the relationship develops.

The decisions and commitments assumed speak of faithfulness, effort, seeking the welfare of the other; of improving oneself so as to offer our best; overcoming difficulties and failures; and sharing successes and joys.

Anyone who shares these views will coincide in that the union of a couple goes far beyond the infatuation that prompts them. The value of this union is much higher than the instinctive encounter of two human beings, and demands a responsible dedication that one must understand as definitive.

It is very true that, today, talking about definitive relationships is interpreted as an old and outdone attitude. But it is also true that not too many are willing to engage in a relationship without having in front a prospect of stability that may last over time. In short, when someone decides to commit to another person, he/she expects that the mutual commitment not be limited by possible constraints, even knowing that the difficulties of living together and sharing a common project will come sooner or later.

The giving of oneself in love from its very origin is first based on an infatuation where everything is "rose-colored," and later, when it starts to involve the making of more mature decisions, it is incompatible with selfishness. In personal relationships, seeking self-indulgence and wellness is a sign that warns us that love begins to decrease. It is important to react on time and make use of the "infatuation stage" to recall all those things that made us decide to share our lives and commit to the other. We must return to exercise our will without losing sight that the best way is by directing it towards the good and, especially, towards the good of the other.

It is logical to consider that, on paper, the "magic formulas" are very easy to follow and they seem to lose their meaning and value. We all know that not few problems arise in many relationships, and many are of irrefutable importance. Love is really not blind and those who practice it should be very clear of what is expected of them and the other. In these circumstances, perhaps the most important thing is not to let oneself be drawn by resentment. We have to remember our personal commitment and have the serenity that comes from being aware that our behavior is directed towards the Good, with a capital G, for oneself and the other. This attitude, even if it does not look like, brings up us once again the "magic formula" of Love, a formula which has Good and Truth as essential ingredients.

When love is an exercise of the will, it is not easy, but worth it.