

# THE POWER OF Sincerity *with* Love

BY JERRY LAZARUS

**The intent of the heart is the true barometer of sincerity.**



**S**INCERITY SEEMS SO basic an idea. Yet, combined with love, it's the very foundation of all the virtues. The readings emphasized sincerity in various ways, showing that a concept so simple can be so powerful.

In 1938, a 53-year-old woman asked Cayce: "In the suggestion for my life reading, did using the date 1887 as my birth date instead of 1884 make any difference in the information" that was given? Cayce told her that her intention was the premise upon which the information was given. Her "sincerity of purpose" trumped any mistakes. In other words, the mix-up in dates was simply a mistake on her part and not a deliberate act to deceive. Consequently, she received the correct information. In addition, in her life reading, Cayce told her: "*In the application of self, know that sincerity must be the keynote.*" (1500-3, -4)

Thus, it is sincerity on both sides that set the stage for the most helpful, accurate readings. A seeker had to be sincere in seeking, and Cayce sincere in wanting to help.

What is sincerity? When I posed this question to my friends, one word came up consistently: truthfulness. Sincerity implies honesty and earnestness. Sincerity is not misleading, manipulative, shrewd, superficial, or selfish. It doesn't exaggerate, try to impress others, or seek fame. It is a state of being authentic.

A study of the readings shows that sincerity doesn't take a back seat to kindness, forgiveness, patience, or any other virtue. It is, in many ways, front and center. Then why don't we find sincerity among the list of "the fruits of the Spirit?" (Galatians 5:21-23) This is because sincerity must precede them. If we're practicing patience, we ought to do it sincerely—and that goes for all virtues. Every virtue built on sincerity will stand; all others will be hewn down.

Sincere motives are the only ones that count. An act doesn't prove anything, only the motive behind it. Consider what Cayce said: "*One may be*



just as deceiving with a smile—yes, how was the betrayal—by a severe look or with a kiss?” (4038-1) He told a musician who asked how he could “develop his magnetism with the public,” to be sincere and honest with them. “However, if a smile or an expression is made to create an effect, it is as the man who prayed, ‘Father, I thank thee that I am not as the publican.’” (2897-2) (Luke 18:9-14)

In a reading for a 15-day-old girl, Cayce advised her parents that in her upbringing, it’s important to emphasize that in Jesus is “the life and the light, and that His whole command is sincerity and love.” (2015-3) Why was sincerity paired with love? Why not forgiveness and love, or some other virtue? Love may be insincere or even deceitful. Thus, on different occasions, the readings recalled the scriptural passage: “Let love be without dissimulation.” (Romans 12:9) Hence, love must be without deceit, pretense, or hypocrisy. Sincerity and love go together like the mortise and tenon. Love must be grounded in sincerity, and sincerity in love. When love is grounded in sincerity, love manifests out of the soul purely because it wants to, not because it has to. Sincerity makes love flow out of our hearts as naturally as a spring gushes out of the earth.

### Sincerity vs. Zealousness

In a life reading for a 24-year-old man, Cayce said he could become “one of the leading bankers of the nation,” and added: “Sincerity is the keynote of every individual soul. Who is sincere? One in a million! Ye can be one of those ones, will ye? Try it!” (5249-1) Implied in the statement, “Ye could be one of those,” is that he isn’t, yet. But he could be, if he chooses to. And his success hinged on being sincere.

Cayce isn’t talking about just sincerity, but sincerity that’s powered by love in its truest sense.

When people fought on both sides of the Crusades, weren’t many of them sincere? Did they not kill in God’s name, thinking they were being sincere to their faith? Yet Jesus did not bring destructiveness to anyone, but chastened without causing harm. The readings attest to that:

“For He, though with the ability to destroy, thought not of such but rather gave Himself...” (357-14) “All powerful—yet

never using that power, save to help, to assist, to give aid, to give succor to someone...” (900-147)

Rather, he healed all. Peter was also sincere. So sincere was he, that he cut off the ear of one of the men who came to arrest Jesus. Jesus, however, immediately healed the man and told Peter to put his sword away, lest the same fate come upon him. Here, Peter’s sincerity is not in question, yet his action was in error. Peter’s sincerity had not been fully tempered in Christ love.

We also have the examples of Moses and Paul, two important biblical personages. From the beginning, both were sincere to their mission, so a reading tells us. Then, why did things go awry early in their mission? Like Peter, Moses and Paul were overcome by zealotry. When Moses became aware of his calling, he put it into action. “Yet materially he chose an error, a sin...” Here Cayce is referring to the young Moses who acted with zeal to help his fellow Jew being beaten by an Egyptian. Moses killed the Egyptian and hid his body in the sand. (Exodus 2:11-15; Acts 7:23-29) Hence, the reading tells us that “a full period was required” for Moses to undo this act. “Then he was called.” (262-126)

Likewise, Paul sincerely believed that the Christians were corrupting his Jewish religion, and sought to correct it by persecuting them “to their death.” Moses and Paul, though sincere, chose a path of destruction. They acted according to their own will and might, and things went wrong. As Merrill Unger, PhD, famous theologian, wrote, “He [Moses] needed divine preparation, as is shown by his killing of an Egyptian taskmaster in anger.” Moses fled to Midian after the killing, and spent time in solitude with God. Paul, after the conversion experience, left for Damascus, with trips to Arabia—perhaps spending time in prayer and meditation. (Galatians 1:17). By turning within and seeking guidance, they grounded their sincerity in love.

As with Moses, Cayce tells us, the saving grace for Paul was his sincerity. Because they were sincere and because they weren’t afraid to act, they were “called and directed.” (262-126) Imbued with love, their sincerity found the correct expression.



### Willingness to change

Are all sincere people guided and directed? Not necessarily. There are three qualifying factors: first, there must be a willingness to be led and guided by the spiritual forces. Second, there mustn’t be any fear to act when directed from within. Third, there must be a turning from the ways of error.

Sincerity doesn’t mean that we are right, but that we acted from a place of sincerity, truly believing that we are right—with a willingness to change if we realize that we are wrong. After his conversion experience, Paul admitted openly that he was misguided. He went so far as to say that he was the chief among sinners, adding, “I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.” This shows repentance and humility. (1 Timothy 1:13)

When the rooster crowed, Peter realized that he was insincere in his denial of Jesus—and wept bitterly. It’s not holding a wrong idea or giving in to fear for a moment that’s ultimately destructive, but our unwillingness to change.

Jesus readily forgave sins, indicating that God’s mercy absolved sins for those willing to sincerely change their ways—as in the examples of Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector, and the woman taken in adultery. Jesus was unfazed by sins, no matter how grave, but he fervently rebuked those who were insincere. Not that he condoned sinning, but that his abounding mercy healed the sincere and repentant.

However, his charge against those who didn’t accept his teachings is that they didn’t “relent and believe”—even when mighty works were done in their



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presence. A change of heart must come upon hearing the *word* because something feels compelling and true. A sincere feeling of ‘that’s the right thing’ must tug us from our very core. A heart compelled to move sincerely will sustain throughout.

Cayce told a 15-year-old student that if he held on to the attitude of sincerity, he would be strong to meet the adversities of life. During times of trouble and turmoil, his strength of purpose and sincerity will be “*as the greater boons of mercy before the Throne of grace.*” (870-1)

### Intent: the barometer of sincerity

One may be outwardly sincere, but inwardly insincere. Jesus related this point through a parable. A man who had two sons, said to the first, “Son, go, work today in my vineyard.” He answered, “I will not,” but later regretted and went. The second son answered, “I go, sir,” but he didn’t. The first son was sincere when he said he will not, and the second insincere when he said he will. (Matthew 21:28-32) The first son’s change of heart—to do “the will of his father”—ought to be imputed to him for his sincerity.

A man asked Cayce if he should enlist in the army or wait to be drafted. Advising him to determine the answer within himself, Cayce added: “Be sincere, and just as sincere with self and with country as ye desire that God be sincere with thee.” Cayce pointed out that if he’s enlisting to make a show or to evade something, then it would be wrong. When he pressed further, Cayce paraphrased a biblical passage that went to the heart of sincerity: “Be not deceived—God is not mocked, and with whatsoever purpose and intent an individual moves or acts toward self or others, with that same measure is it meted to thee again.” (412-15) (Galatians 6:7) The intent of the heart is the true barometer of sincerity.

### Sincerity vs. Self-Exaltation

The Indian religious text, the *Mahabharata*, outlines three qualities (*trigunas*) in humans: *Sattva*, *Rajas*, and *Tamas* (purity, impurity, and darkness). People may have shades of two or more qualities. *The Bhagavad Gita* provides an excellent illustration of these *gunas*:

“A gift is pure when it is given from the heart to the right person at the right time and at the right place, and when we expect nothing in return. But when it is given expecting something in return, or for the sake of future reward or when it is given unwillingly, the gift is of *Rajas*, impure. And a gift given to the wrong person, at the wrong time and the wrong place, or a gift which comes not from the heart, and is given with proud contempt, is a gift of darkness.” (Gita, 17:20-22)

I believe that *Sattva* is the type of sincerity, founded in love, that Cayce espoused and Jesus lived. It’s a sincerity that’s based on “love thy neighbor as thyself”—a truth so well illustrated in the parable of the good Samaritan. His care and love for a stranger, beaten and lying half dead on the road, was a *Sattvic* (pure) act. (Luke 10:30-37)

Compare this with the motives and actions of the scribes and the Pharisees that Jesus observed. They do their works to be seen by others; love the best places at feasts and the best seats in the synagogue; like greetings in the marketplaces and being called, ‘Rabbi,’ ‘Rabbi’; and make long prayers for a pretense (Matt. 23:5-14) These are insincere acts for self-exaltation—wanting to be treated like a V.I.P. or “tooting your own horn.” Many are seeking to make a name for themselves, but God is seeking the sincere heart.

Edgar Cayce once had a dream in which he “seemed to be trying to fix the yard and found it all undermined with refuse and seeping water.” An interpretation taken on it counseled him not to give in to the desires of others, and try to interest or influence the affluent or those in high places. He was told to “*be sure that each and every attempt in any direction is grounded, and founded, in the Christ Jesus...*” And added: “*Remember the likening that was made by Him, ‘Be not as the scribes and Pharisees, who make long prayer, who love to be seen in public places, who love*


*to be well-spoken of. They are as whitened sepulchers, beautiful to look upon but are full of deadmen’s bones!’*” (294-127)

We need to sincerely question our motives and interests at a deep level, and ask ourselves: “*Have ye asked thyself lately ‘How sincere am I?’ Ye may answer only in Him.*” (3051-2)

**Our practice of sincerity** and love must be consistent—not sincere one day and insincere the next, not sincere to one person and insincere to another. When Cayce was asked what should be the highest ideal in all dealings, he answered: “*Sincerity and consistency.*” (452-7) The readings themselves are a great example of sincerity and love—two forces that powered the readings consistently, regardless of the topic.

Sincerity is the first step in any endeavor. It builds character. Character without sincerity is no character at all. Cayce told a salesman that when there’s insincerity, “*the darkness of trouble and discord arises from those seeds of uncertainty that bring distressing experiences...*” And whenever he has been sincere, “*wonderful experiences, wonderful awakenings*” have come to him. Cayce told him that if he kept in the way of sincerity, “*in that, if thou art true to thine self, the stars in their course will fight for thee.*” (257-162)

Sincerity is so powerful a virtue that, in one reading Cayce said: If this is “*applied in one’s daily life may lead to an opening of the veil which enters into the holy of holies—even as that veil which was rent when His Spirit cried unto His God.*” (2067-1)

Sincerity and love are as the warp and woof of the fabric of the soul. Clothed in it, we enter into the presence of God. 

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