

EXPERIENCING DIVINE WISDOM IN ORDINARY LIVING

by Edward Matchett



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The asking of questions can be very important; and spontaneous answers to questions can sometimes be especially revealing. I once asked the question "What is the experiencing of meaning?" and received the following answers in quick succession:

"Experiencing meaning is a doing thing ... it is an active rather than a passive thing ... a getting off one's `butt' thing ... a contributing of

something ... a giving ... a giving and doing with love, as distinct from an habitual and automatic soulless doing - without either giving or love ... it is being creative ... a giving of oneself, maybe a giving of oneself to the uttermost ... a taking of real initiatives ... the determined extending of frontiers ... the experiencing of meaning doesn't occur whilst just amassing information, or just trotting out the same old stuff over and over again ... it is going forward in a lot of uncertainty ... having a go ... defying the elements ... taking lots of risks ... doing something real - and not being prepared to compromise, or to lower one's own standards ... it is a mastery of timing, accepting that one may make oneself appear a fool, and above all the acceptance of the real possibility that one might fail ... it is accepting the challenge, and pressing forward against impossible odds ... if one does fail, it is picking oneself up and starting all over again ... it is suddenly becoming more capable and breaking through to a new level of maturity - which is what happens after one has admitted to oneself that one has failed ... or doesn't know."

As I considered these answers, I was thrown, for a while, by the fact the none of them contained any mention of accessing Divine wisdom ...and because there was seemingly nothing here to support my `3M' formulation of "appropriate form always requiring and demanding the making of media plus matter meaningful in time δt ". All of these spontaneous answers undoubtedly had the ring of truth, so why was Divine wisdom not mentioned? ... Could it be that all of my writings and teachings on Sophiagenics were in error? I really was thrown for a while - for a few days, not merely a few moments. Then, slowly, everything became clear.

The Significance of 'time δt '

All of the spontaneous answers had themselves been given extremely rapidly. And nearly all of them, by implication at least, spoke of the experiencing of meaning happening when a person has put himself - or herself - in a position where one's own need of help is obviously large and very real. I remembered the comment: "man's extremity is God's opportunity", and now saw my in time δt in quite a new light. Since the formulation of the '3M' Sophiagenic discipline in 1968, I had recognised that meaning could occur and be experienced only in a period of time dictated by the speed of light ... virtually instantaneously. But what I had failed to notice through many years of developing, teaching and practicing Sophiagenics was that in `ordinary living' there is quite often

the occurrence of the optimal time and other conditions that are called for in my '3M' formulation. I saw clearly now - what ought to have been obvious to me all along - that the adage "God helps those that help themselves" must be true, provided that the 'helping themselves' is in the spirit of the answers which we have been considering. (Not so, necessarily, if one is robbing a bank, coshing old ladies to steal their handbags etc.) But wasn't the experience also suggesting to me that the Sophiagenic discipline is - and always has been - the working method of every true professional, not exclusively the working method of a creative genius?

The fact that Divine wisdom can be, and often is, accessed instantaneously in ordinary living - without any formal learning of the Sophiagenic discipline - provides us with a good starting point for beginning to increase the number of these occurrences ... and for a form of Sophiagenic instruction and learning which may have more general appeal than the mode that we have devised up to this time. It may not ever be necessary for those who wish to practice the discipline of Sophiagenics to know that the Holy Spirit has a large part in it. It may not be necessary to know that the misuse of human free will is what is normally the barrier to receiving significant inputs of Divine wisdom, love and empowerment. For some persons -maybe the majority in this post Christian age - it may be more acceptable and appropriate to begin to teach, and learn, Sophiagenics from the basis of what is revealed by a careful study of those answers to my question: "What is the experiencing of meaning?" And do please note in this context, the special significance of my opening remark: " ... and spontaneous answers to questions can sometimes be especially revealing". (Please look again at my 'Q.U.I.C.K.' discipline, which requires understanding to gel in only a moment).

If you have been following me closely, you cannot have failed to notice that spontaneous answers fit the prescription of happening in time δt . So, if we can take the requisite steps to ensure that questions need to be answered immediately, perhaps we shall begin to make a lot of progress. But first we must increase our need to obtain answers to questions in virtually zero time. A very fast-moving professionalism is suggested

The Experience of Meaning

In any moment when there is an experience of meaning, Divine wisdom is actually being accessed, whether one realises this or not, and whether or not there is any formal commitment to access it in the role of a 'believer'. When meaning is consistently present, life is always good. A person is then far more productive ... and these productions are themselves good, of high quality and worth etc. And we, each one of us, do actually place a value on each moment in terms of whether meaning exists, or does not exist in our current experiencing. This reckoning might well be an unconscious one, but it is happening to everyone all of the time. It is fundamental to our human nature, and remains so even when other preoccupations usurp centre stage. So, experientially, we have everything to gain in getting answers to questions at speed. Being more sensitive to the 'feel' of meaning should help to make this possible.

What was it that the answers to my question were saying and implying that is now so important for our task? To recap: they boil down to being true to oneself and to others, recognising real needs and doing one's utmost to try to address them and satisfy them ... being quite sincere and determined about this ... actually getting on with it despite the cost and inconvenience to oneself ... going on, whatever the difficulties and opposition ... trying valiantly to think and act quickly, decisively, responsibly and justly all of the time ... having to fail, and fail often if need be ... not pretending it is otherwise whenever one does fail; rather actually admitting it, yet still battling for the means of turning failure into success ... asking determined questions about things that seem necessary but impossible ... treating answers that arrive spontaneously as worthy of genuine consideration, and maybe immediate implementation. In other words exchanging a rather sleepy

lifestyle for a life of very fast movement, though one in which shouldering personal responsibility and doing one's very best is the accepted credo, and the persistent action, of all one's work and life.

In this spirit, can you seriously contemplate that a loving God would fail to lend a helping hand? Do you think He would stand by and say "unless you make a formal commitment of your life to me and my purposes I shall not lift a finger to help you." Not so. Anyway, such things are in line with His purposes, or even if sometimes they are not, I feel sure that He must often be prepared to stretch a point. Note that there is no formal declaration that one has sinned and is a sinner. None of the Church's doctrines are being voiced or addressed. It is simply a spirit of urgent responsible industry that the answers we have been considering have outlined: need of God, His forgiveness and strengthening `comes without saying' ... presumably because a person operates at that level and intensity at which these facts and needs, and God's own loving responses, must necessarily declare themselves in the actual moment ... rather than in some easy-going theological academia.

A Critical Threshold

Could a dearth of true application and intensity in your work and living be what generally robs you of the experience of making media plus matter meaningful in time δt ? Think it through carefully. What do you think of a man or woman who gives all that there is to give to do a real job of work; does the very best that one is capable of doing, takes all the initiatives that one is capable of taking; speaks out instead of remaining silent when there is a pressing need for someone to speak out; exercises the prerogative of choosing to be as fully human, intelligent and loving as it seems humanly possible for a person to be, rather than pretending to be someone else, or somewhere else, because of a fear of what other folk might say or do? Is there a critical threshold, of application and urgency at which meanings cannot help but gel ... if there is, how often do you reach this threshold?

Invited or not, Divine wisdom comes often to any person when he, or she, decides to become and remain very real; a state which cannot exist in idleness or half-heartedness. Divine wisdom and the meaning which it produces cannot coexist with doing nothing when action is called for, with being silent when there is the need for a voice to speak out ... with acting or speaking contrary to what one knows to be the truth ... with thinking and acting as though tomorrow will be soon enough ... or with firing on only one or two cylinders instead of `giving it everything that you've got'. They cannot occur with merely toeing the party line (even if you attend church every Sunday), with slavishly following policies that you know in your heart are wrong. They cannot emerge for any of us whilst we are knowingly pursuing falsehoods and trivia ... stealing other people's goods, reputations, livelihoods, loved ones or time. They can never co-exist with the compromising of our deepest being. But Divine wisdom and meaning can and do co-exist in situations and circumstances which the answers to my question have revealed. So, if this matter is judged important, do consider these answers very deeply and draw your own conclusions, making whatever changes you deem necessary to the conduct of your own life.