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Beginning and End

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Beginning and End

We are quite conscious of the passing of time, and very much aware of the beginning and end of much that we do, as well as for almost everything that takes place in the observable universe. We each have a birthday – a beginning - and are subject, like all the rest of creation, to the laws of entropy. Yet, as persons, we do not end with death. Entropy and death have no effect on love. Our every least decision to love is the beginning of something that expands outward without end, even though our bodies, through which we give and receive love, do come to an end.

Most of our time is occupied with completing one project and moving on to the next, especially if we believe implicitly that we are supposed to begin and complete as many activities as we possibly can. But we are not fulfilled by the mere completion of tasks, however many we begin and end. We are not machines that turn out products as efficiently as possible. Rather, with everything we do, whether unique or repetitive, we have the capacity to include that aspect of ourselves that begins and does not end: the love and care with which we act; the honesty and integrity that we bring to the small tasks of every-day life.

Though we begin and end each communication with God or any other person, we also initiate a change in ourselves that transcends time. The change is for the better when we speak or act in accord with the inspirations to love that come to us from the same Creator who gives existence to all that is, and the change is for the worse when we choose the opposite. Reverberations from the attitudes that underlie our words and deeds continue on in us and in those with whom we communicate long after the physical events have ended. We can repent of unloving acts, but we cannot take back an angry phone call, letter, or electronic message. Positively, neither do we control the benefits that continue moving about among us after we speak and act from the truth that is in our hearts. Every least kind word or honest look of concern has ongoing positive effects.

All that we do begins and ends with some physical aspects, such as conscious thought, speech, movement of our bodies, and use of material objects. But even though a dinner shared with friends or family has a beginning and an end, there is a significant difference between the consumption of food and the sharing that takes place at the table. We might say that a large meal stays with us, but the physical process ceases at some point in time. However, a meal that touches our hearts, such as an awards banquet, family reunion, or some other special event, remains with us both in memory and in effects that can best be described as spiritual, and unending.

What, in us, has a beginning, but no end? "Love does not come to an end."
(1 Cor. 13:8)