

It seems clear to me that to love for Niebuhr means to feel "pity and sympathy" for others or to accept "responsibility for the weal and woe of others" (*Christianity and Power Politics*: 42). Thus he can say that a love "which refuses to assume its fair share of responsibility for the relative justice and relative peace which is possible in the world but possible only in relative terms" is "a loveless love" ("Religion and Action": 13).

This seems to me closely congruent with the view I express by saying, "As we ordinarily use the term 'love,' to love another person is to do something that always has two closely related aspects. First of all, it is to accept the other person, in the sense of taking him or her into account, allowing him or her to make a difference by partly determining one's own actual being. Then, secondly, it is to act toward the other person, in whatever one says or does, on the basis of such acceptance. Accordingly, as different as God's love would certainly have to be from our own, or any other merely creaturely love, it could nevertheless be conceived to be like them in having these same essential aspects: first, the acceptance of others—in God's case, the acceptance of *all* others—and then, secondly, action directed toward others—*all* others—on the basis of such acceptance" (*Faith and Freedom*²: 69 f.; cf. also *Doing Theology Today*: 112: "[T]o be loyal to another necessarily involves—if, indeed, it is not simply another word for—loving the other, in the sense of so accepting the other as to take account of the other's interests and then acting toward the other on the basis of such acceptance.").

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