

Dialectic on Plato's "Symposium"



In the Greeks, Plato's symposium presents a discussion about love by several individuals. These people make their contributions to the discussion on what they think about love. This discussion unfolds as individuals give what they know about love in a complimentary way. That is; an individual supports or criticizes what his fellow says in the previous statements.

Plato's symposium talks about love in a wide view. Phaedrus claims that love is among the oldest deities, which makes most effort in promoting virtues among human beings. Love is a beauty that makes life good. This world would have been boring if love was not there. Pausanias compliments this claim by giving a clarification between heavenly love and common love. According to Pausanias, heavenly love happens between a boy, loved, and a man lover. This love has a base. That is; there is mutual benefit between the two. For example, the man gets sexual gratification from the boy in exchange with virtue, wisdom and education. On the other hand, Pausanias describes common love as one with no direction or purpose. He says "it involves simple and mindless desire". Eryximachus, a doctor, chips in his contribution. He supports the discussion by saying that love helps to promote orderliness and moderation. He further argues that love knows no restriction. Therefore, it goes beyond human interaction into medicine, music and much more.

Aristophanes makes a comic suggestion that every individual was twice the way he or she is now. Human race became a threat to the gods and

therefore, Zeus halved the human race to reduce the threat. The limited number of people would not have a lot of force since numbers matter when it comes to strength. This makes human beings wander throughout the world in search of their halves so that they can rejoin and become one whole human again. Normally, when human beings increase, there is always a tendency to work against gods. This is called rebellion. There, Zeus was wise enough to minimize these people thus reducing threat. Agathon says that; love is responsible for putting all the good virtues in the human race. The good virtues found in humans come from love. Therefore, love is wise, sensitive, beautiful and young. Socrates counteracts Agathon argument by saying that Agathon does not describe love but rather gives the object of love. Socrates comments to correct Agathon. He gives some ideas that he received from Diotima, a wise woman. Diotima argues that love is not a god but it is a spirit, which mediates between objects of desire and people. She adds that love is the desire for beauty and wisdom, but it is not beautiful or wise. There is plenty of truth in this statement that carries lots of weight. It is a factor that needs to be understood. Love is expressed through reproduction and pregnancy, as well as through bodily sexual love. It is also expressed through reproduction and sharing of ideas. She adds to say that the greatest knowledge is the knowledge of beauty from, which everybody should strive to get.

After Socrates' critics Agathon, Alcibiades comes in and criticizes Socrates. Alcibiades has never managed to seduce Socrates since he has no desire for physical desire. Alcibiades does not agree with what Socrates holds. He feels that Socrates is unrealistic.

The dialogue ends with Socrates leaving while all other fall asleep after drinking. This ends with some kind of disagreement after Socrates critics Agathon. That criticism seems to bring about heated arguments.