

# I - THOU

*<sup>1</sup> A song of ascents. Of David. My heart is not proud, LORD, my eyes are not haughty; I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me. <sup>2</sup> But I have calmed and quieted myself, I am like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child I am content.*

Psalm 131:1,2

## I. A year of I-Thou intimacy

- A. I-Thou designates a relation between subject and subject.
- B. I-It is the relation between subject and object involving some form of utilization or control, the object being wholly passive.
- C. An I-Thou relationship is one that treats others as an end, not as a means.
- D. We should love people and use things; we should never use people and love things.
- E. I-Thou relationships are risky, for the other has the full freedom to act unpredictably.
- F. For example, in genuine listening one does not know what's going to be said. In pseudo-listening the I pretends to listen and assumes what is going to be heard based on some past experience.

## II. Two levels of human interaction

- A. Person to person: "I" to "Thou"
- B. Human to object: "I" to "It"

C. Our relationship with objects is impersonal and one-sided.

III. Three things that hinder I-Thou intimacy

A. Seeming rather than being

B. Speechifying rather than real dialogue

C. Imposing oneself on another rather than unfolding oneself to another