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Vincent Brummer

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Religious believers understand the meaning of their lives and of the world in terms of the way these are related to God. How, Vincent Brummer inquires, does the model of love apply to this relationship? He shows that most views of love take it to be an attitude rather than a relationship: exclusive attention (Ortega y Gasset), ecstatic union (nuptial mysticism), passionate suffering (courtly love), need-love (Plato, Augustine), and gift-love (Nygren). In discussing the pertinent issues, Brummer inquires whether these attitudes have a role to play in the love-relationship, and so develops a relational concept of love which can serve as a key model in theology.

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THE MODEL OF LOVE

A study in philosophical theology

VINCENT BRÜMMER

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University of Utrecht*



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*For Jean,
from whom through the years I have learnt the meaning of loving
fellowship.*

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Preface

I have been working on this book off and on for a number of years now, and there are many friends and colleagues whom I would like to thank for the assistance, advice, and comments with which they have helped me both to get it finished and to eliminate many mistakes which I would otherwise have overlooked. I would also like to thank the president and fellows of Wolfson College, Cambridge, for electing me visiting fellow in 1982. Their hospitality enabled me to start collecting material on love and thus to get this project started. Furthermore, I would like to thank my students in Utrecht to whom I have lectured on this material for many years. Their comments and questions, as well as their need for clarity and relevance, have not been without effect on the final form of the book. I am especially grateful to the Department of Theology in the University of Durham for its hospitality during my term as Richardson Fellow in 1991. It was during that delightful stay that I was able to finish the greater part of the book. Among the friends I made in Durham, I am most grateful to David Brown, Carol Harrison, Margaret Harvey, Ann Loades, and Alan Suggate for reading and commenting on various parts of my manuscript, and especially to Ann Loades for so graciously allowing me to use her room in Abbey house as a workplace during my stay in Durham. Finally, I would like to thank Gerbrandt van Santen for his invaluable assistance in preparing the manuscript and making the index. Previous versions of chapters 1, 3, and 6 were published in article form in various journals. I wish therefore to acknowledge the use I have been able to make of material taken from the following papers:

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