

Gene & Dave Talk

1/12/16

D: What is alive in you in thinking?

G: (pause) One of the things that's very much alive in me is that you can't just talk about consciousness & meaning & speaking & language because there is no vocabulary. And it would be discussed in my Wittgenstein paper. So maybe you could look at it?

D: It's the "What happens when Wittgenstein says, 'What happens?'"

G: Yes. Maybe you could just skim it.

D: Sure. And I'll call you back.

[After reading]

G: Of course Wittgenstein's showing is also a kind of saying. Once we admit that, then we can have the kind of saying that also *DOES* what it says. And that's the trick of it.

D: I would add another piece there, if I understand it right. I would say that when the kind of saying also *DOES* what it says, then it becomes "a kind of kind of" saying. Does that work?

G: (pause) It becomes *THAT* kind of saying. Then it's OK. And once we have that. Then I can go to my big point.

Without philosophy, you can't do it. It's being silly, because you're trying to get a kind of meaning without saying what *that* kind of meaning is. In other words, to me philosophy is a way of getting this thing we just did. Except what I want to be able to say is why it's naïve or silly to want to talk about consciousness & meaning & speech & language & all these things, just by saying all these words as if that communicated, like just saying the word "consciousness". To *communicate*, you must use that kind of saying where it achieves what it wants to achieve, and not just do without that. Does that make any sense?

D: Yes.

G: I wanted to expand that to it can't be done without philosophy.

D: Exactly. So how would you expand that?

G: I would say that this paper on Wittgenstein is only *ONE* version of how to do that. There are many ways to do that. But it has to be done *some* way. One can't just say "meaning" and "consciousness" and "life" and words like that, and expect them to mean what one wants them to mean.

D: Give me a moment, I want to say that in my words.

G: Oh, good.

D: (long pause) I would say that to do what happens in this Wittgenstein paper with, say, "life" or "consciousness", requires not "just philosophy as it's usually done", but also a special kind of philosophy. Now here I'm going to guess. It must be a philosophy that is similar to the term, "turn", which you used in this Wittgenstein paper. In other words, you have words not only say *what* they mean, but then they turn and say *how* they mean, too. Am I right so far?

G: I think so, but that's very good. Let me think a little. (long pause) Well, the trouble with it is that "*how* they mean"... is hanging there.

D: OK.