

The Circumcision of the Heart.

by Francois Fenelon

The circumcision of the heart is a process of surrendering to God's jealousy and allowing Him to cut off our self-love and natural generosity, leading to true charity and spiritual growth.

Scripture: Matthew 3:3, Romans 2:29, Galatians 5:6, Philippians 2:3, Hebrews 4:12

Topics: "Heart Circumcision", "Selfless Love"

Description

Francois Fenelon preaches on the importance of true charity, emphasizing that it should be humble, consistent, and selfless, cutting off anything that does not align with pure love for others. He highlights the need for the circumcision of the heart to become children of faith like Abraham, surrendering completely to God's refining process. Fenelon uses the example of John the Baptist, who selflessly pointed others to Christ, showcasing the greatness that comes from forgetting oneself and focusing solely on God.

Transcript

LETTER XL.

The circumcision of the heart.

Our eagerness to serve others, frequently arises from mere natural generosity and a refined self-love; it may soon turn into dislike and despair. But true charity is simple, and ever the same towards the neighbor, because it is humble, and never thinks of self. Whatever is not included in this pure charity, must be cut off.

It is by the circumcision of the heart that we are made children and inheritors of the faith of Abraham, in order that we may, like him, quit our native country without knowing whither we go. Blessed lot! to leave all and deliver ourselves up to the jealousy of God, the knife of circumcision! Our own hand can effect nothing but superficial reforms; we do not know ourselves, and cannot tell where to strike; we should never light upon the spot that the hand of God so readily finds. Self-love arrests our hand and spares itself; it has not the courage to wound itself to the quick. And besides, the choice of the spot and the preparation for the blow, deaden its force. But the hand of God strikes in unexpected places, it finds the very joint of the harness, and leaves nothing unscathed. Self-love then becomes the patient; let it cry out, but see to it that it does not stir under the hand of God, lest it interfere with the success of the operation. It must remain motionless beneath the knife; all that is required is fidelity in not refusing a single stroke.

I am greatly attached to John the Baptist, who wholly forgot himself that he might think only of Christ; he pointed to Him, he was but the voice of one crying in the wilderness to prepare the way, he sent Him all his disciples, and it was this conduct, far more than his solitary and austere life, that entitled him to be called the greatest among them that are born of women.

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