

The Goodness of God Is the Highest Prayer

by Julian of Norwich

The sermon emphasizes the importance of praying directly to God's Goodness, which is the source of all help and salvation, and loving God with an inestimable love.

Scripture: Psalm 27:4, Psalm 34:8, Psalm 63:3, Psalm 86:5, Psalm 100:5, Psalm 145:9, Lamentations 3:25, Ephesians 2:8, James 1:17, 1 John 4:19

Topics: "Gods Goodness", "Christian Prayer"

Description

Julian of Norwich emphasizes the importance of cleaving to the Goodness of God through prayer, highlighting that true worship and delight come from faithfully praying to God Himself and relying on His Grace and love. She explains that all blessings, including redemption, salvation, and the help of saints, stem from God's Goodness. Julian teaches that the Goodness of God is the highest prayer, meeting all our needs, quickening our soul, and leading us to grow in grace and virtue. She reveals that God's love for our soul surpasses all understanding, inviting us to seek Him with reverence and to be evermore connected to His Goodness.

Transcript

THIS Shewing was made to learn our soul wisely to cleave to the Goodness of God. And in that time the custom of our praying was brought to mind: how we use for lack of understanding and knowing of Love, to take many means [whereby to beseech Him].³¹ Then saw I truly that it is more worship to God, and more very delight, that we faithfully³² pray to Himself of His Goodness and cleave thereunto by His Grace, with true understanding, and steadfast by love, than if we took all the means that heart can think.

For if we took all these means, it is too little, and not full worship to God: but in His Goodness is all the whole, and there faileth right nought. For this, as I shall tell, came to my mind in the same time: We pray to God for [the sake of] His holy flesh and His precious blood, His holy Passion, His dearworthy 12 death and wounds: and all the blessed kindness,³³ the endless life that we have of all this, is His Goodness. And we pray Him for [the sake of] His sweet Mother's love that Him bare; and all the help we have of her is of His Goodness.

And we pray by His holy Cross that he died on, and all the virtue and the help that we have of the Cross, it is of His Goodness. And on the same wise, all the help that we have of special saints and all the blessed Company of Heaven, the dearworthy love and endless friendship that we have of them, it is of His Goodness. For God of His Goodness hath ordained means to help us, full fair and many: of which the

chief and principal mean is the blessed nature that He took of the Maid, with all the means that go afore and come after which belong to our redemption and to endless salvation.

Wherefore it pleaseth Him that we seek Him and worship through means, understanding that He is the Goodness of all. For the Goodness of God is the highest prayer, and it cometh down to the lowest part of our need. It quickeneth our soul and bringeth it on life, and maketh it for to waxen in grace and virtue. It is nearest in nature; and readiest in grace: for it is the same grace that the soul seeketh, and ever shall seek till we know verily that He hath us all in Himself enclosed.

For He hath no despite of that He hath made, nor hath He any disdain to serve us at the simplest office that to our body belongeth in nature, for love of the soul that He hath made to His own likeness. For as the body is clad in the cloth, and the flesh in the skin, and the bones in the flesh, and the heart in the 13 whole, 34 so are we, soul and body, clad in the Goodness of God, and enclosed. Yea, and more homely: for all these may waste and wear away, but the Goodness of God is ever whole; and more near to us, without any likeness; for truly our Lover desireth that our soul cleave to Him with all its might, and that we be evermore cleaving to His Goodness.

For of all things that heart may think, this pleaseth most God, and soonest speedeth [the soul]. For our soul is so specially loved of Him that is highest, that it overpasseth the knowing of all creatures: that is to say, there is no creature that is made that may [fully] know 35 how much and how sweetly and how tenderly our Maker loveth us. And therefore we may with grace and His help stand in spiritual beholding, with everlasting marvel of this high, overpassing, inestimable³⁶ Love that Almighty God hath to us of His Goodness.

And therefore we may ask of our Lover with reverence all that we will. For our natural³⁷ Will is to have God, and the Good Will of God is to have us; and we may never cease from willing nor from longing till we have Him in fullness of joy: and then may we no more desire. For He willeth that we be occupied in knowing and loving till the time that we shall be fulfilled in Heaven; and therefore was this lesson of Love shewed, with all that followeth, as ye shall see. For the strength and the Ground of all was shewed in the First Sight.

For 14 of all things the beholding and the loving of the Maker maketh the soul to seem less in his own sight, and most filleth him with reverent dread and true meekness; with plenty of charity to his even-Christians.

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