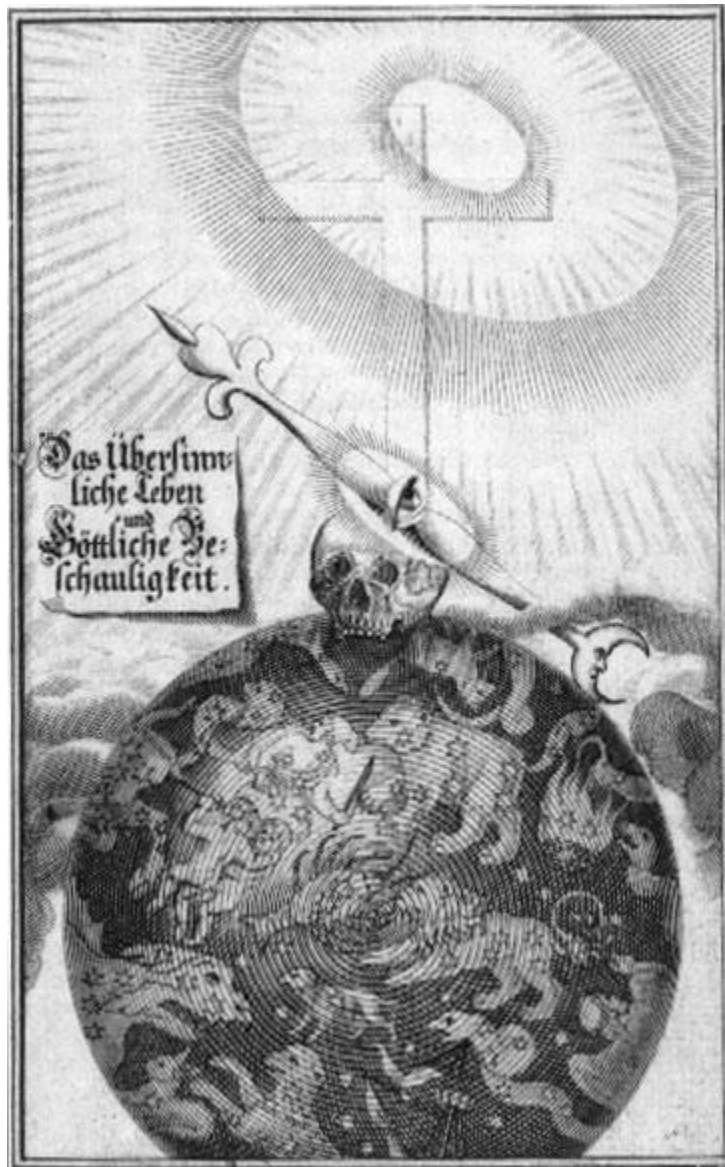


THE SUPERSENSUAL LIFE

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"We speak the hidden mystical wisdom of God, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: For had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his spirit: For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man, which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: For they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth, or discerneth all things." -

1 Corinthians 2:7-15

THE SUPERSENSUAL LIFE

The Disciple said to the Master: Master, how may I come to the Supersensual Life, so that I may see God, and hear God speak?

The Master answered and said: When you can throw yourself into That, where no Creature dwells, if only for a Moment, then you will hear God speak.

Disciple. Is that place where no Creature dwells near at hand; or is it far off?

Master. *It is in you.* And if you can, for a time, cease from all your own thinking and willing, then you will hear the unspeakable Words of God.

Disciple. How can I hear Him speak, when I stand still from thinking and willing?

Master. When you stand still from the thinking of Self, and the willing of Self; when both your intellect and will are quiet, and passive to the Expressions of the Eternal Word and Spirit; and when your Soul is winged up, and above that which is temporal, the outward Senses, and the Imagination being locked up by holy Abstraction, then the Eternal Hearing, Seeing, and Speaking will be revealed in you; and so God hears and sees through you, being now the Organ of His Spirit; and so God speaks in you, and whispers to your Spirit, and your Spirit hears His Voice. Blessed are you therefore if you can stand still from Self-thinking and Self-willing, and can stop the Wheel of your Imagination and Senses; for thus you may arrive at length to see the great Salvation of God being made capable of all Manner of Divine Sensations and Heavenly Communications. Since it is nothing but your own Hearing and Willing that hinder you, so that you do not see and hear God.

Disciple. With what shall I hear and see God, since He is above Nature and Creature?

Master. When you are quiet and silent, then you are as God was before Nature and Creature; you are what God then was; you are that from which He made your Nature and Creature: then you hear and see with that by which God Himself saw and heard in you, even before your own Willing or your own Seeing began.

Disciple. What now hinders or keeps me back, so that I cannot come to that, wherewith God is to be seen and heard?

Master. Your own Willing, Hearing, and Seeing keep you back from it, and hinder you from coming to the Supersensual State. And it is because you strive against that, out of which you yourself are descended and derived, that you separate yourself, with your own Willing, from God's Willing, and with your own Seeing, from God's Seeing. In your own Seeing you see in your own Willing only, and with your own Understanding you understand in and according to your own Willing, which is divided from the Divine Will. Your Willing moreover stops your Hearing, and makes you deaf towards God, through your own thinking upon terrestrial Things, and your attending to that which is outside you; and so it brings you into a Ground, where you are laid hold on and captivated in Nature. And having brought you here, it overshadows you with that which you will; it binds you with your own Chains, and it keeps you in your own dark Prison which you make for yourself; so that you cannot go out thence, or come to that State which is Supernatural and Supersensual.

Disciple. But since I am in Nature, and bound with my own Chains, and by my own natural Will; be so kind as to tell me how I may come through Nature into the Supersensual and Supernatural Ground, without destroying Nature?

Master. Three Things are requisite in order to this. The *First* is, You must surrender up your Will to God; and must sink yourself down to the Dust in His Mercy. The *Second* is, You must hate your own Will, and forbear from doing that to which your own Will drives you. The *Third* is, You must bow your soul under the Cross, heartily submitting yourself to it, that you may be able to bear the Temptations of Nature and Creature. And if you do thus, God will speak into you, and will bring your surrendered Will into Himself, in the Supernatural Ground; and then you shall hear what the Lord speaks in you.

Disciple. This is a hard saying, Master, for I must forsake the World, and my Life too, if I should do thus.

Master. Be not discouraged at this. If you forsake the World, then you come into that out of which the World is made; and if you lose your Life, then your Life is in that, for whose sake you forsake it. Your Life is in God, from whence it came into the Body; and as you come to have your own Power faint and weak and dying, the Power of God will then work in you and through you.

Disciple. Nevertheless as God has created Man in and for the Natural Life, to rule over all Creatures on Earth, and to be a Lord over all Things in this World, it seems not to be at all unreasonable, that Man should therefore possess this World, and the Things therein for his own.

Master. If you rule over all creatures outwardly, there cannot be much in that. But if you have a Mind to possess all Things and to be a Lord indeed over all Things in this World, there is quite another Method to be taken by you.

Disciple. Pray, how is that? And what Method must I take to arrive at this Sovereignty?

Master. You must learn to distinguish well betwixt the Thing, and that which only is an image thereof; betwixt that Sovereignty which is substantial, and in the inward Ground or Nature, and that which is imaginary, and in an outward Form, or Semblance; betwixt that which is properly Angelical, and that which is no more than bestial. If you rule now over the Creatures externally only, and not from the right internal Ground of the renewed Nature; then your Will and ruling is verily in a bestial Kind or Manner, and yours is at best but a Sort of imaginary and transitory Government, being void of that which is substantial and permanent, which you are to desire and press after. Thus by your outwardly lording it over the Creatures, it is most easy for you to lose the Substance and the Reality, while you have nothing remaining but the Image or Shadow only of your first and original Lordship; wherein you are made capable to be again invested, if you are wise, and take your Investiture from the Supreme Lord in the right Course and Manner. Whereas by your willing and ruling thus after a bestial Manner, you bring also your Desire into a bestial Essence, by which Means you become infected and captivated therein, and get with it a bestial Nature and Condition of Life. But if you shall have put off the bestial and feral Nature, and if you have left the imaginary Life, and quitted the low imaged Condition of it; then you are come into the super-imaginal consciousness, and into the intellectual Life, which is a State of living above Images, Figures, and Shadows, And so you rule over all Creatures, being reunited with your Original, in that very Ground or Source, out of which they were and are created; and henceforth nothing on Earth can hurt you. For you are like all things: and nothing is unlike you.

Disciple. O loving Master, pray teach me how I may come the shortest Way to be like unto All Things.

Master. Just think on the Words of our Lord Jesus Christ; when He said, "*Except you be converted, and become as little Children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.*" There is no shorter Way than this; neither can there be a better Way found. Verily, Jesus says unto you, *Unless you turn and become as a Child, hanging upon Him for All Things, you shall not see the Kingdom of God.* Do this, and nothing shall hurt you; for you shall be in Friendship with all Things, as you depend on the Author and Fountain of them all, and become like Him, by such Dependence, and by the Union of your Will with His Will.

But mark what I have further to say; and do not be startled at it, though it may seem hard for you at first to conceive. If you will be like All Things, you must forsake All Things; you must turn your Desire away from them All, and not desire or hanker after any of them; you must not extend your Will to possess that for your own, or as your own, which is Something, whatsoever that Something be. For as soon as ever you take Something into your Desire, and receive it into you for your own, or in Propriety, then this very Something (of whatever Nature it is) is the same with yourself; and this works with you in your Will, and you are thence bound to protect it, and to take Care of it even as of your own Being. But if you receive no Thing into your Desire, then you are free from All Things, and rule over all Things at once, as a Prince of God. For you have received nothing for your own, and are nothing to all Things; and all Things are as nothing to you. You are as a Child, which understands not what a Thing is; and though you do perhaps understand it, yet you understand it without mixing with it, and without sensibly affecting or touching your Perception, even in that Manner wherein God does rule and see all Things; He comprehending All, and yet nothing comprehending Him.

Disciple. Ah! How shall I arrive at this Heavenly Understanding, at this Sight of All Things in God, at this pure and naked Knowledge which is abstracted from the Senses; at this Light above Nature and Creature; and at this Participation of the Divine Wisdom which oversees all Things, and governs through all intellectual Beings? For, alas, I am touched every Moment by the Things which are about me; and overshadowed by the Clouds and Fumes which rise up out of the Earth. I desire therefore to be taught, if possible, how I may attain such a State and

Condition that no Creature may be able to touch me to hurt me; and how my Mind, being purged from sensible Objects and Things, may be prepared for the Entrance and Habitation of the Divine Wisdom in me?

Master. You desire that I would teach you how you are to attain it; and I will direct you to our Master, from Whom I have been taught it, that you may learn it yourself from Him, Who alone teaches the Heart. Hear Him. Would you arrive at this; would you remain untouched by the Sensory; would you behold Light in the very Light of God, and see all Things thereby; then consider the Words of Christ, Who is that Light, and Who is the Truth. O consider now His Words, who said, "*Without Me you can do nothing,*" and do not hesitate to apply yourself unto Him, Who is the Strength of your Salvation, and the Power of your Life; and with Whom you can do all Things, by the Faith which He works in you. But unless you wholly give yourself up to the Life of our Lord Jesus Christ, and surrender your Will wholly to Him, and desire nothing without Him, you shall never come to that Rest that no Creature can disturb. Think what you please, and delight in the Activity of your own Reason, but you shall find that in your own Power, and without such a total Surrender to God, and to the Life of God, you can never arrive at such a Rest as this, or the true Quiet of the Soul, wherein no Creature can molest you, or so much as touch you. Which when you shall, by Grace, have attained to, then with your Body you are in the World, as in the properties of outward Nature; and with your Reason, under the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; but with your Will you walk in Heaven, and are at the End from whence all Creatures are proceeded forth, and to which they return again. And then you can in this End, which is the same with the Beginning, behold all Things outwardly with the Reason, and inwardly with the Mind; and so may you rule in all Things and over all Things, with Christ; unto whom all Power is given both in Heaven and on Earth.

Disciple. O Master, the Creatures which live in me do withhold me, so that I cannot so wholly yield and give up myself as I willingly would. What am I to do in this case?

Master. Do not let this trouble you. Does your Will go forth from the Creatures? Then the Creatures are forsaken in you. They are in the World; and your Body, which is in the World, is with the Creatures. But spiritually you walk with God, and converse in Heaven; being in your Mind redeemed from Earth, and separated

from Creatures, to live the Life of God. And if your Will thus leaves the Creatures, and goes forth from them, even as the Spirit goes forth from the Body at Death; then are the Creatures dead in it, and live only in the Body in the World. Since if your Will does not bring itself into them, they cannot bring themselves into it, neither can they by any Means touch the Soul. And hence St. Paul says, "*Our Conversation is in Heaven*"; and also, "*You are the Temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwells in you.*" So then true Christians are the very Temples of the Holy Ghost, who dwells in them; that is, the Holy Ghost dwells in the Will, and the Creature dwells in the Body.

Disciple. If now the Holy Spirit dwells in the Will of the Mind, how ought I to keep myself so that He departs not from me again?

Master. Mark the Words of our Lord Jesus Christ: "*If you abide in My Words, then My Words abide in you.*" If you abide with your Will, in the Words of Christ; then His Word and Spirit abides in you, and all shall be done for you that you can ask of Him. But if your Will goes into the Creature, then you have broken yourself off from Him; and then you cannot any otherwise keep yourself but by abiding continually in the most surrendered Humility, and by entering into a constant Course of Penitence, wherein you will be always grieved at your own creaturely, and that Creatures do live still in you, that is, in your bodily Appetite. If you do thus, you stand in a daily dying from the Creatures, and in a daily ascending into Heaven in your Will; which Will is also the Will of your Heavenly Father.

Disciple. O my loving Master, pray teach me how I may come to such a constant Course of holy Penitence, and to such a daily dying from all creaturely Objects; for how can I abide continually in Repentance?

Master. When you leave that which loves you, and love that which hates you; then you may abide continually in Repentance.

Disciple. What is it that I must thus leave?

Master. All Things that love and entertain you, because your Will loves and entertains them. All Things that please and feed you, because your Will feeds and cherishes them: All Creatures in Flesh and Blood; in a Word, all Visibles and Sensibles, by which either the Imagination or sensitive Appetite in Men are

delighted and refreshed. These the Will of your Mind, or your supreme Part, must leave and forsake; and must even account them all its Enemies. This is the leaving of what loves you. And the loving of what hates you, is the embracing the Reproach of the World. You must learn then to love the Cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, and for His sake to be pleased with the Reproach of the World which hates you and derides you; and let this be your daily Exercise of Penitence to be crucified to the World, and the World to you. And so you shall have continual Cause to hate yourself in the Creature, and to seek the Eternal Rest, which is in Christ. To which Rest you having thus attained, your Will may therein safely rest and repose itself, according as your Lord Christ has said; *“In Me you may have Rest, but in the World you shall have Anxiety: In Me you may have Peace, but in the World you shall have Tribulation.”*

Disciple. How shall I be now able to subsist in this Anxiety and Tribulation arising from the World, so as not to lose the Eternal Peace, or not enter into this Rest? And how may I recover myself in such a Temptation as this is, by not sinking under the World, but rising above it by a Life that is truly heavenly and Supersensual?

Master. If you do once every Hour throw yourself by Faith beyond all Creatures, beyond and above all sensual Perception and Apprehension, yea, above Discourse and Reasoning into the abyssal Mercy of God, into the Sufferings of our Lord, and into the Fellowship of His intercession, and yield yourself fully and absolutely thereinto; then you shall receive Power from above to rule over Death, and the Devil, and to subdue Hell and the World under you: And then you may subsist in all Temptations, and be the brighter for them.

Disciple. Blessed is the Man that arrives to such a State as this. But, alas! Poor Creature that I am, how is this possible as to me? And what, O my Master, would become of me, if I should never attain with my Mind to that, where no Creature is? Must I not cry out, I am undone?

Master. Why are you so dispirited? Be of good Heart still; for you may certainly yet attain to it. Only believe, and all Things are made possible to you. If it were that your Will, O you of little Courage, could break off itself for one Hour, or even but for one half Hour, from all Creatures, and plunge itself into That where no Creature is, or can be, presently it would be penetrated and clothed upon with the

greatest Radiance of the Glory of God, would taste in itself the most sweet Love of Jesus, the Sweetness whereof no Tongue can express, and would find in itself the unspeakable Words of our Lord concerning His Great Mercy. Your Spirit would then feel in itself the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ to be very pleasing: and would thereupon love the Cross more than the Honors and Goods of the World.

Disciple. This would indeed be good for the Soul, but what would become of the Body, seeing that it must live in the Creature?

Master. The Body would by this Means be put into the Imitation of our Lord Christ, and of His Body: It would stand in the Communion of that most Blessed Body, which was the true Temple of the Deity; and in the Participation of all its gracious Effects, Virtues and Influences. It would live in the Creature not of Choice, but only as it is made subject unto Vanity, and in the World, as it is placed therein by the Ordination of the Creator, for its Cultivation and higher Advancement; and as groaning to be delivered out of it in God's Time and Manner, for its Perfection and Resuscitation in Eternal Liberty and Glory, like unto the Glorified Body of our Lord and His risen Saints.

Disciple. But the Body being in its present Constitution, subject to Vanity, and living in a vain Image and creaturely Shadow, according to the Life of the Creatures or Brutes, whose Breath goes downward to the Earth; I am still very afraid, lest it should continue to depress the Mind which is lifted up to God, by hanging on as a dead Weight; and go on to bemuse and perplex the Mind, as formerly, with Dreams and Trifles, by letting in the Objects from without, in order to draw me down into the Bustling of the World; whereas I would rather maintain my Conversation in Heaven, even while I am living in the World. What therefore must I do with this Body, so that I may be able to keep up so desirable a Conversation; and not to be under any Subjection to it any longer?

Master. There is no other Way for you that I know but to present the Body whereof you complain (which is the Beast to be sacrificed), "*a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God.*" And this shall be your rational service, whereby your Body will be put, as you desire, into the Imitation of Jesus Christ, Who said, *His Kingdom was not of this World.* Do not be conformed to it, then, but be transformed by the renewing of your Mind; which renewed Mind is to have

Dominion over the Body, so that you may prove, both in Body and Mind, what is the perfect Will of God, and accordingly perform His Will by His Grace operating in you. Whereupon the Body, or the Animal Life, would, being thus offered up, begin to die, both from without and from within. From without, that is, from the Vanity and evil Customs and Fashions of the World. It would be an utter Enemy to all worldly Pomp, and to all the Foppery, Pageantry, Pride, Ambition, and Haughtiness therein. From within, it would die to all the Lusts and Appetites of the Flesh, and would get a Mind and Will wholly new, for its Government and Management; being now made subject to the Spirit, which would continually be directed to God, and so consequently that which is subject to it, and thus your very Body is become the Temple of God and of His Spirit, in Imitation of your Lord's Body.

Disciple. But the World would hate it, and despise it for so doing; seeing it must hereby contradict the World, and must live and act quite otherwise than the World does. This is most certain. And how can this then be taken?

Master. It would not take that as any Harm done to it, but would rather rejoice that it is become worthy to be like unto the Image of our Lord Jesus Christ, being transformed from that of the World: And it would be most willing to bear that Cross after our Lord; merely that our Lord might bestow upon it the Influence of His sweet and Precious Love.

Disciple. I do not doubt but in some this may be even so. Nevertheless for my own Part, I am in a Straight betwixt two, not feeling yet enough of that blessed Influence upon me. O how willingly should my Body bear that, could this be safely depended upon by me, according to what is urged! Wherefore pardon me, in this one Thing, if my Impatience does still further demand "what would become of it, if the Anger of God from within, and the wicked World also from without, should at once assault it, as the same really happened to our Lord Christ?"

Master. Be that unto you, even as unto our Lord Christ, when He was reproached, reviled and crucified by the World; and when the Anger of God so fiercely assaulted Him for our Sake. Now what did He under this most terrible Assault both from without and from within? Why: He commended His Soul into the Hands of

His Father, and so departed from the Anguish of this World into the Eternal Joy. Do you likewise; and His Death shall be your Life.

Disciple. Be it unto me as unto the Lord Christ; and unto my Body as unto His; which into His Hands I have commended, and for the Sake of His Name do offer up, according to His revealed Will. Nevertheless I am desirous to know what would become of my Body in its pressing forth from the Anguish of this miserable World into the Power of the Heavenly Kingdom.

Master. It would get forth from the Reproach and Contradiction of the World, by a Conformity to the Passion of Jesus Christ; and from the Sorrows and Pains in the Flesh, which are only the Effects of some tangible Impression of Things without, by a quiet Introversion of the Spirit, and secret Communion with the Deity manifesting itself for that End. It would penetrate into itself; it would sink into the great Love of God; it would be sustained and refreshed by the most sweet Name Jesus; and it would see and find within itself a new World springing forth as through the Anger of God, into the Love and Joy Eternal. And then should a Man wrap his Soul in this, even in the great Love of God, and clothe himself therewith as with a Garment; and should account thence all Things alike; because in the Creature he finds nothing that can give him without God, the least Satisfaction; and because also nothing of Harm can touch him anymore, while he remains in this Love, the which indeed is stronger than all Things, and makes a Man hence invulnerable both from within and without, by taking out the Sting and Poison of the Creatures, and destroying the Power of Death. And whether the Body is in Hell or on Earth, all is alike to him; for whether it be there or here, his mind is still in the greatest Love of God; which is no less than to say, that he is in Heaven.

Disciple. But how would a Man's Body be maintained in the World; or how would he be able to maintain those that are his, if he should by such a Conversation incur the Displeasure of all the World?

Master. Such a Man gets greater Favors than the World is able to bestow upon him. He has God for his Friend; he has all His Angels for his Friends: In all Dangers and necessities these protect and relieve him; so that he need fear no Manner of Evil; no Creature can hurt him. God is his Helper; and that is sufficient. Also God is his Blessing in every Thing: and though sometimes it may seem as if

God would not bless him, yet is this but for a Trial to him, and for the Attraction of the Divine Love; to the End he may more fervently pray to God, and commit all his ways unto Him.

Disciple. He loses however all his good Friends; and there will be none to help him in his Necessity.

Master. Nay, but he gets the Hearts of all his good Friends into his Possession, and loses none but his Enemies, who before loved his Vanity and Wickedness.

Disciple. How is it that he can get his good Friends in his Possession?

Master. He gets the very Hearts and Souls of all those who belong to our Lord Jesus to be his Brethren, and the Members of his own very Life. For all the Children of God are but One in Christ, which one is Christ in All: and therefore He gets them all to be his Fellow Members in the Body of Christ, whence they have all the same Love of God, as the Branches of a Tree in one and the same Root, and spring all from one and the same Source of Life in them. So that he can have no Want of Spiritual Friends and Relations, who are all rooted with him together in the Love which is from above; who are all of the same Blood and Kindred in Christ Jesus; and who are cherished all by the same quickening Sap and Spirit diffusing itself through them universally from the one true Vine, which is the Tree of Life and Love. These are Friends worth having; and though here they may be unknown to him, will abide his Friends beyond Death, to all Eternity. But neither can he want even outward natural Friends; as our Lord Christ when on Earth did not want such also. For though indeed the High-Priests and Potentates of the World could not have a Love to Him, because they belonged not to Him, neither stood in any Kind of Relation to Him, as being not of this World, yet those loved Him who were capable of His Love, and receptive to His Words. So in like Manner, those who love Truth and Righteousness will love that man, and will associate themselves unto him, yea, though they may perhaps be outwardly at some Distance or seeming Disagreement, from the Situation of their worldly Affairs, or out of some certain Respects; yet in their Hearts they cannot but cleave to him. For though they be not yet actually incorporated into one Body with him, yet they cannot resist being of one Mind with him, and being united in Affection for the great Regard they bear to the Truth, which shines forth in his Words and in his

Life. By which they are made either his declared or his secret Friends; and he does so get their Hearts, as they will be delighted above all Things in his Company, for the Sake thereof, and will court his Friendship, and will come unto him by Stealth, if openly they dare not, for the Benefit of his Conversation and Advice even as Nicodemus did unto Christ, who came to Him by Night, and in his Heart loved Jesus for the Truth's Sake, though outwardly he feared the World. And thus you shall have many Friends that are not known to you; and some known to you, who may not appear so before the World.

Disciple. Nevertheless it is very grievous to be generally despised of the World, and to be trampled upon by men as the very Off-scouring thereof.

Master. That which now seems so hard and heavy to you, you will yet hereafter be most of all in Love with.

Disciple. Loving Master, I am well content that this Love should rule in me over the natural Life, so that I may attain to that which is Supernatural and Supra-sensual; but pray tell me now, why must Love and Hatred, Friend and Foe, thus be together? Would not Love alone be better? Wherefore, I say, are Love and Trouble thus joined?

Master. If Love dwelt not in Trouble, it could have nothing to love: but its Substance which it loves, namely, the poor Soul, being in Trouble and Pain, it has thence Cause to love this its own Substance, and to deliver it from Pain; that so itself may be by it again beloved. Neither could anyone know what Love is, if there were no Hatred; or what Friendship is, if there were no Foe to contend with: Or in one Word, if Love had not something which it might love, and manifest the Virtue and Power of Love, by working our Deliverance to the Beloved from all Pain and Trouble.

Disciple. Pray what is the Virtue, the Power, the Height and the Greatness of Love?

Master. The Virtue of Love is Nothing and All, or that Nothing visible out of which All Things proceed; its Power is through All Things; its Height is as high as God; its Greatness is as great as God. Its Virtue is the Principle of all Principles; its Power supports the Heavens and upholds the Earth; its Height is higher than the

Highest Heavens; and its Greatness is even greater than the very Manifestation of the Godhead in the glorious Light of the Divine Essence, as being infinitely capable of greater and greater Manifestations in all Eternity. What can I say more? Love is higher than the Highest. Love is greater than the Greatest. Yea, it is in a certain Sense greater than God; while yet in the highest Sense of all, God is Love, and Love is God. Love being the highest Principle, is the Virtue of all Virtues; from whence they flow forth. Love being the greatest Majesty, is the Power of all Powers, from whence they severally operate: And it is the Holy Magical Root, or Ghostly Power from whence all the Wonders of God have been wrought by the Hands of His elect Servants, in all their Generations successively. Whosoever finds it, finds Nothing and All Things.

Disciple. Dear Master, pray tell me how I may understand this.

Master. First then, in that I said, *its Virtue is Nothing, or that Nothing*, which is the Beginning of All Things, you must understand it thus: When you are gone forth wholly from the Creature, and from that which is visible, and are become Nothing to all that is Nature and Creature, then you are in that Eternal One, which is God Himself: And then you shall perceive and feel in your Interior, the highest Virtue of Love. But in that I said, *Its Power is through All Things*, this is that which you perceive and find in your own Soul and Body experientially, whenever this great Love is enkindled within you; seeing that it will burn more than the Fire can do, as it did in the Prophets of old, and afterwards in the Apostles, when God conversed with them bodily, and when His Spirit descended upon them in the Oratory of Zion. You shall then see also in all the Works of God, how Love has poured forth itself into all Things: Inwardly in the Virtue and Power of every Thing; and outwardly in the Figure and Form thereof.

And in that I said, *Its Height is as high as God*; you may understand this in yourself; forasmuch as it brings you to be as high as God Himself is, by being united to God: As may be seen by our beloved Lord Christ in our Humanity. Which Humanity Love has brought up into the highest Throne, above all Angelical Principalities and Powers, into the very Power of the Deity itself.

But in that I also said, *Its Greatness is as great as God*, you are hereby to understand, that there is a certain Greatness and Latitude of Heart in Love, which is inexpressible; for it enlarges the Soul as wide as the whole Creation of God. And this shall be truly experienced by you, beyond all Words, when the Throne of Love shall be set up in your Heart.

Moreover in that I said, *Its Virtue is the Principle of all Principles*, hereby it is given you to understand, that Love is the principiating Cause of all created beings, both spiritual and corporeal, by Virtue of which the second Causes do move and act occasionally, according to certain Eternal Laws from the Beginning implanted in the very Constitution of Things thus originated. This Virtue which is in Love, is the very Life and Energy of all the Principles of Nature, superior and inferior: It reaches to all Worlds, and to all Manner of Beings in them contained, they being the Workmanship of Divine Love and it the first Mover, and first Moveable both in Heaven above and in the Earth beneath, and in the Water under the Earth. And hence there is given to it the Name of the Lucid Aleph, or Alpha; by which is expressed the Beginning of the Alphabet of Nature, and of the Book of Creation and Providence, or the Divine Archetypal Book, in which is the Light of Wisdom, and the Source of all Lights and Forms.

And in that I said, *Its Power supports the Heavens*; by this you will come to understand, that as the Heavens, visible and invisible, are originated from this great Principle, so are they likewise necessarily sustained by it; and that therefore if this should be but never so little withdrawn, all the Lights, Glories, Beauties, and Forms of the heavenly Worlds, would presently sink into Darkness and Chaos.

And whereas I further said, *that it upholds the Earth*: this will appear to you no less evident than the former, and you shall perceive it in yourself by daily and hourly Experience; forasmuch as the Earth without it, even your own Earth also (that is, your Body) would certainly be without Form and void. By the Power thereof the Earth has been thus long upheld, notwithstanding a foreign usurped Power introduced by the Folly of Sin: And should this but once fail or recede, there could no longer be either Vegetation or Animation upon it; yea, the very Pillars of it be overthrown quite, and the Band of Union, which is that of Attraction or Magnetism, called the Centripetal Power, being broken and dissolved, all must

thence run into the utmost Disorder, and falling away as into Shivers, would be dispersed as loose Dust before the Wind.

But in that I said, *Its Height is higher than the highest Heavens*; this you may also understand within yourself: For should you ascend in Spirit through all the Orders of Angels and heavenly Powers, yet the Power of Love still is undeniably superior to them all, and as the Throne of God, Who sits upon the Heaven of Heavens, is higher than the highest of them, even so must Love also be, which fills them all, and comprehends them all.

And whereas I said of the Greatness of Love, *that it is greater than the very Manifestation of the Godhead in the Light of the Divine Essence*; that is also true: For Love enters even into that where the Godhead is not manifested in this glorious Light, and where God may be said not to dwell. And entering thereinto, Love begins to manifest to the Soul the Light of the Godhead: and thus is the Darkness broken through, and the Wonders of the new Creation successively manifested.

Thus shall you be brought to understand really and fundamentally, what is the Virtue and Power of Love, and what the Height and Greatness thereof is; how that it is indeed the Virtue of all Virtues, though it be invisible, and as Nothing in Appearance. Inasmuch as it is the Worker of all Things and a powerful vital Energy passing through all Virtues and Powers natural and Supernatural; and the Power of all Powers, nothing being able to let or obstruct the Omnipotence of Love, or to resist Its invincible penetrating Might, which passes through the whole Creation of God, inspecting and governing all Things.

And in that I said, *It is higher than the highest, and greater than the greatest*; you may hereby perceive as in a Glimpse, the supreme Height and Greatness of Omnipotent Love, which infinitely transcends all that human Sense and Reason can reach to. The highest Archangels and the Greatest Powers of Heaven, are in Comparison of it, but as Dwarfs. Nothing can be conceived higher and greater in God Himself, by the very highest and greatest of His Creatures. There is such an Infinity in it, as comprehends and surpasses all the Divine Attributes.

But in that it was also said, *Its Greatness is greater than God*; that likewise is very true in the Sense wherein it was spoken. For Love, as I before observed, can there enter where God dwells not, since the most high God dwells not in Darkness, but

in the Light; the hellish Darkness being put under His Feet. Thus for Instance, when our beloved Lord Christ was in Hell, Hell was not the Mansion of God or of Christ; Hell was not God, neither was it with God, nor could it be at all with Him; Hell stood in the Darkness and Anxiety of Nature, and no Light of the Divine Majesty did there enter: God was not there; for He is not in the Darkness, or in the Anguish; but Love Was there; and Love destroyed Death and conquered Hell. So also when you are in Anguish or Trouble, which is Hell within God is not the Anguish or Trouble; neither is He in the Anguish or Trouble; but His Love is there, and brings you out of the Anguish and Trouble into God, leading you into the Light and joy of His Presence, When God hides Himself in you, Love is still there, and makes Him manifest in you. Such is the inconceivable Greatness and Largeness of Love; which will hence appear to you as great as God above Nature, and greater than God in Nature, or as considered in His manifestative Glory.

Lastly, Whereas I also said, *Whosoever finds it, finds Nothing and All Things*; that is also certain and true. But how finds he Nothing? Why, I will tell you how. He that finds it, finds a Supernatural Supersensual Abyss, which has no Ground or Byss to stand on, and where there is no Place to dwell in; and he finds also Nothing is like unto it, and therefore it may fitly be compared to Nothing; for it is deeper than any Thing, and is as Nothing with Respect to All Things, forasmuch as it is not comprehensible by any of them. And because it is Nothing respectively, it is therefore free from All Things; and is that only Good, which a Man cannot express or utter what it is; there being Nothing to which it may be compared, to express it by.

But in that I lastly said, *Whosoever finds it, finds All Things*; there is nothing can be more true than this Assertion. It has been the Beginning of All Things; and it rules All Things. It is also the End of All Things; and will thence comprehend All Things within its Circle. All Things are from it, and in it, and by it. If you find it, you come into that Ground from whence All Things are proceeded, and wherein they subsist; and you are in it a King over all the Works of God.

Here the Disciple was exceedingly ravished with what his Master had so wonderfully and surprisingly declared, and returned his most humble and hearty Thanks for that Light, which he had been an Instrument of conveying to him. But being desirous to hear further concerning these high Matters, and to know

somewhat more particularly, he requested him, that he would give him Leave to wait on him the next Day again; and that he would then be pleased to show him how and where he might find this which was so much beyond all Price and Value, and whereabout the Seat and Abode of it might be in human Nature; with the entire Process of the Discovery and bringing it forth to Light.

The Master said to him: This then we will discourse about at our next Conference, as God shall reveal the same to us by His Spirit, which is a Searcher of All Things. And if you do remember well what I answered you in the Beginning, you shall soon come thereby to understand that hidden mystical Wisdom of God, which none of the Wise Men of the World know; and where the Mine thereof is to be found in you, shall be given you from above to discern. Be silent therefore in your Spirit, and watch unto Prayer; that when we meet again Tomorrow in the Love of Christ, your Mind may be disposed for finding that noble Pearl, which to the World appears Nothing, but which to the Children of Wisdom is All Things.

DIALOGUE II

ARGUMENT

Herein is described and set forth the Manner of passing the Gulf which divides betwixt the two Principles or States of Heaven and Hell: and it is particularly shown how this Transaction is carried on in the Soul; what the Partition Wall therein is, which separates from God.

What the breaking down of this Partition Wall, and how effected; what the Centre of Light is, and the pressing into that Centre is; What the Light of God, and the Light of Nature are; how they are operative in their several Spheres, and how to be kept from interfering with each other; with some Account of the two Wills and their Contraposition in the Fallen State; of the Magical Wheel of the Will, and how the Motion thereof may be regulated; of the Eye in the Midst thereof, what the Right Eye is to the Soul, and what the Left is, but especially what the Single Eye is, and in what Manner it is to be obtained; of Purification from the Contagion of Matter, of the Destruction of Evil, and of the very Annihilation of it, by the Subsidence of the Will from its own Something into Nothing; of the Naked and Magical Faith, and the Attraction thereby of a certain Divine Substantiality and Vestment; how all consists in the Will, and proceeds but from one Point; where

that Point is placed, and how it may be found out; and which is both the safest and nearest Way to attain to the high Supersensual State, and the internal Kingdom of Christ, according to the true Heavenly Magia or Wisdom.

The Disciple being very earnest to be more fully instructed how he might arrive at the Supersensual Life, and how, having found all Things, he might come to be a king over all God's Works, came again to his Master the next Morning, having watched the Night in Prayer, that he might be disposed to receive and apprehend the Instructions that should be given him by Divine Irradiation upon his Mind. And the Disciple after a little Space of Silence, bowed himself, and thus brake forth:

Disciple. O my Master! My Master! I have now endeavored so to recollect my Soul in the Presence of God, and to cast myself into that Deep where no Creature does nor can dwell; that I might hear the Voice of my Lord speaking in me; and be initiated into that high Life, whereof I heard yesterday such great and amazing Things pronounced. But, alas! I neither hear nor see as I should: There is still such a Partition Wall in me which beats back the Heavenly Sounds in their Passage, and obstructs the Entrance of that Light by which alone Divine Objects are discoverable, as till this be broken down, I can have but small Hopes, yea, even none at all, of arriving at those glorious Attainments which you pressed me to, or of entering into that where no Creature dwells, and which you call Nothing and All Things. Wherefore be so kind as to inform me what is required on my Part, that this Partition which hinders may be broken or removed.

Master. This Partition is the Creaturely Will in you: and this can be broken by nothing but by the Grace of Self- Denial, which is the Entrance into the true following of Christ; and totally removed by nothing but a perfect Conformity with the Divine Will.

Disciple. But how shall I be able to break this Creaturely Will, which is in me, and is at Enmity with the Divine Will? Or, what shall I do to follow Christ in so difficult a Path, and not to faint in a continual Course of Self- Denial and Surrender to the Will of God?

Master. This is not to be done by yourself, but by the Light and Grace of God received into your Soul, which will if you gainsay not, break the Darkness that is in you, and melt down your own Will, which works in the Darkness and Corruption

of Nature, and bring it into the Obedience of Christ, whereby the Partition of the Creaturely Self is removed from betwixt God and you.

Disciple. I know that I cannot do it of myself. But I would fain learn how I must receive this Divine Light and Grace into me, which is to do it for me, if I hinder it: not my own Self. What is then required of me in order to admit this Breaker of the Partition and to Promote the Attainment of the Ends of such Admission?

Master. There is nothing more required of you at first, than not to resist this Grace, which is manifested in you, and nothing in the whole Process of your Work, but to be obedient and passive to the Light of God shining through the Darkness of your Creaturely Being, which comprehends it not, as reaching no higher than the Light of Nature.

Disciple. But is it not for me to attain, if I can, both the Light of God, and the Light of the outward Nature too: And to make use of them both for the ordering my Life wisely and prudently?

Master. It is right, I confess, so to do. And it is indeed a Treasure above all earthly Treasures, to be possessed of the Light of God and Nature, operating in their Spheres; and to have both the Eye of Time and Eternity at once open together, and yet not to interfere with each other.

Disciple. This is a great Satisfaction to me to hear; having been very uneasy about it for some Time. But how this can be without interfering with each other, there is the Difficulty: Wherefore fain would I know, if it were lawful, the Boundaries of the one and the other; and how both the Divine and the Natural Light may in their several Spheres respectively act and operate, for the Manifestation of the Mysteries of God and Nature, and for the Conduct of my outward and inward Life?

Master. That each of these may be preserved distinct in their several Spheres, without confounding Things Heavenly and Things Earthly, or breaking the golden Chain of Wisdom, it will be necessary, my Child, in the first Place to wait for and attend the Supernatural and Divine Light, as that superior Light appointed to govern the Day, rising in the true East, which is the Centre of Paradise; and in great Might breaking forth as out of the Darkness within you, through a Pillar of Fire and Thunder Clouds, and thereby also reflecting upon the inferior Light of

Nature a Sort of Image of itself, whereby only it can be kept in its due Subordination, that which is below being made subservient to that which is above; and that which is without to that which is within. Thus there will be no Danger of interfering; but all will go right, and every Thing abide in its proper Sphere.

Disciple. Therefore, unless Reason or the Light of Nature be sanctified in my Soul, and illuminated by this superior Light, as from the central East of the holy Light-World, by the Eternal and Intellectual Sun; I perceive there will be always some Confusion, and I shall never be able to manage aright either what concerns Time or Eternity: But I must always be at a Loss, or break the Links of Wisdom's Chain.

Master. It is even so as you have said. All is Confusion, if you have no more but the dim Light of Nature, or unsanctified and unregenerate Reason to guide you by; and if only the Eye of Time be opened in you, which cannot pierce beyond its own Limit. Wherefore seek the Fountain of Light, waiting in the deep Ground of your Soul for the rising there of the Sun of Righteousness, whereby the Light of Nature in you, with the Properties thereof, will be made to shine seven Times brighter than ordinary. For it shall receive the Stamp, Image, and Impression of the Supersensual and Supernatural; so that the sensual and rational Life will hence be brought into the most perfect Order and Harmony.

Disciple. But how am I to wait for the rising of this glorious Sun, and how am I to seek in the Centre, this Fountain of Light, which may enlighten me throughout, and bring all my Properties into perfect Harmony? I am in Nature as I said before; and which Way shall I pass through Nature, and the Light thereof, so that I may come into that Supernatural and Supersensual Ground, whence this true Light, which is the Light of Minds, does arise; and this, without the Destruction of my Nature, or quenching the Light of it, which is my Reason?

Master. Cease but from your own Activity, steadfastly fixing your eye upon one point, and with a strong purpose relying upon the promised grace of God in Christ, to bring you out of your darkness into His marvelous light. For this end gather in all your thoughts, and by faith press into the Centre, laying hold upon the Word of God, which is infallible, and which has called you. Be you then obedient to this call; and be silent before the Lord, sitting alone with Him in your inmost and most hidden cell, your mind being centrally united in itself, and attending His will in the

patience of Hope. So shall your light break forth as the morning; and after the redness thereof is passed, the Sun Himself, which you wait for, shall arise unto you, and under His most healing wings you shall greatly rejoice; ascending and descending in His bright and salutiferous beams. Behold this is the true Supersensual ground of life.

Disciple. I believe it indeed to be even so. But will not this destroy Nature? Will not the Light of Nature in me be extinguished by this greater Light? Or, must not the outward Life hence perish with the earthly Body which I carry?

Master. By no Means at all. It is true, the evil Nature will be destroyed by it; but by the Destruction thereof you can be no Loser, but very much a Gainer. The Eternal Band of Nature is the same afterward as before; and the Properties are the same. So that Nature hereby is only advanced and meliorated; and the Light thereof, or human Reason, by being kept within its due Bounds, and regulated by a superior Light, is only made useful.

Disciple. Pray therefore let me know how this inferior Light ought to be used by me how it is to be kept within its due Bounds and after what Manner the superior Light does regulate it and ennoble it.

Master. Know then, my beloved Son, that if you will keep the Light of Nature within its own proper Bounds, and make use thereof in just Subordination to the Light of God: you must consider that there are in the Soul two Wills, an inferior Will, which is for driving you to Things without and below; and a superior Will, which is for drawing to Things within and above. These two Wills are now set together, as it were, Back to Back, and in a direct Contrariety to each other; but in the Beginning it was not so. For this Contraposition of the Soul in these two is no more than the Effect of the Fallen State; since before that they were placed one under the other, that is, the superior Will Above, as the Lord, and the inferior Below, as the Subject. And thus it ought to have continued. You must also further consider, that answering to these two Wills there are likewise two Eyes in the Soul, whereby they are severally directed; forasmuch as these Eyes are not united in one single View, but look quite contrary Ways at once. They are in a like Manner set one against the other, without a common Medium to join them. And hence, so long as this Double-sightedness does remain, it is impossible there should be any

Agreement in the Determination of this or that Will. This is very plain: And it shows the Necessity that this Malady, arising from the Dis-union of the Rays of Vision be some Way remedied and redressed, in order to a true Discernment in the Mind. Both these Eyes therefore must be made to unite by a Concentration of Rays; there being nothing more dangerous than for the Mind to abide thus in the Duplicity, and not to seek to arrive at the Unity. You perceive, I know, that you have two Wills in you, one set against the other, the superior and the inferior; and that you have also two Eyes within, one against another whereof the one Eye may be called the Right Eye, and the other the Left Eye. You perceive too, doubtless, that it is according to the Right Eye that the Wheel of the superior Will is moved; and that it is according to the Motion of the Left Eye, that the contrary Wheel in the lower is turned about.

Disciple. I perceive this, Sir, to be very true; and this it is which causes a continual Combat in me, and creates to me greater Anxiety than I am able to express. Nor am I unacquainted with the Disease of my own Soul, which you have so clearly declared. Alas! I perceive and lament this Malady, which so miserably disturbs my Sight; whence I feel such irregular and convulsive Motions drawing me on this Side and that Side. The Spirit sees not as the Flesh sees; neither does, or can the Flesh see, as the Spirit sees. Hence the Spirit wills against the Flesh; and the Flesh wills against the Spirit in me. This has been my hard Case. And how shall it be remedied? O how may I arrive at the Unity of Will, and how come into the Unity of Vision!

Master. Mark now what I say: The Right Eye looks forward in you into Eternity. The Left Eye looks backward in you into Time. If now you suffer yourself to be always looking into Nature, and the Things of Time, and to be leading the Will and to be seeking somewhat for itself in the Desire, it will be impossible for you ever to arrive at the Unity, which you wish for Remember this; and be upon your watch, Give not your Mind leave to enter in, nor to fill itself with, that which is without you: neither look you backward upon yourself; but quit yourself, and look forward upon Christ. Let not your Left Eye deceive you, by making continually one Representation after another, and stirring up thereby an earnest Longing in the Self-Propriety; but let your Right Eye command back this Left, and attract it to you, so that it may not gad abroad into the Wonders and Delights of Nature. Yea, it is better to pluck it quite out, and to cast it from you, than to suffer it to proceed

forth without Restraint into Nature, and to follow its own Lusts: However there is for this no necessity, since both Eyes may become very useful, if ordered aright; and both the Divine and natural Light may in the Soul subsist together, and be of mutual Service to each other. But never shall you arrive at the Unity of Vision or Uniformity of Will, but by entering fully into the Will of our Savior Christ, and therein bringing the Eye of Time into the Eye of Eternity; and then descending by Means of this united through the Light of God into the Light of Nature.

Disciple. So then if I can but enter into the Will of my Lord, and abide therein, I am safe, and may both attain to the Light of God in the Spirit of my Soul, and see with the Eye of God, that is, the Eye of Eternity in the Eternal Ground of my Will; and may also at the same Time enjoy the Light of this World nevertheless; not degrading, but adorning the Light of Nature; and beholding as with the Eye of Eternity Things Eternal, so with the Eye of Nature Things natural, and both contemplating therein the Wonders of God, and sustaining also thereby the Life of my outward Vehicle or body.

Master. It is very right. You have well understood; and you desire now to enter into the Will of God, and to abide therein as in the Supersensual Ground of Light and Life, where you may in His Light behold both Time and Eternity, and bring all the Wonders created of God for the exterior into the interior Life, and so eternally rejoice in them to the Glory of Christ; the Partition of your Creaturely Will being broken down, and the Eye of your Spirit simplified in and through the Eye of God manifesting itself in the Centre of your Life. Let this be so now; for it is God's Will.

Disciple. But it is very hard to be always looking forwards into Eternity; and consequently to attain to this single Eye, and Simplicity of Divine Vision. The Entrance of a Soul naked into the Will of God, shutting out all Imaginations and Desires, and breaking down the strong Partition which you mention, is indeed somewhat very terrible and shocking to human Nature, as in its present State. O what shall I do, that I may reach this which I so much long for?

Master. My Son, let not the Eye of Nature with the Will of the Wonders depart from that Eye which is introverted into the Divine Liberty, and into the Eternal Light of the holy Majesty: but let it draw to you those Wonders by Union with that

heavenly internal Eye, which are externally wrought out and manifested in visible Nature. For while you are in the World, and have an honest Employment, you are certainly by the Order of Providence obliged to labor in it, and to finish the Work given you, according to your best Ability, without repining in the least; seeking out and manifesting for God's Glory, the Wonders of Nature and Art. Since let the Nature be what it will, it is all the Work and Art of God: and let the Art also be what it will, it is still God's Work; and His Art, rather than any Art or Cunning of Man. And all both in Art and Nature serves but abundantly to manifest the wonderful Works of God; that He *for* all, and *in* all may be glorified. Yea, all serves, if you know rightly how to use them, but to recollect you more inwards, and to draw your Spirit into that majestic Light, wherein the original Patterns and Forms of Things visible are to be seen. Keep therefore in the Centre, and stir not out from the Presence of God revealed within your Soul; let the World and the Devil make never so great a Noise and Bustle to draw you out, mind them not; they cannot hurt you. It is permitted to the Eye of your Reason to seek Food, and to your Hands, by their Labor, to get Food for the terrestrial Body: But then this Eye ought not with its Desire to enter into the Food prepared, which would be covetousness; but must in Surrender simply bring it before the Eye of God in your Spirit, and then you must seek to place it close to this very Eye, without letting it go. Mark this Lesson well.

Let the Hands or the Head be at Labor, your Heart ought nevertheless to rest in God. God is a Spirit; dwell in the Spirit, work in the Spirit, pray in the Spirit, and do every Thing in the Spirit; for remember you also are a Spirit, and thereby created in the Image of God: Therefore see you attract not in your Desire Matter unto you, but as much as possible abstract yourself from all Matter whatever; and so, standing in the Centre, present yourself as a naked Spirit before God, in Simplicity and Purity; and be sure your Spirit draw in nothing but Spirit.

You will yet be greatly enticed to draw Matter, and to gather that which the World calls Substance, thereby to have somewhat visible to trust to: But by no Means consent to the Tempter, nor yield to the Lustings of your Flesh against the Spirit. For in so doing you will infallibly obscure the Divine Light in you; your Spirit will stick in the dark covetous Root, and from the fiery Source of your Soul will it blaze out in Pride and Anger; your Will shall be chained in Earthliness, and shall sink through the Anguish into Darkness and Materiality; and never shall you be able to

reach the still Liberty, or to stand before the Majesty of God. Since this is opening a Door for him who reigns in the Corruption of Matter, possibly the Devil may roar at you for this Refusal; because nothing can vex him worse than such a silent Abstraction of the Soul, and Controversion thereof to the Point of Rest from all that is worldly and circumferential: But regard him not; neither admit the least Dust of that Matter into which he may pretend any Claim to. It will be all Darkness to you, as much Matter as is drawn in by the Desire of your Will: It will darken God's Majesty to you; and will close the seeing Eye, by hiding from you the Light of His beloved Countenance. This the Serpent longs to do; but in vain except you permit your Imagination, upon his Suggestion, to receive in the alluring Matter; else he can never get in. Behold then, if you desire to see God's Light in your Soul, and be divinely illuminated and conducted; this is the short Way that you are to take not to let the Eye of your Spirit enter into Matter, or fill itself with any Thing whatever; either in Heaven or Earth; but to let it enter by a naked Faith into the Light of the Majesty; and so receive by pure Love the Light of God, and attract the Divine Power into itself, putting on the Divine Body, and growing up in it to the full Maturity of the Humanity of Christ.

Disciple. As I said before, so I say again, this is very hard. I conceive indeed well enough that my Spirit ought to be free from the Contagion of Matter, and wholly empty, that it may admit into it the Spirit of God. Also, that this Spirit will not enter, but where the Will enters into Nothing, and surrenders itself up in the Nakedness of Faith, and in the Purity of Love, to its Conduct; feeding magically upon the Word of God, and clothing itself thereby with a Divine Substantiality. But, alas, how hard is it for the Will to sink into nothing, to attract nothing, to imagine nothing!

Master. Let it be granted that it is so. Is it not surely worth your while, and all that you can ever do?

Disciple. It is so, I must confess.

Master. But perhaps it may not be as hard as at first it appears to be; make but the Trial, and be in earnest. What is there required of you, but to stand still, and see the Salvation of your God? And could you desire any Thing less? Where is the Hardship in this? You have nothing to care for, nothing to desire in this Life,

nothing to imagine or attract: You need only cast your Care upon God, Who cares for you, and leave Him to dispose of you according to His Good Will and Pleasure, even as if you had no Will at all in you. For He knows what is best; and if you can but trust Him, He will most certainly do better for you, than if you were left to your own Choice.

Disciple. This I most firmly believe.

Master. If you believe, then go and do accordingly, All is in the Will, as I have shown you. When the Will imagines after somewhat, then enters it into that somewhat, and this somewhat takes presently the Will into itself, and overclouds it, so as it can have no Light, but must dwell in Darkness, unless it return back out of that somewhat into nothing. But when the Will imagines or lusts after nothing, then it enters into nothing, where it receives the Will of God into itself, and so dwells in Light, and works all its Works in it.

Disciple. I am now satisfied that the main Cause of anyone's spiritual Blindness, is his letting his Will into somewhat, or into that which he has wrought, of whatever Nature it might be, Good or Evil, and his setting his Heart and Affections upon the Work of his own Hands or Brain; and that when the earthly Body perishes, then the Soul must be imprisoned in that very Thing which it shall have received and let in; and if the Light of God be not in it, being deprived of the Light of this World, it cannot but be found in a dark Prison.

Master. This is a very precious Gate of Knowledge; I am glad you take it into such Consideration. The understanding of the whole Scripture is contained in it; and all that has been written from the Beginning of the World to this Day, may be found herein, by him that having entered with his Will into Nothing, has there found All Things, by finding God; from Whom, and to Whom, and in Whom are All Things. By this Means you shall come to hear and see God; and after this earthly Life is ended, to see with the Eye of Eternity all the Wonders of God and of Nature, and more particularly those which shall be wrought by you in the Flesh, or all that the Spirit of God shall have given you to labor out for yourself and your Neighbor, or all that the Eye of Reason enlightened from above, may at any Time have manifested to you. Delay not therefore to enter in by this Gate, which if you see in the Spirit, as some highly favored Souls have seen it, you see in the Supernatural

Ground, all that God is, and can do; you see also therewith, as one has said who was taken thereinto, through Heaven, Hell and Earth; and through the Essence of all Essences. Whosoever finds it, has found all that he can desire. Here is the Virtue and Power of the Love of God displayed. Here is the Height and Depth; here is the Breadth and Length thereof manifested, as ever the Capacity of your Soul can contain. By this you shall come into that Ground out of which all Things are originated, and in which they subsist; and in it you shall reign over all God's Works, as a Prince of God.

Disciple. Pray tell me, dear Master where does it dwell in man?

Master. Where Man dwells not: there has it its seat in Man.

Disciple. Where is that in a Man, where Man dwells not in himself?

Master. It is the surrendered Ground of a Soul to which nothing cleaves.

Disciple. Where is the Ground in any Soul, to which there will nothing stick? Or, where is that which abides and dwells not in something?

Master. It is the Centre of Rest and Motion in the surrendered Will of a truly contrite Spirit, which is crucified to the World. This Centre of the Will is impenetrable consequently to the World, the Devil, and Hell: Nothing in all the World can enter into it, or adhere to it, though never so many Devils should be in the Confederacy against it; because the Will is dead with Christ unto the World, but quickened with Him in the Centre thereof, after His blessed Image. Here it is where Man dwells not; and where no Self abides, or can abide.

Disciple. O where is this naked Ground of the Soul void of all Self? And how shall I come at the hidden Centre where God dwells, and not man? Tell me plainly, loving Sir, where it is, and how it is to be found of me, and entered into?

Master. There where the Soul has slain its own Will, and wills no more any Thing as from itself, but only as God wills, and as His Spirit moves upon the Soul, shall this appear: Where the Love of Self is banished, there dwells the Love of God. For so much of the Soul's own Will as is dead unto itself, even so much room has the Will of God, which is His Love, taken up in that Soul. The Reason whereof is this:

Where its own Will did before sit, there is now nothing; and where nothing is, there it is that the Love of God works alone.

Disciple. But how shall I comprehend it?

Master. If you go about to comprehend it, then it will fly away from you; but if you surrender yourself wholly up to it, then it will abide with you, and become the Life of your Life, and be natural to you.

Disciple. And how can this be without dying, or the whole Destruction of my Will?

Master. Upon this entire Surrender and yielding up of your Will, the Love of God in you becomes the Life of your Nature; it does not kill you, but quickens you, who are now dead to yourself in your own Will, according to its proper Life, even the Life of God. And then you live, yet not to your own Will; but you live to His Will; forasmuch as your Will becomes His Will. So then it is no longer your Will, but the Will of God; no longer the Love of yourself, but the Love of God, which moves and operates in you; and then, being thus comprehended in it, you are dead indeed as to yourself, but are alive unto God. So being dead you live, or rather God lives in you by His Spirit; and His Love is made to you Life from the Dead. Never could you with all your seeking, have comprehended it; but it has apprehended you. Much less could you have comprehended it: But now it has comprehended you; and so the Treasure of Treasures is found.

Disciple. How is it that *so few* Souls find it when *so many* would be glad enough to have it?

Master. They all seek it in somewhat, and so they find it not: For where there is somewhat for the Soul to adhere to, there the Soul finds but that somewhat only, and takes up its Rest therein, until it sees that it is to be found in nothing, and goes out of the somewhat into nothing, even into that nothing out of which all Things may be made. The Soul here says, "I have nothing, for I am utterly naked and stripped of every Thing: I can do nothing; for I have no Manner of Power, but am as Water poured out: I am nothing; for all that I am is no more than an Image of Being, and only God is to me I AM; and so sitting down in my own Nothingness, I give Glory to the Eternal Being, and will nothing myself, that so God may will All in me, being unto me my God and All Things." Herein now it is that so very few

find this most precious Treasure in the Soul, though everyone would so fain have it; and might also have it, were it not for this something in everyone which obstructs it.

Disciple. But if the Love should proffer itself to a Soul, could not that Soul find it, nor lay hold on it, without going for it into Nothing?

Master. No verily. Men seek and find not, because they seek it not in the naked Ground where it lies; but in something or other where it never will be, neither can be. They seek it in their own Will, and they find it not. They seek it in their Self-Desire, and they meet not with it. They look for it in an Image, or in an Opinion, or in Affection, or a natural Devotion and Fervor, and they lose the Substance by thus hunting after a Shadow. They search for it in something sensible or imaginary, in somewhat which they may have a more peculiar natural Inclination for, and Adhesion to; and so they miss of what they seek, for Want of diving into the Supersensual and Supernatural Ground where the Treasure is hid. Now, should the Love graciously condescend to Proffer itself to such as these, and even to present itself evidently before the Eye of their Spirit, yet would it find no Place in them at all, neither could it be held by them, or remain with them.

Disciple. Why not, if the Love should be willing and ready to offer itself, and to stay with them?

Master. Because the Imaginariness which is in their own Will has set up itself in the Place thereof: And so this Imaginariness would have the Love in it; but the Love flies away, for it is its Prison. The Love may offer itself; but it cannot abide where the Self-Desire attracts or imagines. That Will which attracts nothing, and to which nothing adheres, is only capable of receiving it; for it dwells only in nothing, as I said, and therefore they find it not.

Disciple. If it dwell only in nothing, what is now the Office of it in nothing?

Master. The Office of the Love here is to penetrate incessantly into something; and if it penetrate into, and find a Place in something which is standing still and at Rest, then its Business is to take Possession thereof. And when it has there taken Possession, then it rejoices therein with its flaming Love-Fire, even as the Sun does in the visible World. And then the Office of it, is without Intermission to enkindle

a Fire in this something, which may burn it up; and then, with the Flames thereof exceedingly to enflame itself, and raise the Heat of the Love- Fire by it, even seven Degrees higher.

Disciple. O, loving Master, how shall I understand this?

Master. If it but once kindle a Fire within you, my Son, you shall then certainly feel how it consumes all that which it touches; you shall feel it in the burning up yourself, and swiftly devouring all Egoity, or that which you call *I* and *Me*, as standing in a separate Root, and divided from the Deity, and Fountain of your Being. And when this enkindling is made in you, then the Love does so exceedingly rejoice in your Fire, as you would not for all the World be out of it; yea, would rather suffer yourself to be killed, than to enter into your something again. This Fire now must grow hotter and hotter, till it has perfected its Office with respect to you, and therefore will not give over, till it come to the seventh Degree. Its Flame hence also will be so very great, that it will never leave you, though it should even cost you your temporal Life; but it would go with you in its sweet loving Fire into Death; and if you went also into Hell, it would break Hell in Pieces also for your Sake, Nothing is more certain than this; for it is stronger than Death and Hell.

Disciple. Enough, my dearest Master, I can no longer endure that any Thing should divert me from it. But how shall I find the nearest Way to it?

Master. Where the Way is hardest, there go you; and what the World casts away, that take you up. What the World does, that do you not; but in all Things walk you contrary to the World. So you come the nearest Way to that which you are seeking.

Disciple. If I should in all Things walk contrary to other People, I would be in a very unquiet and sad State; and the World would not fail to account me for a Madman.

Master. I bid you not, Child, to do Harm to anyone, thereby to create to yourself any Misery or Unquietness. This is not what I mean by walking contrary in every Thing to the World. But because the World, as the World, loves only Deceit and Vanity, and walks in false and treacherous Ways; thence, if you have a Mind to act a clean contrary Part to the Ways thereof, without any Exception or Reserve

whatsoever, Walk you only in the right Way, which is called the Way of Light, as that of the World is properly the Way of Darkness. For the right Way, even the path of Light is contrary to all the ways of the World.

But whereas you are afraid of creating for yourself Trouble and Inquietude, that indeed, will be according to the Flesh. In the World you must have Trouble, and your Flesh will not fail to be unquiet, and to give you Occasion of continual Repentance. Nevertheless in this very Anxiety of Soul, arising either from the World or the Flesh, the Love does most willingly enkindle itself, and its cheering and conquering Fire is but made to blaze forth with greater Strength for the Destruction of that Evil. And whereas you do also say, that the World will for this esteem you mad; it is true the World will be apt enough to censure you for a Madman in walking contrary to it: And you are not to be surprised if the Children thereof laugh at you, calling you silly Fool. For the way to the Love of God is Folly to the World, but is Wisdom to the Children of God. Hence, whenever the World perceives this Holy Fire of Love in God's Children, it concludes immediately that they are turned Fools, and are besides themselves. But to the Children of God, that which is despised by the World is the Greatest Treasure; yea, so great a Treasure it is, as no Life can express, nor Tongue so much as name what this enflaming, all-conquering Love of God is. It is brighter than the Sun; it is sweeter than any Thing that is called sweet; it is stronger than all Strength; it is more nutrimental than Food; more cheering to the Heart than Wine, and more pleasant than all the Joy and Pleasantness of this World. Whosoever obtains it, is richer than any Monarch on Earth and he who gets it, is nobler than any Emperor can be, and more potent and absolute than all Power and Authority.

OF HEAVEN and HELL

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN A SCHOLAR AND HIS MASTER

SHOWING whither the blessed and the damned Souls go when they depart from their Bodies; and How Heaven and Hell are in Man; Where the Angels and Devils

dwell in this World's Time; How far Heaven and Hell are asunder; and What and Whence the Angels and Human Souls are; What the Body of Man is; and Why the Soul is capable of receiving Good and Evil; Of the Destruction of the World; Of Man's Body in and after the Resurrection; Where Heaven and Hell shall be; Of the Last Judgment; and Why the Strife in the Creature must be.

OF HEAVEN AND HELL

A DIALOGUE between JUNIUS, a SCHOLAR, and THEOPHORUS, his MASTER

The Scholar asked his Master, saying; Whither goes the Soul when the Body dies?

His master answered him; There is no Necessity for it to go any whither.

What not! *said the inquisitive Junius:* Must not the Soul leave the Body at Death, and go either to Heaven or Hell? It needs no going forth, *replied the venerable*

Theophorus: Only the outward mortal Life with the Body shall separate themselves from the Soul. The Soul has Heaven and Hell within itself before, according as it is written, "**The Kingdom of God comes not with Observation, neither shall they say, Lo here! or Lo there! For behold the Kingdom of God is within you.**" And whichever of the two, that is, either Heaven or Hell is manifested in it, in that the Soul stands.

Here Junius said to his Master; This is hard to understand. Does it not enter into Heaven or Hell, as a Man enters into a House; or as one goes through a Hole or Casement, into an unknown Place; so goes it not into another World?

The Master spoke and said; No. There is verily no such Kind of entering in; forasmuch as Heaven and Hell are everywhere, being universally co-extended.

How is that possible? *said the Scholar.* What, can Heaven and Hell be here present, where we are now sitting? And if one of them might, can you make me believe that both should ever be here together?

Then spoke the Master in this Manner: I have said that Heaven is everywhere present; and it is true. For God is in Heaven; and God is everywhere. I have said

also, that Hell must be in like Manner everywhere; and that is also true. For the **wicked One**, who is the Devil, is in Hell; and the whole World, as the Apostle has taught us, lies in the **wicked One**, or the **evil One**; which is as much as to say, not only that the Devil is in the World, but also that the World is in the Devil; and if in the Devil, then in Hell too, because he is there. So Hell therefore is everywhere, as well as Heaven; which is the Thing that was to be proved.

The Scholar, startled hereat, said, Pray make me to understand this. *To whom the Master said:* Understand then what Heaven is: **It is but the Turning in of the Will into the Love of God.** Wherever you find God manifesting Himself in Love, there you find Heaven, without travelling for it so much as one Foot. And by this understand also what Hell is, and where it is. I say unto you, it is **but the Turning in of the Will into the Wrath of God.** Wherever the Anger of God does more or less manifest itself, there certainly is more or less of Hell, in whatsoever Place it be. So that it is but the Turning in of your Will either into His Love, or into His Anger; and you are accordingly either in Heaven or in Hell. Mark it well. And this now comes to pass in this present Life, whereof St. Paul speaking, says, "**Our Conversation is in Heaven.**" And the Lord Christ says also; "**My Sheep HEAR my Voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give them the Eternal Life; and none shall pluck them out of my Hand.**" Observe, he says not, **I will give** them - after this Life is ended; but **I give** them, that is, **now** - in the Time of this Life. And what else is this Gift of Christ to His Followers but an Eternity of Life; which for certain, can be nowhere but in Heaven? And also if Christ is in Heaven, and they who follow Him in the Regeneration are in His Hand, then are they where He is, and so cannot be out of Heaven: Yea, moreover none shall be able to pluck them out of Heaven, because it is He who holds them there, and they are in His Hand which nothing can resist. All therefore does consist in the Turning in, or Entering of the Will into Heaven, by HEARING the Voice of Christ, and both **Knowing** Him and **Following** Him. And so on the contrary it is also. Do you understand this?

His Scholar said to him; I think, in part, I do. But how comes this entering of the Will into Heaven to pass?

The Master answered him; This then I will endeavor to satisfy you in; but you must be very attentive to what I shall say unto you. Know then, my Son, that when

the Ground of the Will yields itself up to God, then it sinks out of its own Self, and out of and beyond all Ground and Place that is or can be imagined, into a certain unknown Deep, where God only is manifest, and where He only works and wills. And then it becomes nothing to itself, as to its OWN Working and Willing; and so God works and wills in it. And God dwells in this surrendered Will; by which the soul is sanctified, and so fitted to come into Divine Rest. Now in this Case when the Body breaks, the Soul is thoroughly penetrated all over with the Divine Love, and so thoroughly illuminated with the Divine Light, even as a glowing hot Iron is by the Fire, by which being penetrated throughout, it loses its Darkness and becomes bright and shining. Now this is **the Hand of Christ**, where God's Love thoroughly inhabits the Soul, and is in it a shining Light, and a new glorious Life. And then the Soul is in Heaven, and is a Temple of the Holy Ghost, and is itself the very Heaven of God, wherein He dwells. Lo, this is the entering of the Will into Heaven and how it comes to pass.

Be pleased, Sir, to proceed, *said the Scholar*, and let me know how it fares on the other Side.

The Master said: The godly Soul, you see, is in the **Hand of Christ**, that is in Heaven, as He Himself has told us; and in what Manner this comes to be so, you have also heard. But the ungodly Soul is not willing in this Lifetime to come into the Divine Surrender of its Will, or to enter into the Will of God; but goes on still in its OWN Lust and Desire, in Vanity and Falsehood, and so enters into the Will of the Devil. It receives thereupon into itself nothing but Wickedness; nothing but Lying, Pride, Covetousness, Envy, and Wrath; and into that it gives up its Will and whole Desire. This is the Vanity of the Will; and this same Vanity or vain Shadow must also in like Manner be manifested in the Soul, which has yielded up itself to be its Servant; and must work therein, even as the Love of God works in the regenerated Will, and penetrates it all over, as Fire does Iron.

And it is not possible for this Soul to come into the **Rest of God**; because God's Anger is manifested in it, and works in it. Now when the Body is parted from this Soul, then begins the Eternal Melancholy and Despair; because it now finds that it is become altogether Vanity, even a Vanity most vexatious to itself, and a distracting Fury, and a Self-tormenting Abomination. Now it perceives itself disappointed of every Thing which it had before fancied, and blind, and naked, and

wounded, and hungry, and thirsty; without the least Prospect of being ever relieved, or Obtaining so much as one Drop of Water of Eternal Life. And it feels itself to be a mere Devil to itself, and to be its own Vile Executioner and Tormentor; and is affrighted at its own ugly dark Form, appearing as a most hideous and monstrous Worm, and fain would flee from itself, if it could, but it cannot, being fast bound with the Chains of the Dark Nature, into which it had sunk itself when in the Flesh. And so not having learned nor accustomed itself to sink down into the Divine Grace, and being also strongly possessed with the Idea of God, as an Angry and Jealous God, the poor Soul is both afraid and ashamed to bring its Will into God, by which Deliverance might possibly come to it. The Soul is afraid to do it, as Fearing to be consumed by so doing, under the Apprehension of the Deity as a mere **devouring Fire**. The Soul is also **ashamed** to do it, as being confounded at its own Nakedness and Monstrosity; and therefore would, if it were possible, hide itself from the Majesty of God, and cover its abominable Form from His most holy Eye, though by casting itself still deeper into the Darkness, wherefore then it **will not** enter into God; nay, it cannot enter with its false Will; yea, though it should strive to enter, yet it cannot enter into the Love, because of the Will which has reigned in it. For such a Soul is thereby captivated in the Wrath; yea, is itself but **mere Wrath**, having by its false Desire, which it had awakened in itself, comprehended and shut up itself therewith, and so transformed itself into the Nature and Property thereof.

And since also the Light of God does not shine in it, nor the Love of God incline it, the Soul is moreover a **great Darkness**, and is withal an anxious **Fire-Source**, carrying about a Hell within itself, and not being able to discern the least Glimpse of the Light of God, or to feel the least Spark of His love. Thus it dwells in itself as in Hell, and needs no entering into Hell at all, or being carried thither; for in whatever Place it may be, so long as it is in itself, it is in the Hell. And though it should travel far, and cast itself many hundred thousand Leagues from its present Place, to be out of Hell; yet still would it remain in the Hellish Source and Darkness.

If this be so, how then comes it, *said the Scholar to Theophorus*, that a Heavenly Soul does not in the Time of this Life perfectly perceive the Heavenly Light and Joy; and the Soul which is without God in the World, does not also here feel Hell, as well as hereafter? Why should they not both be perceived and felt as well in this

Life as in the next, seeing that both of them are in Man, and one of them (as you have shown) works in every Man?

To whom Theophorus presently returns this Answer: The Kingdom of Heaven is in the Saints operative and manifestative of itself by **Faith**. They who carry God within them, and live by His Spirit, find the **Kingdom of God** in their **Faith**; and they feel the Love of God in their **Faith**, by which the Will has given up itself into God, and is made Godlike. In a Word, all is transacted within them **by Faith**, which is to them the Evidence of the Eternal Invisibles, and a great Manifestation in their Spirit of this Divine Kingdom, which is within them. But their natural Life is nevertheless encompassed with Flesh and Blood; and this Standing in a Contrariety thereto, and being placed through the Fall in the Principle of God's Anger, and surrounded about with the World, which by no means can be reconciled to Faith, these faithful Souls cannot but be very much exposed to Attacks from this World, wherein they are Sojourners; neither can they be insensible of their being thus compassed about with Flesh and Blood, and with this World's vain Lust, which ceases not continually to penetrate the outward mortal Life, and to tempt them in manifold Ways, even as it did Christ. Whence the World on one side, and Devil on the other, not without the Curse of God's Anger in Flesh and Blood, do thoroughly penetrate and sift the Life; whereby it comes to pass that the Soul is often in Anxiety when these three are all set upon it together, and when Hell thus assaults the Life, and would manifest itself in the Soul. But the Soul hereupon sinks down into the Hope of the Grace of God, and stands like a beautiful Rose in the Midst of Thorns, until the Kingdom of this World shall fall from it in the Death of the Body; And then the Soul first becomes truly manifest in the Love of God, and in His Kingdom, which is the Kingdom of Love; having henceforth nothing more to hinder it. But during this Life she must walk with Christ in this World; and then Christ delivers her out of her own Hell, by penetrating her with His Love throughout, and standing by her in Hell, and even changing her Hell into Heaven.

But in that you ask, *why do not the Souls which are without God feel Hell in this World?* I answer; They bear it about with them in their wicked Consciences, but they know it not; because the World has put out their Eyes, and its deadly Cup has cast them likewise into a Sleep, a most fatal Sleep. Notwithstanding which it must be owned that the Wicked do frequently feel Hell within them during the Time of

this mortal Life, though they may not apprehend that it is Hell, because of the earthly Vanity which cleaves unto them from without, and the sensible Pleasures and Amusements wherewith they are intoxicated. And moreover it is to be noted, that the outward Life in every such one has yet the Light of the outward Nature, which rules in that Life; and so the Pain of Hell cannot, so long as that has Rule, be revealed. But when the Body dies or breaks away, so as the Soul cannot any longer enjoy such temporal Pleasure and Delight, nor the Light of this outward World, which is wholly thereupon extinguished as to it; then the Soul stands in an eternal Hunger and Thirst after such Vanities as it was here in Love withal, but yet can reach nothing but that false Will, which it had impressed in itself while in the Body; and wherein it had abounded to its great Loss. And now whereas it had too much of its Will in this Life, and yet was not contented therewith, it has after this Separation by Death, as little of it; which creates in it an everlasting Thirst after that which it can henceforth never more obtain, and causes it to be in a perpetual anxious Lust after Vanity, according to its former Impression, and in a continual Rage of Hunger after those Sorts of Wickedness and Lewdness into which it was immersed, while being in the Flesh. Fain would it do more Evil still, but that it has not either wherein or wherewith to effect the Same, left to it; and therefore it does perform this only **in itself**. All is now internally transacted, as if it were outward; and so the Ungodly Soul is tormented by those Furies which are in his own Mind, and begotten upon himself by himself. For he is verily become his own Devil and Tormentor; and that by which he sinned here, when the Shadow of this World is passed away, abides still with him in the Impression, and is made his Prison and his Hell. But this hellish Hunger and Thirst cannot be fully manifested in the Soul, till the Body which ministered to the Soul what it lusted after, and with which the Soul was so bewitched, as to dote thereupon, and pursue all its Cravings, be stripped off from it.

I perceive then, *said Junius to his Master*, that the Soul having played the Wanton with the Body in all Voluptuousness, and having served the Lusts thereof during this Life, retains still the very same Inclinations and Affections which it had before; so that when it has no more Opportunity nor Capacity to satisfy them; and when it finds it cannot, then Hell will open in that Soul, which before had been shut up, by Means of the outward Life in the Body, and of the Light of this World. Do I rightly understand?

Theophorus said, It is very rightly understood by you. Go on.

On the other hand, *the Scholar went on*, I clearly perceive by what I have heard, that Heaven cannot but be in a loving Soul, which is possessed of God, and has subdued thereby the Body to the Obedience of the Spirit in all Things, and perfectly immersed itself into the Will and Love of God. And when the Body dies, and this Soul is hence redeemed from the Earth, it is now evident to me, that the Life of God which was hidden in it, will display Itself gloriously, and Heaven will consequently be then manifested. But notwithstanding, if there be not also a local Heaven besides, and a local Hell, I am still at a loss where to place no small Part of the Creation, if not the greatest. For where must all the intellectual Inhabitants abide?

In their own Principle, *answered the Master*, whether it be of Light or of Darkness. For every created intellectual Being remains in its Deeds and Essences, in its Wonders and Properties, in its Life and Image; and therein it beholds and feels God, as Who is everywhere, whether it be in the Love, or in the Wrath.

If it be in the Love of God, then beholds it God accordingly, and feels Him as He is Love. But if it has captivated itself in the Wrath of God, then it cannot behold God otherwise than in the wrathful Nature, nor perceive Him otherwise than as an incensed and vindictive Spirit. All Places are alike to it, if it be in God's Love; and if it be not there, every Place is Hell alike. What Place can bound a Thought? Or what needs any understanding Spirit to be kept here or there, in order to its Happiness or Misery? Verily, Wherever it is, it is in the **abyssal** World, where there is neither End nor Limit. And whither, I pray, should it go? Since though it should go a thousand Miles off, or a thousand Times ten thousand Miles, and this ten thousand Times over, beyond the Bounds of the Universe, and into the imaginary Spaces above the Stars, yet it were then still in the very same Point from whence it went out. For God is **the Place of Spirit**; if it may be lawful to attribute to Him such a Name, to which the Body has a Relation: And in God there is no Limit; both near and far off is here all one; and be it in His Love, or be it in His Anger, the **abyssal Will** of the Spirit is altogether unconfined. It is swift as Thought, passing through all Things; it is magical, and nothing corporeal or from without can let or obstruct it; it dwells in its Wonders, and they are its House.

Thus it is with every Intellectual, whether of the Order of Angels, or of human Souls; and you need not fear but there will be Room enough for them all, be they ever so many; and such also as shall best suit them, even according to their Election and Determination; and which may thence very well be called his **own Place**.

At which, *said the Scholar*; I remember, indeed, that it is written concerning the great Traitor, that he went after Death to his **own Place**.

The Master here said: The same is true of every Soul, when it departs this mortal Life: And it is true in like Manner of every Angel, or Spirit whatsoever; which is necessarily determined by its own Choice. As God is everywhere, so also the Angels are everywhere; but each one in its own Principle, and in its own Property, or (if you had rather) in **its own Place**. The same Essence of God, which is a Place of Spirits, is confessed to be everywhere; but the Appropriation, or Participation thereof is different to everyone, according as each has attracted magically in the Earnestness of the Will. The same Divine Essence which is with the Angels of God above, is with us also below: And the same Divine Nature which is with us, is likewise with them; but after different Manners and in different Degrees, communicated and participated.

And what I have said here of the **Divine**, is no less to be considered by you in the Participation of the Diabolical Essence and Nature, which is the **Power of Darkness**, as to the manifold Modes, Degrees, and Appropriations thereof in the false Will. In this World there is Strife between them: but when this World has reached in any one the Limit, then the Principle catches that which is its own: and so the Soul receives Companions accordingly, that is, either Angels or Devils.

To whom the Scholar said again: Heaven and Hell then being in us at Strife in the Time of this Life, and God Himself being also thus near unto us, where can Angels and Devils dwell?

And the Master answered him thus: Where you do not dwell as to your **Self-hood**, and to your **OWN Will**, there the holy Angels dwell with you, and everywhere all over round about you. Remember this well. On the contrary, where you dwell as to yourself, in Self-Seeking, and Self-Will, there to be sure the Devils will be with

you, and will take up their abode with you, and dwell all over you, and round about you everywhere. Which may God in his Mercy prevent!

I understand not this, *said the Scholar*, so perfectly well as I could wish. Be pleased to make it a little more clear to me.

The Master then spoke: Mark well what I am going to say. Where the Will of God in any Thing wills, there is God manifested; and in this very manifestation of God, the Angels do dwell. But where God in any Creature wills not with the Will of that Creature, there God is not manifested to it, neither can He be; but dwells in Himself, without the Co-operation and Subjection of the Creature to Him in Humility. There God is an unmanifest God to the Creature. So the Angels dwell not with such a one; for wherever they dwell, there is the Glory of God; and they make His Glory. What then dwells in such a Creature as this? God dwells not therein; the Angels dwell not therein; God wills not therein, the Angels also will not therein. The case is evidently this, in that Soul or Creature its OWN Will is without God's Will, and there the Devil dwells; and with him all whatever is without God, and without Christ. This is the Truth; lay it to Heart.

The Scholar: It is possible I may ask several impertinent Questions; but I beseech you, good Sir, to have Patience with me, and to pity my Ignorance, if I ask what may appear to you perhaps ridiculous, or may not seem fit for me to expect an Answer to. For I have several Questions still to propound to you; but I am ashamed of my own Thoughts in this Matter.

The Master: Be plain with me, and propose whatever is upon your Mind; yea, be not ashamed even to appear ridiculous, so that by Querying you may but become wiser.

The Scholar thanked his Master for this Liberty, and said: How far then are Heaven and Hell asunder?

To whom he answered thus: As far as Day and Night; or as far as Something and Nothing. They are in one another, and yet they are at the greatest Distance one from the other. Nay, the one of them is as nothing to the other; and yet they cause Joy and Grief to one another. Heaven is throughout the whole World, and It is also without the World over all, even everywhere that is, or that can be but so much as

imagined. It fills all; It is within all; It is without all; It encompasses all; without Division, without Place; working by a Divine Manifestation, and flowing forth universally, but not going in the least out of Itself. For It works only in Itself, and is revealed, being ONE, and undivided in ALL. It appears only through the Manifestation of God; and never but in Itself only: And in that Being which comes into It, or in that wherein It is manifested, there also it is that God is manifested. Because Heaven is nothing else but a Manifestation or Revelation of the Eternal ONE, wherein ALL the Working and Willing is in quiet LOVE.

So in like Manner Hell also is through the whole World, and dwells and works but in itself, and in that wherein the Foundation of Hell is manifested, namely, in Self-hood, and in the False Will. The visible World has both in it; and there is no Place but what Heaven and Hell may be found or revealed in it. Now Man as to his temporal Life, is only of the visible World; and therefore during the Time of this Life, he sees not the spiritual World. For the outward World with its Substance, is a Cover to the spiritual World, even as the Body is to the Soul. But when the outward Man dies, then the spiritual World, as to the Soul, which has now its Covering taken away, is manifested either in the Eternal Light with the holy Angels, or in the Eternal Darkness, with the Devils.

The Scholar further queried: What is an Angel, or a human Soul that they can be thus manifested either in God's Love or Anger, either in Light or Darkness?

To whom Theophorus answered: They come from one and the Self-same Original: They are little Branches of the Divine Wisdom, of the Divine Will, sprung from the Divine Word, and made Objects of the Divine Love. They are out of the Ground of Eternity, whence Light and Darkness do spring: Darkness, which consists in the receiving of Self-Desire: and Light, which consists in Willing the same Thing with God. For in the conformity of the Will with God's Will, is Heaven; and Wherever there is this Willing with God, there the Love of God is undoubtedly in the Working, and His Light will not fail to manifest Itself. But in the Self-Attraction of the Soul's Desire, or in the Reception of Self into the Willing of any Spirit, Angelical or Human, the Will of God works difficultly, and is to that Soul or Spirit nothing but Darkness; out of which, notwithstanding, the Light may be manifested. And this Darkness is the Hell of that Spirit wherein it is. For

Heaven and Hell are nothing else but a Manifestation of the Divine Will either in Light or Darkness, according to the Properties of the Spiritual World.

What the Body of Man is; and why the Soul is capable of receiving Good and Evil.

Scholar. WHAT then is the Body of Man?

Master. It is the visible World; an Image and Quintessence, or Compound of all that the World is; and the visible World is a Manifestation of the inward spiritual World, come out of the eternal Light, and out of the eternal Darkness, out of the spiritual Compaction or Connection; and it is also an Image or Figure of Eternity, whereby Eternity has made itself visible; where Self-Will and SURRENDERED Will, viz. Evil and Good, work one with the other. Such a Substance is the outward Man. For God created Man of the outward World, and breathed into him the inward spiritual World for a Soul and intelligent Life; and therefore in the Things of the outward World, Man can receive and work Evil and Good.

Of the Destruction of the World; of Man's Body, in and after the Resurrection; where Heaven and Hell shall be; of the Last Judgment; and wherefore the Strife in the Creature must be.

Scholar. WHAT shall be after this World, when all Things perish and come to an End?

Master. The material Substance only ceases; viz. the four Elements, the Sun, Moon, and Stars. And then the inward World will be wholly visible and manifest. But whatsoever has been wrought by the Will or Spirit of a Man in this World's Time, whether evil or good shall not cease. I say, every such Work shall there separate itself in a spiritual Manner, either into the Eternal Light, or into the Eternal Darkness. For that which is born from each Man's Will shall penetrate and passes again into that which is like itself. And there the Darkness is called Hell, and is an **eternal forgetting of all Good**; and the Light is called the Kingdom of God, and is an eternal Joy in and to the Saints, who continually glorify and praise God, for having delivered them from the Torment of Evil. The Last Judgment is but a Kindling of the Fire both of God's Love and Anger, in which the Matter of every Substance perishes, and each Fire shall attract into itself its own, that is, the

Substance that is like itself: Thus God's Fire of Love will draw into It whatsoever is born in the Love of God, or Love-Principle, in which also It shall burn after the Manner of Love, and yield Itself into that Substance. But the Torment will draw into itself what is wrought in the Anger of God in Darkness, and consume the false Substance; and then there will remain only the painful aching Will in its own proper Nature, Image and Figure.

Scholar. With what Matter and Form shall the human Body rise?

Master. It is sown a natural gross and elementary Body, which in this Lifetime is like the outward Elements; yet in this gross Body there is a subtle Power and Virtue. As in the Earth also there is a subtle good Virtue, which is like the Sun, and is one and the same with the Sun; which also in the Beginning of Time did spring and proceed out of the Divine Power and Virtue, from whence all the good Virtue of the Body is likewise derived. This good Virtue of the mortal Body shall come again and live forever in a Kind of transparent crystalline material Property, in spiritual Flesh and Blood; as shall return also the good Virtue of the Earth, for the Earth likewise shall become crystalline, and the Divine Light shine in every Thing that has a Being, Essence or Substance. And as the gross Earth shall perish and never return, so also the gross Flesh of Man shall perish and not live forever. But all Things must appear before the Judgment, and in the Judgment be separated by the Fire; yea, both the Earth, and also the Ashes of the human Body. For when God shall once move the spiritual World, every Spirit shall attract its spiritual Substance to itself. A good Spirit and Soul shall draw to itself its good Substance, and an evil one its evil Substance. But we must here understand by Substance, such a material Power and Virtue, the Essence of which is mere Virtue, like a material Tincture (such a Thing as has all Figures, Colors, and Virtues in it, and is at the same Time transparent), the Grossness whereof shall have perished in all Things.

Scholar. Shall we not rise again with our visible Bodies, and live in them forever?

Master. When the visible World perishes, then all that has come out of it, and has been external, shall perish with it. There shall remain of the World only the heavenly crystalline Nature and Form, and of Man also only the spiritual Earth; for Man shall be then wholly like the spiritual World, which as yet is hidden.

Scholar. Shall there be Husband and Wife, or Children or Kindred, in the heavenly Life, or shall one associate with another, as they do in this Life?

Master. Why are you so fleshly-minded? There will be neither Husband nor Wife, but all will be like the Angels of God, Viz. Masculine Virgins. There will be neither Son nor Daughter, Brother nor Sister, but all of one Stock and Kindred. For all are but One in Christ, as a Tree and its Branches are one, though distinct as Creatures; but God is All in All. Indeed, there will be spiritual Knowledge of what everyone has been, and done, but no Possessing or Enjoying, or Desire of Possessing earthly Things, or Enjoying fleshly Relations any more.

Scholar. Shall they all have that Eternal Joy and Glorification alike?

Master. The Scripture says, "**Such as the People is, such is their God.**"

And in another Place, "**With the holy you are holy, and with the perverse you are perverse.**"

And St. Paul says, "**In the Resurrection one shall differ from another in Glory, as do the Sun, Moon, and Stars.**"

Therefore know, that the Blessed shall indeed all enjoy the Divine Working in and upon them; but their Virtue, and Illumination or Glory, shall be very different, according as they have been endued in this Life with different Measures and Degrees of Power and Virtue in their painful Working. For the painful Working of the Creature in this Lifetime is the opening and begetting of Divine Power, by which that Power is made movable and operative. Now those who have wrought with Christ in this Lifetime, and not in the Lust of the Flesh, shall have great Power and transcendent Glorification in and upon them. But others, who have only expected, and relied upon, an imputed Satisfaction, **71** and in the meanwhile have served their Belly-God, and yet at last have turned, and obtained Grace; those, I say, shall not attain to so high a Degree of Power and Illumination. So that there will be as great a Difference of Degrees between them, as is between the Sun, Moon and Stars; or between the Flowers of the Field in their Varieties of Beauty, Power, and Virtue.

Scholar. How shall the World be judged, and by Whom?

Master. **Jesus Christ**, that "**Word of God which became Man**," shall by the Power of His Divine Stirring or Motion separate from Himself all that belongs not to Him, and shall wholly manifest His Kingdom in the Place or Space where this World now is; for the separating Motion works all over the Universe, through all at once.

Scholar. Whither shall the Devils and all the Damned be thrown, when the Place of this World is become the Kingdom of Christ, and as Such shall be glorified? Shall they be cast out of the Place of this World? Or shall Christ have, and manifest His Dominion, out of the Sphere or Place of this World?

Master. Hell shall remain in the Place or Sphere of this World everywhere, but hidden to the Kingdom of Heaven, as the Night is hidden in and to the Day. "**The Light shall shine forever in the Darkness, but the Darkness can never comprehend, or reach it.**" And the Light is the Kingdom of Christ; but the Darkness is Hell, wherein the Devils and the Wicked dwell; and thus they shall be suppressed by the Kingdom of Christ, and made his Footstool, viz. a Reproach.

Scholar. How shall all People and Nations be brought to Judgment?

Master. The Eternal Word of God, out of which every spiritual creaturely Life has proceeded, will move Itself at that Hour, according to Love and Anger, in every Life which is come out of the Eternity, and will draw every Creature before the Judgment of Christ, to be sentenced by this Motion of the World. The Life will then be manifested in all its Works, and every Soul shall see and feel its Judgment and Sentence in itself. For the Judgment is indeed immediately manifested in and to every Soul at the Departure of the Body; and the last Judgment is but a Return of the spiritual Body, and a Separation of the World, when the Evil shall be separated from the Good, in the substance of the World and of the human Body, and every Thing enters into its eternal Receptacle. And thus it is a Manifestation of the Mystery of God in every Substance and Life.

Scholar. How will the Sentence be pronounced?

Master. Here consider the Words of Christ:

"He will say to those on His Right hand, Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. For

I was hungry, and you gave Me Meat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me Drink; I was a Stranger, and you took Me in; naked, and you clothed Me. I was sick, and you visited Me, in Prison, and you came unto Me".

Then shall they answer Him, saying, "**Lord, when saw we You hungry, thirsty, a Stranger, naked, sick, or in Prison, and ministered thus unto You?"**

And shall the King answer and say unto them; "**Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, you have done it unto Me.**"

And unto the Wicked on His Left hand He will say, "**Depart from Me, you Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. For I was hungry, thirsty, a Stranger, naked, sick, and in Prison, and you ministered not unto Me.**"

And they shall also answer Him and say, "**When did we see You thus, and ministered not unto You?"**

And He will answer them, "**Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as you have not done it unto one of the least of these, you did it not to Me.**" And these shall depart into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life Eternal.

Scholar. Loving Master, pray tell me why Christ says, "**What you have done to the least of these, you have done to Me; and what you have not done to them, neither have you done it to Me.**" And how does a Man in his Working, do it to **Christ Himself?**

Master. Christ dwells really and essentially in the Faith of those that wholly yield up themselves to Him, and He gives them His Flesh for Food, and His Blood for Drink; and thus He possesses the Ground of their Faith, according to the interior or inward Man. And a True Christian is called a Branch of the Vine Christ, and a **72** Christian, because Christ dwells spiritually in him; therefore whatsoever Good any shall do to such a Christian in his bodily Necessities, it is done to Christ Himself, Who dwells in him. For such a Christian is not his own, but is wholly surrendered to Christ, and become His peculiar Possession, and consequently the good Deed is done to Christ **Himself**. Therefore also, whosoever shall withhold their Help from such a needy Christian, and forbear to serve him in his Necessity, they thrust Christ away from themselves, and despise Him in His Members. When a poor Person that

belongs thus to Christ, asks any Thing of you, and you deny it to him in his Necessity, you deny it to Christ Himself. And whatsoever hurt any shall do to such a Christian, they do it to Christ Himself. When any mock, scorn, revile, reject, or thrust away such a one, they do all that to Christ; but he that receives him, gives him Meat and Drink, or Apparel, and assists him in his necessities, does it likewise to Christ, and to a Fellow-Member of his own Body. Nay he even does it to himself, if he be a True Christian; for we are all One in Christ, as a Tree and its Branches are.

Scholar. How then will those subsist in the Day of that fierce Judgment, who afflict and vex the poor and distressed, and deprive them of their very Sweat; necessitating and constraining them by Force to submit to their Wills, and trampling upon them as their Footstools, only that they themselves may live in Pomp and Power, and spend the Fruits of this poor People's Sweat and Labor in Voluptuousness, Pride, and Vanity?

Master. Christ suffers in the Persecution of His Members. Therefore all the Wrong that such hard Exactors do to the poor Wretches under their Control, is done to Christ Himself; and falls under His severe Sentence and Judgment! And besides that, they help the Devil to augment his Kingdom; for by such Oppression of the Poor they draw them off from Christ, and make them seek unlawful Ways to fill their Bellies. Nay, they work for, and with the Devil himself, doing the very same Thing which he does; who, without Intermission, opposes the Kingdom of Christ, which consists only in Love. All these Oppressors, if they do not turn with their whole Hearts to Christ, and minister to, or serve Him, must go into Hell-Fire, which is fed and kept alive by nothing else but such mere Self, as that which they have exercised over the Poor here.

Scholar. But how will it fare with those, and how will they be able to stand that severe Trial, who in this Time do so fiercely contend about the Kingdom of Christ, and slander, revile, and persecute one another for their Religion, as they do?

Master. All such have not yet known Christ; and they are but as a Type or Figure of Heaven and Hell, striving with each other for the Victory. All rising, swelling Pride, which contends about Opinions, is an Image of Self. And whosoever has not Faith and Humility, nor lives in the Spirit of Christ, which is Love, is only armed

with the Anger of God, and helps forward the Victory of the imaginary Self, that is, the Kingdom of Darkness, and the Anger of God. For at the Day of Judgment all Self shall be given to the Darkness, as shall also all the unprofitable Contentions of Men; in which they seek not after Love, but merely after their imaginary Self, that they may exalt themselves by exalting and establishing their OWN Opinions; even stirring up Princes to Wars for the Sake of the same, and by that Means occasioning the Desolation of whole Countries of People. All such Things belong to the Judgment, which will separate the False from the True; and then all Images or Opinions shall cease, and all the Children of God shall dwell forever in the Love of Christ, and That in them. All whosoever in this Time of Strife, namely, from the Fall to the Resurrection, are not zealous in the Spirit of Christ, and desirous to promote Peace and Love, but seek and strive for themselves only, are of the Devil, and belong to the Pit of Darkness, and must consequently be separated from Christ. For in Heaven all serve God their Creator in Humble Love.

Scholar. Wherefore then does God suffer such Strife and Contention to be in this Time?

Master. The Life itself stands in Strife, that it may be made manifest, sensible, and palpable, and that the Wisdom may be made separable and known.

The Strife also constitutes the eternal Joy of the Victory. For there will arise great Praise and Thanksgiving in the Saints from the experimental Sense and Knowledge that Christ in them has overcome Darkness, and all the Self of Nature, and that they are at length totally delivered from the Strife; at which they shall rejoice eternally, when they shall know how the Wicked are recompensed. And therefore God suffers all Souls to stand in the Free-Will, that the eternal Dominion both of Love and Anger, of Light and Darkness, may be made manifest and known; and that every Life might cause and find its own Sentence in itself. For that which is now a Strife and Pain to the Saints in their wretched Warfare here, shall in the End be turned into great Joy to them; and that which has been a Joy and Pleasure to ungodly Persons in this World, shall afterwards be turned into eternal Torment and Shame to them. Therefore the Joy of the Saints must arise to them out of Death, as the Light arises out of a Candle by the Destruction and Consumption of it in its Fire; that so the Life may be freed from the Painfulness of Nature, and possess another World.

And as the Light has quite another Property than the Fire has, for It gives and yields Itself forth; whereas the Fire draws in and consumes itself; so the holy Life of Meekness springs forth through the Death of Self-Will, and then God's Will of Love only rules, and does ALL in ALL. For thus the Eternal ONE has attained Feeling and Separability, and brought Itself forth again with the Feeling, through Death in great Joyfulness; that there might be an Eternal Delight in the Infinite Unity, and an Eternal Cause of Joy; and therefore that which was before Painfulness, must now be the Ground and cause of this Motion or stirring to the Manifestation of all Things. And herein lies the Mystery of the hidden Wisdom of God.

Every one that asks receives, every one that seeks finds; and to everyone that knocks it shall be opened. The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us all. Amen.

Hebrews 12:22-24 *But you are come to Mount Zion, and to the City of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaks better things than the blood of Abel. Amen.*

Praise, Glory, and Thanksgiving, Wisdom, Honor and Power unto Him that sits on the throne, to our God, and to the Lamb forever and ever.

THE WAY FROM DARKNESS TO LIGHT

A DISCOURSE BETWEEN A SOUL HUNGRY AND THIRSTY AFTER THE FOUNTAIN OF LIFE, THE SWEET LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST, AND A SOUL ENLIGHTENED SHOWING: *Which Way one Soul should seek after and comfort another, and bring it by Means of its Knowledge into the Paths of Christ's Pilgrimage, and faithfully warn it of the thorny Way of the World, which leads the fallen Soul that naturally walks therein, into the Abyss or Pit of Hell.*

THE WAY FROM DARKNESS - TO TRUE ILLUMINATION

There was a poor Soul that had wandered out of Paradise and come into the Kingdom of this World; where the Devil met with it, and said to it, "Whither do you go, you Soul that are half blind?"

The Soul said: I would see and speculate into the Creatures of the World, which the Creator has made.

The Devil said: How will you see and speculate into them, when you cannot know their Essence and Property? You will look upon their Outside only, as upon a graven Image, and cannot know them thoroughly.

The Soul said: How may I come to know their Essence and Property?

The Devil said: Your Eyes would be opened to see them thoroughly, if you did but eat of that from whence the Creatures themselves are come to be good and evil. You would then be as God Himself is, and know what the Creature is.

The Soul said: I am now a noble and holy Creature; but if I should do so, the Creator has said, that I should die.

The Devil said: No, you should not die at all; but your eyes would be opened, and you should be as God Himself is, and be Master of Good and Evil. Also, you should be mighty, powerful, and very great, as I am; all the Subtlety that is in the Creatures would be made known to you.

The Soul said: If I had the Knowledge of Nature and of the Creatures, I would then rule the whole World as I pleased.

The Devil said: The whole Ground of that Knowledge lies in you. Do but turn your Will and Desire from God or Goodness into Nature and the Creatures, and then there will arise in you a Lust to taste; and so you may eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and by that means come to know all Things.

The Soul said: Well then, I will eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, that I may rule all Things by my own Power; and be of myself a Lord on Earth, and do what I will, as God Himself does.

The Devil said: I am the Prince of this World; and if you would rule on Earth, you must turn your Lust towards my Image, or desire to be like me, that you may get the Cunning, Wit, Reason, and Subtlety, that my Image has. Thus did the Devil present to the Soul the Vulcan in the Mercury (the Power that is in the fiery Root of the Creature), that is the fiery Wheel of Essence or Substance, in the Form of a Serpent.

Upon which, **The Soul said:** Behold, this is the Power, which can do all Things. -- What must I do to get it?

The Devil said: You yourself are also such a fiery Mercury. If you do break your Will off from God, and bring it into this Power and Skill, then your hidden Ground will be manifested in you, and you may work in the same Manner. But you must eat of that Fruit, wherein each of the four Elements in itself rules over the other, and is in Strife; the Heat striving against the Cold, and the Cold against the Heat; and so all the Properties of Nature work feelingly. And then you will instantly be as the fiery Wheel is, and so bring all Things into your own Power, and possess them as your own.

The Soul did so, and what happened thereupon. Now when the Soul broke its Will thus off from God, and brought it into the Mercury, or the fiery Will (which is the Root of Life and Power), there presently arose in it a Lust to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil; and the Soul did eat thereof. Which as soon as it had done so, Vulcan (or the artificer in the fire) instantly kindled the fiery Wheel of its substance, and thereupon all the Properties of Nature awoke in the Soul and each began to exercise its own Lust and Desire.

First arose the Lust of Pride; a Desire to be great, mighty and powerful; to bring all Things under Subjection to it, and so to be Lord itself without Control; despising all Humility and Equality, as esteeming itself the only prudent, witty and cunning One, and accounting every Thing Folly that is not according to its own Humor and Liking.

Secondly arose the Lust of Covetousness; a Desire of Getting, which would draw all Things to itself, into its own Possession. For when the Lust of Pride had turned away the Will from God, then the Life of the Soul would not trust God any further, but would now begin to take Care for itself; and therefore brought its Desire into

the Creatures, viz. into the Earth, Metals, Trees, and other Creatures. Thus the kindled fiery Life became hungry and covetous, when it had broken itself off from the Unity, Love and Meekness of God, and attracted to itself the four Elements and their Essence, and brought itself into the Condition of the Beasts; and so the Life became dark, empty and wrathful; and the heavenly Virtues and Colors went out, like a Candle extinguished.

Thirdly, there awoke in this fiery Life the stinging thorny Lust of Envy; a hellish Poison, a Property which all Devils have, and a Torment which makes the Life a mere Enmity to God, and to all Creatures. Which Envy raged furiously in the Desire of Covetousness, as a venomous Sting does in the Body. Envy cannot endure, but hates and would hurt or destroy that which Covetousness cannot draw to itself, by which hellish Passion the noble Love of the Soul is smothered.

Fourthly, there awoke in this fiery Life a Torment like Fire, viz. Anger; which would murder and remove out of the Way all who would not be subject to Pride. Thus the Ground and Foundation of Hell, which is called the Anger of God, was wholly manifested in this Soul. Whereby it lost the fair Paradise of God and the Kingdom of Heaven, and became such a Worm as the fiery Serpent was, which the Devil had presented to it in his own Image and Likeness. And so the Soul began to rule on Earth in a bestial Manner, and did all Things according to the Will of the Devil; living in mere Pride, Covetousness, Envy, and Anger, having no longer any true Love towards God. But there arose in the Stead thereof an evil bestial Love of filthy Lechery, Wantonness, and Vanity, and there was no Purity left in the Heart; for the Soul had forsaken Paradise, and taken the Earth into its Possession. Its Mind was wholly bent upon cunning Knowledge, Subtlety, and getting together a Multitude of earthly Things. No Righteousness nor Virtue remained in it at all; but whatsoever Evil and Wrong it committed, it covered all cunningly and subtly under the Cloak of its Power and Authority by Law, and called it by the Name of Right and Justice, and accounted it good.

THE DEVIL CAME TO THE SOUL.

Upon this the Devil drew near to the Soul, and brought it on from one Vice to another; for he had taken it captive in his Essence, and set Joy and Pleasure before it therein, saying thus to it: Behold, now you are powerful, mighty and noble;

endeavor to be greater, richer, and more powerful still. Display your Knowledge, Wit, and Subtlety, that every one may fear you, and stand in Awe of you, and that you may be respected, and get a great Name in the World.

The Soul did so. The Soul did as the Devil counseled it, and yet knew not that its Counselor was the Devil; but thought it was guided by its own Knowledge, Wit, and Understanding, and that it was doing very well and right all the While.

Jesus Christ met with the Soul: The Soul going on in this Course of Life, our dear and loving Lord Jesus Christ, Who was come into this World with the Love and Wrath of God, to destroy the Works of the Devil, and to execute Judgment upon all ungodly Deeds, on a Time met with it, and spoke by a strong Power, viz. by His Passion and Death, into it and destroyed the Works of the Devil in it, and discovered to it the Way to His Grace, and shone upon it with His Mercy, calling it to return and repent; and promising that He would then deliver it from that monstrous deformed Shape or Image which it had gotten, and bring it into Paradise again.

How Christ wrought in the Soul: Now when the Spark of the Love of God, or the Divine Light, was accordingly manifested in the Soul, it presently saw itself with its Will and Works to be in Hell, in the Wrath of God, and found that it as a misshapen ugly Monster in the Divine Presence and the Kingdom of Heaven; at which it was so afraid, that it fell into the greatest Anguish possible, for the Judgment of God was manifested in it.

What Christ said: Upon this the Lord Christ spoke into it with the Voice of His Grace, and said, "Repent and forsake Vanity, and you shall attain My Grace."

What the Soul said: Then the Soul in its ugly misshapen Image, with the defiled Coat of Vanity, went before God, and entreated for Grace and the Pardon of its Sins, and came to be strongly persuaded in itself, that the Satisfaction and Atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ did belong to it. But the evil Properties of the Serpent, formed in the astral Spirit or Reason of the outward Man, would not suffer the Will of the Soul to come before God, but brought their Lusts and Inclinations thereinto. For those evil Properties would not die to their own Lusts, nor leave the World, for they were come out of the World, and therefore they feared the Reproach of it, in case they should have to forsake their worldly Honor and Glory.

But the poor Soul turned its Countenance towards God, and desired Grace from Him, even that He should bestow His Love upon it.

The Devil came to it again: But when the Devil saw that the Soul thus prayed to God, and would enter into Repentance, he drew near to it, and thrust the Inclinations of the earthly Properties into its Prayers, and disturbed its good Thoughts and Desires which pressed forward towards God, and drew its thoughts back again to earthly Things that they might have no Access to Him.

The Soul sighed: The central Will of the Soul indeed sighed after God, but the Thoughts arising in the Mind, that it should penetrate into Him, were distracted, scattered, and destroyed, so that they could not reach the Power of God. At which the poor Soul was still more afraid, and began to pray more earnestly. But the Devil with his Desire took hold of the Mercurial kindled fiery Wheel of Life, and awakened the evil Properties, so that evil or false Inclinations arose in the Soul, and went into that Thing wherein they had taken most Pleasure and Delight before.

The poor Soul would very fain go forward to God with its Will, and therefore used all its Endeavors; but its Thoughts continually fled away from God into earthly Things, and could not go to Him.

Upon this the Soul sighed and bewailed itself to God; but it seemed as if it were quite forsaken by Him, and cast out from His Presence. It could not get so much as one Look of Grace, but was in mere Anguish, Fear and Terror, and dreaded every Moment that the Wrath and severe Judgment of God would be manifested in it, and that the Devil would take hold of it and have it. And thereupon the Soul fell into such great Heaviness, and Sorrow, that it became weary of all the temporal Things, which before had been its chief Joy and Happiness. The earthly natural Will indeed desired those Things still, but the Soul would willingly leave them altogether, and desired to die to all temporal Lust and Joy whatsoever, and longed only after its first Native Country, from whence it originally came. But the Soul found itself to be far from thence, in great Distress and Want, and knew not what to do, yet resolved to enter into itself, and try to pray more earnestly.

The Devil's Opposition: But the Devil opposed it, and withheld it so that it could not bring itself into any greater Fervency of Repentance.

He awakened the old earthly Lusts in its Heart, that they might still keep their evil Nature and false Right therein, and set them at Variance with the new-born Will and Desire of the Soul. For they would not die to their own Will and Light, but would still maintain their temporal Pleasures, and so kept the poor Soul captive in their evil Desires, that it could not stir, though it sighed and longed even more after the Grace of God. For whenever it prayed, or offered to press forward towards God, then the Lusts of the Flesh swallowed up the Rays and Ejaculations that went forth from it, and brought them away from God into earthly Thoughts, that it might not partake of Divine Strength. Which caused the poor Soul to think itself forsaken of God, not knowing that He was so near it and did thus attract it. Also the Devil got access to it, and entered into the fiery Mercury, or fiery Wheel of its Life, and mingled his Desires with the earthly Lusts of the Flesh, and tempted the poor Soul; saying to it in the earthly Thoughts, *"Why do you pray? Do you think that God knows you or regards you: Consider but what Thoughts you have in His Presence; are they not altogether evil? You have no Faith or Belief in God at all; how then should He hear you? He hears you not, leave off; why will you needlessly torment and vex yourself? You has Time enough to repent at Leisure. Will you be mad? Do but look upon the World, I pray you, a little; does it not live in Jollity and Mirth? Yet it will be saved well enough for that. Has not Christ paid the Ransom and satisfied all Men? You need only persuade and comfort yourself that it is done for you, and then you shall be saved. You cannot possibly in this World come to any Feeling of God; therefore leave off, and take care for your Body, and look after temporal Glory. What do you suppose will become of you, if you turn to be so stupid and melancholy? You will be the Scorn of everybody, and they will laugh at your Folly; and so you will spend your Days in mere Sorrow and Heaviness, which is pleasing neither to God nor Nature. I pray you, look upon the Beauty of the World; for God has created and placed you in it, to be a Lord over all Creatures, and to rule them. Gather a Store of temporal Goods beforehand, that you may not be beholden to the World, or stand in Need hereafter. And when Old Age cometh, or when you grow near your End, then there will be Time enough to prepare yourself for Repentance. God will save you, and receive you into the heavenly Mansions then. There is no need of such ado in vexing, bewailing, and stirring up yourself, as you make."*

The Condition of the Soul: In these and the like Thoughts the Soul was ensnared by the Devil, and brought into the Lusts of the Flesh, and earthly Desires; and so was bound as if it were with Fetters and strong Chains, so that it did not know what to do. It looked back a little into the World and the Pleasures thereof, but still felt in itself a Hunger after the Divine Grace, and would always rather enter into Repentance, and Favor with God. For the Hand of God had touched and bruised the Soul, and therefore it could nowhere find Rest; but always sighed within itself in Sorrow for the Sins it had committed, and longed to be rid of them. Yet it could not get true Repentance, or even the Knowledge of Sin, though it had a mighty Hunger and longing Desire after such penitential Sorrow.

The Soul being thus heavy and sad, and finding no Remedy or Rest, began to cast about where it might find a fit Place to perform true Repentance in, where it might be free from Business, Hindrances and Cares of the World; and also by what Means it might win the Favor of God. And at length it decided to take itself to some private solitary Place, and give up all worldly Employments and temporal Things; and hoped, that by being bountiful and pitiful to the Poor, it should obtain God's Mercy. Thus did it devise all Kinds of Ways to get Rest, and gain the Love, Favor, and Grace of God again. But all that it tried would not do; for its worldly Business still followed it in the Lusts of the Flesh, and it was ensnared in the Net of the Devil now, as well as before, and could not attain Rest. And though for a little while it was somewhat cheered with earthly Things, yet presently it fell to be as sad and heavy again, as it was before. The Truth was, it felt the awakened Wrath of God in itself, but knew not how that came to pass, nor what ailed it. For many Times great Trouble and Terror fell upon it, which made it comfortless, sick, and faint with Fear; so mightily did the first bruising Ray or Influence of the stirring Grace work upon it. And yet it knew not that Christ was in the Wrath and severe Justice of God, and fought therein with Satan, that Spirit of Error, which was incorporated in the Soul and its Body; nor it understood not that the Hunger and Desire to turn and repent came from Christ Himself, by which it was drawn in this Manner; neither did it know what hindered it from Attaining to Divine Feeling. It knew not that itself was a Monster, and did bear the Image of the Serpent, in which the Devil had such Power and Access to it, and had confounded all its good Desires, Thoughts, and Motions, and brought them away from God and Goodness;

concerning which Christ Himself had said, "*The Devil snatches the Word out of their Hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.*"

An enlightened and regenerate Soul met the distressed Soul: By the Providence of God, an enlightened and regenerate Soul met this poor afflicted and distressed Soul, and said, "What ails you, you distressed Soul, that you are so restless and troubled?"

The distressed Soul answered: The Creator has hid His Countenance from me, so that I cannot come to His Rest; therefore I am thus troubled, and know not what I shall do to get His Loving-kindness again. For I feel as though great Cliffs and Rocks lie in my Way to His grace, so that I cannot come to Him. Though I sigh and long after Him ever so much, yet I am kept back so that I cannot partake of His Power, Virtue and Strength.

The enlightened Soul said: You bear the monstrous Shape of the Devil, and are clothed therewith; in which, being his own Property or Principle, he has Access or Power of Entrance into you, and thereby keeps your Will from penetrating into God. For if your Will might penetrate into God, it would be anointed with the highest Power and Strength of God, in the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that Unction would break in Pieces the Monster which you carry about within you; and your first Image of Paradise would revive in the Center; which would destroy the Devil's Power therein, and you would become as an Angel again. And because the Devil envies you this Happiness, he holds you captive in his Desire in the Lusts of the Flesh; from which if you are not delivered, you will be separated from God, and can never enter into our Society.

The distressed Soul terrified: At this Speech the poor distressed Soul was so terrified and amazed, that it could not speak one Word more. When it found that it stood in the Form and Condition of the Serpent, which separated it from God; and that the Devil was so near to it in that Condition, who injected evil Thoughts into the Will of the Soul, and had so much Power over it thereby, that it was near Damnation, and sticking fast in the Abyss or bottomless Pit of Hell, in the Anger of God; it would have even given up any hope for the Divine Mercy; except for the Power, Virtue and Strength of the first Stirring of the Grace of God, which had before bruised the Soul, - this upheld and preserved it from total Despair. But still

it wrestled in itself between Hope and Doubt; whatsoever Hope built up was thrown down again by Doubt. And thus was it agitated with such continual Disquiet, that at last the World and all the Glory thereof became loathsome to it, neither would it enjoy worldly Pleasures anymore; and yet for all this, it could not come to Rest.

The enlightened Soul came again, and spoke to the troubled Soul: On a Time the enlightened Soul came again to this Soul, and finding it still in so great Trouble, Anguish and Grief of Mind, said to it:

What do you? Will you destroy yourself in your Anguish and Sorrow? Why do you torment yourself in your OWN Power and Will, who are but a Worm, seeing your Torment increases thereby more and more? Yea, if you should sink yourself down to the Bottom of the Sea, or could fly to the uttermost Coasts of the Morning, or raise yourself above the Stars, yet you would not be released. For the more you grieve, torment, and trouble yourself, the more painful your Nature will be; and yet you will not be able to come to any Rest. For your Power is quite lost; and as a dry Stick burnt to a Coal cannot grow green and spring afresh by its OWN Power, nor get Sap to flourish again with other Trees and Plants, so neither can you reach the Place of God by your OWN Power and Strength, and transform yourself into that Angelical Image which you had at first. For in respect to God you are withered and dry, like a dead Plant that has lost its Sap and Strength, and so are become a dry tormenting Hunger. Your Properties are like Heat and Cold, which continually strive one against the other, and can never unite.

The distressed Soul said: What then shall I do to bud forth again, and recover the first Life, wherein I was at Rest before I became an Image?

The enlightened Soul said: You should do Nothing at all but forsake your OWN Will, viz. that which you call *I*, or your *Self*. By which Means all your evil Properties will grow weak, faint, and ready to die; and then you will sink down again into that One Thing, from which you are originally sprung. For now you lie captive in the Creatures; but if your Will forsakes them, the Creatures, with their evil Inclinations, will die in you, which at present stay and hinder you so that you cannot come to God. But if you take this Course, your God will meet you with His infinite Love, which He has manifested in Christ Jesus in the Humanity, or Human

Nature. And that will impart Sap, Life, and Vigor to you; whereby you may bud, spring, and flourish again, and rejoice in the Living God, as a Branch growing on His True Vine. And so you will at length recover the Image of God, and be delivered from the Image or Condition of the Serpent: Then shall you come to be my Brother, and have Fellowship with the Angels.

The poor Soul said: How can I forsake my Will, so that the Creatures which lodge therein may die, seeing I must be in the World, and also have need of it as long as I live?

The enlightened Soul said: Now you have worldly Power and Riches, which you possesses as your OWN, to do what you will with, and regard not how you get or use the same; employing them in the Service and Indulgence of your OWN carnal and vain Desires. Nay, though you see the poor and needy Wretch, who wants your Help, and is your Brother, yet you help him not, but lay heavy Burdens upon him, by requiring more of him than his Abilities will bear, or his Necessities afford; and oppress him, by forcing him to spend his Labor and Sweat for you, and for the Gratification of your voluptuous Will. You are moreover proud, and insult over him, and behave roughly and sternly to him, exalting yourself above him, and making small Account of him in Respect to yourself. Then that poor oppressed Brother of yours cometh, and complains with Sighs towards God, that he cannot reap the Benefit of his Labor and Pains, but is forced by you to live in Misery. By which Sighings and Groanings of his, he raises up the Wrath of God in you; which makes your Flame and Unquietness still the greater. These are the Creatures which you are in Love with, and have broken yourself off from God for their Sakes, and brought your Love into them, or them into your Love, so that they live therein. You nourish and keep them by continually receiving them into your Desire, for they live in and by your receiving them into your Mind; because you thereby bring the Lust of your Life into them. They are but unclean, filthy, and evil Births, and Issues of the bestial Nature, which yet, by your receiving them in your Lust or Desire, have gotten an Image, and formed themselves in you. And that Image is a Beast with four Heads; *First*, Pride. *Secondly*, Covetousness. *Thirdly*, Envy. *Fourthly*, Anger. And in these four Properties the Foundation of Hell consists, which you carry in you and about you. It is imprinted and engraven in you, and you are wholly taken Captive thereby. For these Properties live in your natural

Life; and thereby you are severed or cut off from God, neither can you ever come to Him, unless you so forsake these evil Creatures that they may die in you.

But since you desire me to tell you how to forsake your own perverse creaturely Will so that the Creatures in you might die, and how yet you might live along with them in the World, I must assure you that there is but one Way to do it, which is narrow and straight, and will be very hard and irksome to you at the Beginning, but afterwards you will walk in it cheerfully.

You must seriously consider, that in the Course of this worldly Life you walk in the Anger of God and in the Foundation of Hell; and that this is not your true Native Country; but that a True Christian should, and must live in Christ, and in his Walking truly follow Him; and that he cannot be a True Christian, unless the Spirit and Power of Christ so live in him, that he becomes wholly Subject to It. Now seeing the Kingdom of Christ is not of this World, but in Heaven, therefore you must always be in a continual Ascension towards Heaven, if you will follow Christ; though your Body must dwell among the Creatures and use them.

The narrow Way to which perpetual Ascension into Heaven and Imitation of Christ is this: You must despair of all your OWN Power and Strength, for in and by your OWN Power you cannot reach the Gates of God; and firmly purpose and resolve wholly to give yourself up to the Mercy of God, and to sink down with your whole Mind and Reason into the Passion and Death of our Lord Jesus Christ, always desiring to persevere in the same, and to die from all your Creatures therein. Also you must resolve to watch and guard your Mind, Thoughts and Inclinations that they admit no Evil into them, neither must you suffer yourself to be held fast by temporal Honor or Profit. You must resolve likewise to put away from you all Unrighteousness, and whatsoever else may hinder the Freedom of your Motion and Progress. Your Will must be wholly pure, and fixed in a firm Resolution never to return to its old Idols any more, but that you will leave them the very Instant they are known to you, and separate your Mind from them, and enter into the sincere Way of Truth and Righteousness, according to the plain and full Doctrine of Christ. And as you do thus purpose to forsake the Enemies of your own inward Nature, so also must you forgive all your outward Enemies, and resolve to meet them with your Love; so that there may be left no Creature, Person, or Thing at all able to take hold of your Will and captivate it; but that it may be sincere, and

purged from all Creatures. Nay further; if it should be required, you must be willing and ready to forsake all your temporal Honor and Profit for Christ's sake, and regard nothing that is Earthly so as to set your Heart and Affections upon it; but esteem yourself in whatsoever State, Degree, and Condition you are, as to worldly Rank or Riches, to be but a Servant of God and of your Fellow-Christians; or as a Steward in the Office wherein your Lord has placed you. All Arrogance and Self-Exaltation must be humbled, brought low, and so annihilated that nothing of your OWN or of any other Creature may stay in your Will to bring your Thoughts or Imagination to be set upon it.

You must also firmly impress it on your Mind, that you shall certainly partake of the promised Grace in the Merit of Jesus Christ, viz. of His outflowing Love, which indeed is already in you, and which will deliver you from your Creatures, and enlighten your Will, and kindle it with the Flame of Love, whereby you shall have Victory over the Devil. Not as if you could will or do anything in your OWN Strength, but only enter into the Suffering and Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and take them to yourself, and with them assault and break in Pieces the Kingdom of the Devil in you, and mortify your Creatures. You must resolve to enter into this Way this very Hour, and never to depart from it, but willingly to submit yourself to God in all your Endeavors and Doings, that He may do with you what He pleases.

When your Will is thus prepared and resolved, it has then broken through its own Creatures, and is sincere in the Presence of God, and clothed with the merits of Jesus Christ. It may then freely go to the Father with the Prodigal Son, and fall down in His Presence and pour forth its Prayers; and putting forth all its Strength in this Divine Work, confess its Sins Disobedience; and how far it has departed from God. This must be done not with bare Words, but with all its Strength, which indeed amounts only to a strong Purpose and Resolution; for the Soul of itself has no Strength or Power to effect any good Work.

Now when you are thus ready, and that your Heavenly Father shall see your coming and returning to Him in such Repentance and Humility, He will inwardly speak to you, and say in you, "*Behold this is My Son which I had lost; he was dead and is alive again.*" And He will come and meet you in your Mind with the Grace and Love of Jesus Christ, and embrace you with the Beams of His Love, and kiss you with His Spirit and Strength; and then you shall receive Grace to pour out your

Confession before Him, and to pray powerfully. This indeed is the right Place where you must wrestle in the Light of His Countenance. And if you stand resolutely here, and do not shrink back, you shall see or feel great Wonders. For you shall find Christ in you assaulting Hell, and crushing your Beasts in Pieces, and that a great Tumult and Misery will arise in you; also your secret undiscovered Sins will then first awake, and labor to separate you from God, and to keep you back. Thus shall you truly find and feel how Death and Life fight one against the other, and shall understand by what passes within yourself, what Heaven and Hell are. At which Time be not moved, but stand firm and shrink not; for at length all your Creatures will grow faint, weak, and ready to die; and then your Will shall wax stronger, and be able to subdue and keep down the evil Inclinations. So shall your Will and Mind ascend into Heaven every day, and your Creatures gradually die away. You will get a Mind wholly new, and begin to be a new Creature, and getting rid of the Bestial deformity, recover the Divine Image. Thus shall you be delivered from your present Anguish, and return to your Original Rest.

The poor Soul's Practice: Then the poor Soul began to practice this Course with such Earnestness, that it conceived it should get the Victory presently; but it found that the Gates of Heaven were shut against it in its own Strength and Power and it was as if it were rejected and forsaken by God, and received not so much as one Look or Glimpse of Grace from Him. Upon which it said to itself, *"Surely you have not sincerely submitted yourself to God. Desire Nothing at all of Him, but only submit yourself to His Judgment and Condemnation, that He may kill your evil Inclinations. Sink down into Him beyond the Limits of Nature and Creature, and submit yourself to Him, that He may do with you what He will, for you are not worthy to speak to Him."* Accordingly the Soul took a Resolution to sink down, and to forsake its own Will; and when it had done so, there fell upon it presently the greatest Repentance that could be for the Sins it had committed; and it bewailed bitterly its ugly Shape, and was truly and deeply sorry that the evil Creatures did dwell within it. And because of its Sorrow it could not speak one more Word in the Presence of God, but began in its Repentance to realize the bitter Passion and Death of Jesus Christ, viz. what great Anguish and Torment He had suffered for its Sake, in order to deliver it out of its Anguish, and change it into the Image of God. In which Consideration it wholly sunk down, and did Nothing but complain of its Ignorance and Negligence, and that it had not been thankful to its

Redeemer, nor once considered the great Love He had shown to it, but had idly spent its Time, and not at all regarded how it might come to partake of His purchased and proffered Grace; but instead thereof had formed in itself the Images and Figures of earthly Things, with the vain Lusts and Pleasures of the World. Whereby it had gotten such bestial Inclinations, that now it must lie captive in great Misery, and for very shame dared not lift up its Eyes to God, Who hid the Light of His Countenance from it, and would not so much as look upon it. And as it was thus sighing and crying, it was drawn into the Abyss or Pit of Horror, and laid itself as it were at the Gates of Hell, there to perish. Upon which the poor troubled Soul was as it were bereft of Sense, and wholly forsaken, so that it in a Manner forgot all its Doings, and would willingly yield itself to Death, and cease to be a Creature. Accordingly it did yield itself to Death, and desired Nothing else but to die and perish in the Death of its Redeemer, Jesus Christ, Who had suffered such Torments and Death for its Sake. And in this Perishing it began to sigh and pray in itself very inwardly to the Divine Goodness, and to sink down into the mere Mercy of God.

Upon this there suddenly appeared unto it the amiable Countenance of the Love of God, which penetrated through it as a great Light, and made it exceedingly joyful. It then began to pray aright, and to thank the Most High for such Grace, and to rejoice abundantly, that it was delivered from the Death and Anguish of Hell. Now it tasted of the Sweetness of God, and of His promised Truth; and now all the evil Spirits, which had harassed it before, and kept it back from the Grace, Love, and inward Presence of God, were forced to depart from it. The "Wedding of the Lamb" was now kept and solemnized, that is, the Noble Sophia [or the Eternal Wisdom] espoused or betrothed herself to the Soul; and the Seal-Ring of Christ's Victory was impressed into its Essence, and it was received to be a Child and Heir of God again.

When this was done, the Soul became very joyful, and began to work in this new Power, and to celebrate with Praise the Wonders of God, and thought thenceforth to walk continually in the same Light, Strength, and Joy. But it was soon assaulted; from without, by the Shame and Reproach of the World, and from within, by great Temptation, so that it began to doubt whether its Ground was truly from God, and whether it had really partaken of His Grace. For the Accuser, Satan, went to it, and would fain lead it out of this Course, and make it doubtful whether it was the true

Way; whispering thus to it inwardly: *"This happy Change in your Spirit is not from God, but only from your own Imagination."* Also the Divine Light retired in the Soul, and shone but in the inward Ground, as Fire raked up in Embers, so that Reason was perplexed, and thought itself forsaken, and the Soul knew not what had happened to itself, nor whether it had really and truly tasted of the heavenly Gift or not. Yet it could not leave off struggling; for the burning Fire of Love was sown in it, which had raised in it a vehement and continual Hunger and Thirst after Divine Sweetness. So at length it began to pray aright, and to humble itself in the Presence of God, and to examine and try its evil Inclinations and Thoughts and to put them away. By which means the Will of its Reason was broken, and the evil Inclinations inherent in it were killed and extirpated more and more. This Process was very severe and painful to the Nature of the Body, for it made it faint and weak, as if it had been very sick; and yet it was no natural Sickness that it had, but only the Melancholy of its earthly Nature which was feeling and lamenting the Destruction of its evil Lusts.

Now when the earthly Reason found itself thus forsaken, and the poor Soul saw that it was despised outwardly, and derided by the World, because it would no longer walk in the Way of Wickedness and Vanity; and also that it was inwardly assaulted by the Accuser, Satan, who mocked it, and continually set before it the Beauty, Riches, and Glory of the World, and called it a Fool for not embracing them; it began to think and say thus within itself; *"O eternal God! What shall I now do to come to Rest?"*

The enlightened Soul met it again, and spoke to it: While it was in this Consideration, the enlightened Soul met with it again, and said, "What ails you, my Brother, that you are so heavy and sad?"

The distressed Soul said: I have followed your Counsel, and thereby attained a Ray, or Emanation of the Divine Sweetness, but it is gone from me again. and I am now deserted. Moreover I have outwardly very great Trials and Afflictions in the World; for all my good Friends forsake and scorn me; and am also inwardly assaulted with Anguish and Doubt, and know not what to do.

The enlightened Soul said: Now I like you very well; for now our beloved Lord Jesus Christ is performing that same Pilgrimage or Process on Earth with you and

in you, which He did Himself when He was in this World, Who was continually reviled, despised, and evil spoken of and had nothing of His own in it; and now you bear His Mark or Badge. But do not wonder at it, or think it strange; for it must be so, in order that you may be tried, refined, and purified. In this Anguish and Distress you will necessarily hunger and cry after Deliverance; and by such Hunger and Prayer you will attract Grace to you both from within and from without. For you must grow from above and from beneath to be the Image of God again. Just as a young Plant is agitated by the Wind, and must stand its Ground in Heat and Cold, drawing Strength and Virtue to it from above and from beneath by that Agitation, and must endure many a Tempest, and undergo much Danger before it can come to be a Tree, and bring forth Fruit. For through that Agitation the Virtue of the Sun moves in the Plant, whereby its wild Properties come to be penetrated and tintured with the Solar Virtue, and grow thereby.

And this is the Time wherein you must play the Part of a valiant Soldier in the Spirit of Christ, and co-operate yourself Therewith. For now the Eternal Father by His fiery Power begets His Son in you, who changes the Fire of the Father, namely, the first Principle, or wrathful Property of the Soul, into the Flame of Love, so that out of Fire and Light (viz. Wrath and Love) there comes to be ONE Essence, Being, or Substance, which is the true Temple of God. And now you shall bud forth out of the Vine Christ, in the Vineyard of God, and bring forth Fruit in your Life, and by assisting and instructing others, show forth your Love in Abundance, as a good Tree. For Paradise must thus spring up again in you, through the Wrath of God, and Hell be changed into Heaven in you. Therefore be not dismayed at the Temptations of the Devil, who seeks and strives for the Kingdom, which he once had in you; but having now lost it, he must be confounded, and depart from you. And he covers you outwardly with the Shame and Reproach of the World, that his own Shame may not be known, and that you may be hidden to the World. For with your new Birth or regenerated Nature, you are in the Divine Harmony in Heaven. Be patient, therefore, and wait upon the Lord; and whatsoever shall befall you, take it all from His Hands, as intended by Him for your highest Good. And so the enlightened Soul departed from it.

The distressed Soul's Course: The distressed soul began its Course now under the patient Suffering of Christ, and depending solely upon the Strength and Power of God in it, entered into Hope. Thenceforth it grew stronger every Day, and its evil

Inclinations died more and more in it. So that it arrived at length to a High State or Degree of Grace; and the Gates of the Divine Revelation and the Kingdom of Heaven, were opened to, and manifested in it. And thus the Soul through Repentance, Faith, and Prayer, returned to its Original and True Rest, and became a Right and Beloved Child of God again; to which may He of His Infinite Mercy help us all. Amen. **"But you are a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, a holy Nation, a peculiar People; that you should show forth the Praises of Him Who has called you out of Darkness into His marvelous Light."**