

Humility and the Believer

"They shall cast their crowns before the throne, so saying: Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory, and the honor and the power: for You did create all things, and because of Your will they are, and were created." Rev. 4:11

When God created the universe, it was with the one object of making his creation; which is you and I, partakers of His perfection and blessedness, and so showing forth in it the glory of His love and wisdom and power. God wished to reveal Himself in and through created beings by communicating to them as much of His own goodness and glory as they were capable of receiving. But this communication was not giving to the creature something which it could possess in itself, a certain life or goodness, of which it had the charge and disposal. By no means. But as God is the ever-living, ever-present, ever-acting One, who upholds all things by the word of His power, and in whom all things exist, the relation of the creation to God could only be one of unceasing, absolute, universal dependence. As truly as God by His power once created, so truly by that same power must God every moment maintain. The creation has not only to look back to the origin and first beginning of existence, and acknowledge that it there owes everything to God; its chief care, its highest virtue, its only happiness, now and through all eternity, is to present itself an empty vessel, in which God can dwell and manifest His power, will and goodness.

The life God bestows is imparted not once for all, but each moment continuously, by the unceasing operation of His mighty power. Humility, the placing of one's entire dependence and trust in God, is, from the very nature of things, the first duty and the highest virtue of the creation, and the root of every virtue.

And so pride, or the loss of this humility, is the root of every error, sin and evil deed. It was when the now fallen angels began to look upon themselves with self-complacency that they were led to disobedience, and were cast down from the light of heaven into outer darkness. Even so it was, when the serpent breathed the poison of his pride, the desire to be as God, into the hearts of our first parents Adam and Eve, that they too fell from their high estate into all the wretchedness in which we have now sunk. In heaven and earth, pride and self-exaltation, is the start, the birth, and the curse of hell.

Be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time. 1 Peter 5:5-6.

Without true humility all prayer is in vain. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the One from whom this noble virtue is best learned; as he is, indeed, a perfect mirror to us of all the virtues and graces. Study his earthly life, and you will find it made up of nothing but love and humility. Study his doctrine, and you will discern it to be absolute wisdom and truth; a doctrine consisting not in words, but in a living power; and in very deed itself.

Our humble Savior chose to exemplify this as his concluding work: after his last supper, he took a towel and girded himself, and then "washed his disciples' feet" that so he might by such example implant this virtue in all that should be ever called by his name, and might most sensibly imprint it on the heart of every one to whom this Gospel should come.

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