

**Articles and Sermons :: Of GOD'S Operation In The SOUL - Archbishop Fenelon**

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WHAT a Comfort it is, O my God! to think that every Thing is the Work of Thy Hand, even that which is within me, as much as that without. Thou art always with me. When I do Evil Thou art with me, reproaching me for the Evil I do, and making me regret the Good I forsake, and letting me see Thy merciful Arms stretched out to receive me. When I do Good, 'tis Thou inspir'st me with the Desire of it, and do'st it in me.

Thou art therefore (and I am even ravish'd with the Thought of it) operating without ceasing in the Midst of my Heart. Thou workest there invisibly, just as a Labourer works in the Mines and Bowels of the Earth. Thou do'st every Thing, and yet the Bulk of Men see thee not. They ascribe nothing to Thee. I myself wander'd, and strove in vain to find Thee at a Distance from myself. I try'd, by collecting together in my Mind all the wonderful Works of Nature, to frame an Idea of the Grandeur. I sought Thee among Thy Creatures, and did not think of finding Thee in my Heart, where Thou art never absent. No, there is no need, O my God! To descend into the Deep, nor to go over the Sea," as say the holy Scriptures, nor to ascend into Heaven, to find Thee, for thou art nearer to us than we are to our Selves.

O Lord! Who art so great, and yet so Familiar; so high above the heavens, and yet fitting Thyself so to the lowest of thy Creatures, so infinite, and yet so intimately inclos'd in my heart; so terrible, and yet so lovely; so jealous, and yet so easy of Access to those who freely approach Thee with pure Love, Oh, when will the Time come that thy Children shall be no longer unacquainted with Thee! Oh, that I had a Voice capable and strong enough to reprove the whole World for their Blindness, and to declare with Authority what Thou really art!

To bid Men look for Thee in their own Hearts, is like bidding them look for Thee in the most remote and unknown parts of the Earth; for what is more remote and unknown to the Generality of vain and heedless Mortals, than the secret and quiet Recesses of their own Hearts? Do they know what it is to look into themselves? Have they ever try'd the Way to it? Can they so much as imagine what that INWARD SANCTUARY, that impenetrable Center of the Soul is, where thou art worshipp'd in Spirit and in Truth? They are awlays at Distance from themselves, among the Objects of their Ambition or Divisions. Alas! how should they understand heavenly Truths, when as Jesus Christ said, They understand not those of this World? They can't conceive what it is to enter into themselves by serious Reflections; what then would they say if one should bid them be empty'd of themselves, and absorb'd in God?

As for me, O my Creator! my Eyes being clos'd to all outward Objects, which are but Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, I would find in the most Secret Part of my Heart, an intimate Familiarity with Thee through Jesus Christ thy Son, who is thy WISDOM, and Eternal Reason; who took Flesh, and patiently submitted to the Shame and Death of the Cross, that by it might degrade our vain and false Wisdom. There it is, cost it what it will, in opposition to my worldly Fears and Reasonings, I would become little and low, yea a Fool, and more contemptible in my own Eyes, than in the Eyes of all the wise and prudent of this World. There it is, I would be fill'd and inebriated with the Holy Spirit as the Apostles were; and like them suffer myself to be the Derision and Scorn of the World.