

Second Conversation

by Brother Lawrence

Brother Lawrence emphasizes that love for God should be the foundation of all actions and that simplicity in our approach to Him leads to true spiritual fulfillment.

Scripture: Psalm 16:8, 1 Corinthians 10:31, Philippians 4:6, Colossians 3:23, 1 John 4:19

Topics: "Prayer Life", "Gods Love"

Description

Brother Lawrence preaches about the importance of living a life governed by love for God, finding joy and satisfaction in seeking Him above all else, even in the most mundane tasks. He shares his journey of struggling with doubts and fears, but ultimately finding peace and freedom in God's love. Brother Lawrence emphasizes the simplicity of conversing with God continually, seeking His assistance in all things, and acting out of love for Him in every aspect of life.

Transcript

Love the motive of all. * Once in fear, now in joy. * Diligence and love. Simplicity the key to Divine assistance. * Business abroad as at home. * times of prayer and self-mortification not essential for the practice. * All scruples brought to God.

That he had always been governed by love, without selfish views; and that having resolved to make the love of GOD the end of all his actions, he had found reasons to be well satisfied with his method. That he was pleased when he could take up a straw from the ground for the love of GOD, seeking Him only, and nothing else, not even His gifts. That he had been long troubled in mind from a certain belief that he should be damned; that all the men in the world could not have persuaded him to the contrary; but that he had thus reasoned with himself about it: I did not engage in a religious life but for the love of GOD, and I have endeavoured to act only for Him; whatever becomes of me, whether I be lost or saved, I will always continue to act purely for the love of GOD.

I shall have this good at least, that till death I shall have done all that is in me to love Him. That this trouble of mind had lasted four years; during which time he had suffered much. That since that time he had passed his life in perfect liberty and continual joy. That he placed his sins betwixt him and GOD, as it were, to tell Him that he did not deserve His favours, but that GOD still continued to bestow them in abundance. That in order to form a habit of conversing with GOD continually, and referring all we do to Him; we must at first apply to Him with some diligence: but that after a little care we should find His love inwardly excite us to it without any difficulty.

That he expected after the pleasant days GOD had given him, he should have his turn of pain and suffering; but that he was not uneasy about it, knowing very well, that as he could do nothing of himself, GOD would not fail to give him the strength to bear them. That when an occasion of practising some virtue offered, he addressed himself to GOD, saying, LORD, I cannot do this unless Thou enablest me; and that then he received strength more than sufficient. That when he had failed in his duty, he only confessed his fault, saying to GOD, I shall never do otherwise, if You leave me to myself; 'tis You must hinder my falling, and mend what is amiss.

That after this, he gave himself no further uneasiness about it. That we ought to act with GOD in the greatest simplicity, speaking to Him frankly and plainly, and imploring His assistance in our affairs, just as they happen. That GOD never failed to grant it, as he had often experienced. That he had been lately sent into Burgundy, to buy the provision of wine for the society, which was a very unwelcome task for him, because he had no turn for business and because he was lame, and could not go about the boat but by rolling himself over the casks.

That however he gave himself no uneasiness about it, nor about the purchase of the wine. That he said to GOD, It was His business he was about, and that he afterwards found it very well performed. That he had been sent into Auvergne the year before upon the same account; that he could not tell how the matter passed, but that it proved very well. So, likewise, in his business in the kitchen (to which he had naturally a great aversion), having accustomed himself to do everything there for the love of GOD, and with prayer, upon all occasions, for His grace to do his work well, he had found everything easy, during the fifteen years that he had been employed there.

That he was very well pleased with the post he was now in; but that he was as ready to quit that as the former, since he was always pleasing himself in every condition, by doing little things for the love of GOD. That with him the set times of prayer were not different from other times: that he retired to pray, according to the directions of his Superior, but that he did not want such retirement. nor ask for it, because his greatest business did not divert him from GOD. That as he knew his obligation to love GOD in all things, and as he endeavoured so to do, he had no need of a director to advise him, but that he needed much a confessor to absolve him.

That he was very sensible of his faults, but not discouraged by them; that he confessed them to GOD, and did not plead against Him to excuse them. When he had so done, he peaceably resumed his usual practice of love and adoration. That in his trouble of mind, he had consulted nobody, but knowing only by the light of faith that GOD was present, he contented himself with directing all his actions to Him, i.e., doing them with a desire to please Him, let what would come of it. That useless thoughts spoil all: that the mischief began there; but that we ought to reject them, as soon as we perceived their impertinence to the matter in hand, or our salvation; and return to our communion with GOD.

That at the beginning he had often passed his time appointed for prayer, in rejecting wandering thoughts, and falling back into them. That he could never regulate his devotion by certain methods as some do. That nevertheless, at first he had meditated for some time, but afterwards that went off, in a manner that he could give no account of. That all bodily mortifications and other exercises are useless, but as they serve to arrive at the union with GOD by love; that he had well considered this, and found it the shortest way to go straight to Him by a continual exercise of love, and doing all things for His sake.

That we ought to make a great difference between the acts of the understanding and those of the will; that the first were comparatively of little value, and the others all. That our only business was to love and delight ourselves in GOD. That all possible kinds of mortification, if they were void of the love of GOD, could not efface a single sin. That we ought, without anxiety, to expect the pardon of our sins from the Blood of JESUS CHRIST, only endeavouring to love Him with all our hearts.

That GOD seemed to have granted the greatest favours to the greatest sinners, as more signal monuments of His mercy. That the greatest pains or pleasures, of this world, were not to be compared with what he had experienced of both kinds in a spiritual state: so that he was careful for nothing and feared nothing, desiring but one only thing of GOD, viz., that he might not offend Him. That he had no scruples; for, said he, when I fail in my duty, I readily acknowledge it, saying, I am used to do so: I shall never do otherwise, if I am left to myself. If I fail not, then I give GOD thanks, acknowledging that it comes from Him.

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