

The Shewing Is Not Other Than of Faith, nor Less nor More

by Julian of Norwich

The Shewing is a manifestation of God's greatness and nobleness, and is a source of joy and delight, grounded in faith, hope, and charity.

Scripture: Psalm 111:2, Isaiah 66:2, John 15:13, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Philippians 2:6

Topics: "Divine Love", "Christian Humility"

Description

Julian of Norwich preaches about the profound revelation of God's greatness and Mary's humility in His presence, leading to a deep sense of meekness and grace. She describes a vivid vision of Jesus' bleeding head, symbolizing His sacrifice and the overwhelming plenteousness of His love. Julian finds comfort in the paradox of God's reverent dread and approachable nature, emphasizing the joy in His homeliness and courtesy towards humanity.

Transcript

AND [it was] to learn us this, as to mine understanding, [that] our Lord God shewed our Lady Saint Mary in the same time: that is to say, the high Wisdom and Truth she had in beholding of her Maker so great, so holy, so mighty, and so good. This greatness and this nobleness of the beholding of God fulfilled her with reverent dread, and withal she saw herself so little and so low, so simple and so poor, in regard of 38 her Lord God, that this reverent dread fulfilled her with meekness.

And thus, by this ground [of meekness] she was fulfilled with grace and with all manner of virtues, and overpasseth all creatures. In all the time that He shewed this that I have told now in spiritual sight, I saw the bodily sight lasting of the plenteous bleeding of the Head. The great drops of blood fell down from under the Garland like pellots, seeming as it had come out of the veins; and in the coming out they were brown-red, for the blood was full 15 thick; and in the spreading-abroad they were bright-red; and when they came to the brows, then they vanished; notwithstanding, the bleeding continued till many things were seen and understood.

The fairness and the lifelikeness is like nothing but the same; the plenteousness is like to the drops of water that fall off the eaves after a great shower of rain, that fall so thick that no man may number them with bodily wit; and for the roundness, they were like to the scale of herring, in the spreading on the forehead. These three came to my mind in the time: pellots, for roundness, in the coming out of the blood;

the scale of herring, in the spreading in the forehead, for roundness; the drops off eaves, for the plenteousness innumerable.

This Shewing was quick and life-like, and horrifying and dreadful, sweet and lovely. And of all the sight it was most comfort to me that our God and Lord that is so reverend and dreadful, is so homely and courteous: and this most fulfilled me with comfort and assuredness of soul. And to the understanding of this He shewed this open example.-- It is the most worship that a solemn King or a great Lord may do a poor servant if he will be homely with him, and specially if he sheweth it himself, of a full true meaning, and with a glad cheer, both privately and in company.

Then thinketh this poor creature thus: And what might this noble Lord do of more worship and joy to me than to shew me that am so simple this marvellous homeliness? Soothly it is more joy and pleasance to me than [if] he gave me great gifts and were himself strange in manner. This bodily example was shewed so highly that man's heart might be ravished and almost forgetting itself for joy of the great homeliness. Thus it fareth with our Lord Jesus and with us. For verily it is the most joy that may be, as to my sight, that He that is highest and mightiest, noblest and worthiest, is lowest and meekest, homeliest and most courteous: and truly and verily this marvellous joy shall be shewn us all when we see Him.

And this willeth our Lord that we seek for and trust to, joy and delight in, comforting us and solacing us, as we may with His grace and with His help, unto the time that we see it verily. For the most fulness of joy that we shall have, as to my sight, is the marvellous courtesy and homeliness of our Father, that is our Maker, in our Lord Jesus Christ that is our Brother and our Saviour. But this marvellous homeliness may no man fully see in this time of life, save he have it of special shewing of our Lord, or of great plenty of grace inwardly given of the Holy Ghost.

But faith and belief with charity deserveth the meed: and so it is had, by grace; for in faith, with hope and charity, our life is grounded. The Shewing, made to whom that God will, plainly teacheth the same, opened and declared, with many privy points belonging to our Faith which be worshipful to know. And when the Shewing which is given in a time is passed and hid, then the faith keepeth [it] by grace of the Holy Ghost unto our life's end. And thus through the Shewing it is not other than of faith, nor less nor more; as it may be seen in our Lord's teaching in the same matter, by that time that it shall come to the end.

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