

God Created Us for Heaven¹

St. Peter Julian Eymard to the Servants of the Blessed Sacrament,
Nemours, Tuesday, November 6, 1866

Let us place ourselves in the presence of our Lord by an act of faith and self-surrender. With gratitude, let's thank our Lord for having called us to his feet in spite of our sins. In an act of contrition, let's pray for God's forgiveness of our sins, the only obstacle to the kingdom of God within us. Let's pray for the light of the Holy Spirit through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

[...]

My Sisters, let's complete yesterday's meditation. We have now established the foundation. I must tell you the whole truth and I did so. God loved you personally from all eternity. He always saw you, since you were always present to him; he loved you with a benevolent love. He loved you not for himself but for you; he loved you with an infinite love. He never stopped loving you, even for one second, and as long as you live in this world he will not stop loving you. As long as you live, God will love you, yes, indeed.

Since you are alive, God loves you. This is even true of a sinner, since God loves him in spite of his sins, constantly pursuing him with his love. We commit so many venial sins, but God acts as if he did not see them, treating us as his beloved children. God loved us from all eternity and, when the time came, he allowed us to be born under the best conditions for our salvation, in the best conditions for service, in the best era of the world, after the incarnation; in the best conditions for education, with good parents; in the best conditions for making a good First Communion; in order, then, to place us in circumstances of grace, virtue, merit, and service of God.

Before our birth, God cared for us in himself. When we were born, the love of God cared for us as a mother; as a father caring for a child in the smallest things. My Sisters, you understand that all natural gifts come from God's love. Since God loves us, all natural and supernatural gifts come from his love; one cannot exist without the other. All things spring from God's love. Then, God gave us supernatural graces, particular graces that predispose our natural gifts to rise up towards God. We cannot live without these graces. That was yesterday's meditation; now, let's continue.

[...]

Love wants to share. That's why God did not care to be happy alone – he wants to place us in paradise. Paradise is no less than the possession of everything; God gives himself as he is; such is God. Through that gift, God wants to give us his perfect love. In this world, he cannot give us his perfect love because we are not in a perfect state but in a process of purification and sanctification. We are not in a condition of glory and could not bear that love, that tender love of our Lord. A single word spoken by our Lord touches us and causes us to experience an interior and occasionally exterior ecstasy. If we cannot bear one small word, how can we totally receive our Lord? We would be like wax in the fire, completely melted, with nothing remaining of ourselves. What was difficult for Saint Theresa was that she could not give herself to our Lord as much as she would like; God's love overwhelmed her. Love cannot do violence to itself.

[...]

¹ Number 605. *Dieu nous a créés pour le ciel.*

If we could see God's love, we would see him asking us to open our hearts to him, and let him enter. Then we could see ourselves answering, don't come; this is too much. Then you send him away. This may appear unkind to you: but God is at the door saying: ***I am standing at the door, knocking, and I am waiting for someone to open*** (cf. Rv 3:20). But he is sent away. Truly God said it would happen. It seems to me that the devil is looking around saying: Lord, what are you doing there? And our Lord replies, I am waiting for the door to open for me. If the devil is in possession of this heart, he will say, You wait for nothing, wasting your time; you will not be welcomed. And the devil humiliates God's love. In paradise, God's love bursts forth in all its power and the soul lives in God; there, love is free and effusive, that's paradise. In his love God gives everything, communicating his love, his kindness, and his tenderness, finally, all that he has. Then the soul becomes rich with the richness of God, with God's love. In God, the soul becomes perfectly divine. God created us for paradise and there to love him peacefully forever. We were created to remain in his eternal love, to be always with the Good Lord in paradise, enjoying the happiness of the angels and the bliss of all the saints, filled with the beauty of God.

God wants us in paradise with an absolute will. Were it up to him alone, he would even now let us into heaven. God truly wants me in paradise, where he has prepared a place for me. (cf. Jn 14:2) My poor Daughters, we are on the way. We journey toward paradise on a certain road determined by God. We are headed for heaven. Just as a boat follows the current of a river, we journey toward paradise. That is our harbor, because there is no death for one who loves. Plants and animals die, but for human beings nothing dies; they are transformed, and that's all. Although the body takes on its prior form of dust and soil, this is now human soil. God takes up this dust and restores the body as it was. This dust becomes the seed of resurrection. Simply say that you are on the way to paradise, not as others would claim, I will be happy in paradise! [...]

My good Daughters, this is said to ordinary people, mercenaries, day laborers, who go to paradise for wages. They love the Good Lord along with themselves, for themselves; what kind of paradise is that? Isn't it rather selfish? Imagine! To go to paradise for our own happiness is the least noble incentive; it's not wrong but it's the lowest degree of the Christian law. **Where is love in this; where is the desire to see the Good Lord?** Others say, I want to go to heaven in order not to offend the Good Lord any more. That's forty times better than the other. Did you not read in Revelations where it is said that in heaven there will be no more tears, sorrows and sadness? (cf. Rv 21:4) Is that what you want, you who want to be happy? You are worth forty times more if you love the Good Lord because you don't want to offend him, want to be always faithful to him. Such souls will be with the angels. But the one who says, I want to go to paradise to love the Good Lord, to thank him and to see him. Ah! You are perfect because you want the Good Lord for himself; this surely pleases him. Here, finally, is somebody who loves the Good Lord. Beautiful. That's something to talk about!

[...] All the saints desired to go to heaven, not to be happy, but to be with God. The Good Lord wants us to desire heaven. Read the psalm: *Quemadmodum, etc. – As a doe longs for running streams, so my soul longs for you, my God. My soul thirsts for God, the God of life; when shall I go to see the face of God?* (cf. Ps 41:1-2) While St. Paul was converting the nations, he used to say: *I actually want to be exiled from the body and make my home with the Lord!* (cf. 2 Co 5:2-8) We could object: O great Apostle, you are doing a great work on earth, you are working for God. Ah yes! But look again at what he says: *I want to be exiled from the body.* This is what the saints do; their souls yearn for God. This is what we should do, because it is most perfect.

Love desires union. If I love the Good Lord, the Good Lord wants me and I want him also. All the saints desired death to go to heaven because death is nothing else than the door leading to eternity. Of course, sometimes we need sorrows and storms to be purified. It's normal to tell ourselves, I please God by desiring to go and see him in heaven. Suppose a king would say to his friend, Come with me to my palace; you will be my friend, and all that is mine will be yours. If that friend would refuse, he would be

dishonest and foolish. Therefore I say, Desire heaven to show your love for the Good Lord. If you ask, Why does our Lord proclaim sorrows, persecutions and poverty in the gospel? He does this out of fear that we become too attached to the good things of this world. Why are human friendships unreliable? It is because we are not created for man, but for God alone.

Happiness in this world is like a bridge that breaks when we want to remain on it. Do not think of anything but paradise. Life is like a road with the goods of this world on one side, while the other side of the road is full of crosses and thorns. I hear the Good Lord saying: walk in the middle. When we suffer from throwing ourselves into the goods of this world, God rebukes us, Why did you go to that side? Walk in the middle with my Son. Then we throw ourselves on the other side among the thorns. Again God asks, Why do you go painfully on the side of the crosses and thorns? Follow my Son. Where is he going? To paradise. Go with him. All the trials willed by God are meant to lead us to paradise.

[...]

What is the road for if not to lead you forward? **The road indicated by our Good Lord is his mercy which carries us along.** God's grace opens up that road. Briefly, our Lord himself is our road. He spreads himself out, so to speak, and we walk on him. My good Daughters, let us take this road and we will go directly to heaven. Amen.



Points for reflection:

The basics of our spiritual experience come from the awareness of our true destiny. Here St. Peter Julian wants to purify our motivations. In this instruction, what is the idea of resurrection? What motives are presented? What is the idea of God? What scripture passages are the bases of this meditation?