

Articles and Sermons :: Abandonment to Divine Providence**Abandonment to Divine Providence, on: 2014/10/7 9:08**

Abandonment to Divine Providence by Jean-Pierre de Caussade.

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/decaussade/abandonment.html>

SECTION XII. "The Divine Word our Model.

34 The divine action alone can sanctify us, for that alone can make us imitate the divine Example of our perfection. In course of time the idea formed by the Eternal Wisdom of all things is carried out by divine action. All things have, in God, their likeness, and are recognised and known by the divine Wisdom.

Should you know all those things that are not for you, such knowledge would be no guide to you in any way. The divine action beholds in the Word the idea after which you ought to be formed and this example is always before it. It sees in the Word all that is necessary for the sanctification of every soul.

The holy Scriptures contain one part, and the workings of the divine action in the interior of the soul, after the example set forth by the Word, complete the work. We must understand that the only way of receiving the impression of this eternal idea is to remain quietly amenable to it; and that neither efforts, nor mental speculations can do anything to that end.

It is obvious that a work such as this cannot be effected by cleverness, intelligence, nor subtlety of mind, but only by the passive way of abandonment to, its reception, and by yielding to it like metal in a mould, or canvas under the pencil, or stone in the hands of the sculptor. It is evident that to know all the divine mysteries of God is by no means the way in which by His will we are made to resemble His image, that image which the Word has formed of us; that our resemblance to the divine type can only be formed in us by the impression of the seal of the divine action, and that this impression is not produced in the mind by ideas, but in the will by abandonment.

The wisdom of the just soul consists in being content with what is intended for it! in confining itself within the boundary of its path, and not trespassing beyond its limit. It is not inquisitive about God's ways of acting, but is content as regards itself with the arrangements of His will, making no effort to discover its meaning by comparisons or conjectures, but only desiring to understand what each moment reveals.

It listens to the voice of the Word when it sounds in the depths of the heart, it does not inquire as to what the divine Spouse has said to others, but is satisfied with what it receives for itself, so that moment by moment it becomes, in this way, divinised without its knowledge.

It is thus that the divine Word converses with His spouse, by the solid effects of His action which the spouse without scrutinising curiously, accepts with loving gratitude. Thus the spirituality of such a soul is perfectly simple, absolutely solid, and thoroughly diffused throughout its entire being. Its actions are not determined by ideas nor by a confusion of words which by themselves would only serve to excite pride.

Pious people make a great use of the mind, whereas mental exertion is of very little use, and is even antagonistic to true piety. We must make use only of that which God sends us to do or to suffer, and not forsake this divine reality to occupy our minds with the historical wonders of the divine work instead of gaining an increase of grace by our fidelity.

The marvels of this work, of which we read for the purpose of satisfying our curiosity, often only tend to disgust us with things that seem trifling but by which, if we do not despise them, the divine love effects very great things in us. Fools that we are! We admire and bless this divine action in the writings relating its history, and when it is ready to continue this writing on our hearts, we keep moving the paper and prevent it writing by our curiosity, to see what it is doing in and around us.

Pardon, divine love, these defects; I can see them all in myself, for I am not yet able to understand how to let You act. So far I have not allowed myself to be cast into the mould. I have run through all Your workshops and have admired all Your works, but have not as yet, by abandonment, received even the bare outlines of Your pencil. Nevertheless I have found

d in You a kind Master, a Physician, a Father, a beloved Friend.

I will now become Your disciple, and will frequent no other school than Yours. Like the Prodigal Son I return hungering for Your bread. I relinquish the ideas which tend only to the satisfaction of mental curiosity; I will no longer run after masters and books but will only make use of them as of other things that present themselves, not for my own satisfaction, but in dependence on the divine action and in obedience to You. For love of You and to discharge my debts I will confine myself to the one essential business, that of the present moment, and thus enable You to act.