

The Way Of Perfection

Chapters 4 to 9

C4 : Strive after sublime perfection

Accomplish this great enterprise

How to practise prayer

C5 : Examination of Conscience through confession

C6 : Perfect Love

C7 : How to obtain Spiritual Love

C8 : Detachment from material World

C9 : Detachment only works if we give ourselves also.

St Teresa of Avila, in trying to guide the Carmelite Nuns in the Convent at this time and in trying to avoid the dilution of these standards for future generations of Nuns explores her beliefs in the meaning of loving God, and how best she believes this can be obtained.

Throughout these six chapters St Teresa defines the difference between:

- Human love.
- The love of God,
- How best to find God's love
- The love we express for each other.
- The distractions that prevent us from achieving our love for God.

The important points that can be gleaned from St Teresa message is our own examination of conscience¹ and the help we can seek, through mirroring the life of Jesus and the Saints², through guidance sought in the confessional³, by understanding the Scripture;⁴ Theology,⁵ Prayer⁶ and Charity⁷.

St Teresa identifies that we each might have different requirements in achieving our love of God, but demonstrates tools that can be used to achieve this love, she also points out our weaknesses that prevent us finding this love, for instance: Seeking recognition or love from others, Worldly or material goods or values. Insufficient prayer, or self examination, dismissal of others not worthy of our own time. Our own

¹ Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1779 & 1781

² Jn 15:9,12 That you should love one another as I have loved you.

³ Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1466

⁴ Catechism of the Catholic Church: 131 - 133

⁵ Catechism of the Catholic Church: 236

⁶ Catechism of the Catholic Church: 2697

⁷ Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1822 Charity is the theological virtue by which we love God above all things for his own sake, and our neighbours as ourselves for the love of God

self importance, to name but a few distractions sent by the Devil to hinder us in our path of finding the love that Jesus wants from us all.

These only seem like simple guides for us to follow, but are some of the hardest principles to establish in our daily lives if we are to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Jesus stated: 'No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and any one to whom the Son chooses to reveal to him'.⁸ In following St Teresa's eternal words we can be helped to find the Father through the Son,

⁸ Mt 11:27