

THE THREE MOST ESSENTIAL THINGS

WHICH WE SHALL NEVER FORGET

(Mathews Barnabas Metropolitan)

Let us think of the three most essential things in our life. They are 1) Sincere thankfulness to God. 2) Whole-hearted love for mankind. 3) Deep craving for the glory of God.

1) SINCERE THANKFULNESS TO GOD

St. Paul says "Give thanks in all circumstances." (I Thess. 5:17). God is the source of all goodness. It is not because of any goodness in us that God blessed us. It was from nothingness that we were created. All our activities are done through God. "In him we live, move and have our being." (Acts 17:38). Even the desire to do good comes from God. "God is at work in you, both to will and work for his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13). God brings good out of sufferings also. "Suffering produces endurance and endurance produces character." (Rom. 5:3-4). The psalmist speaks of the fullness of the thankfulness he owed to God. "What shall I render to the Lord for all his bounty to me?" (Ps. 116:12).

2) WHOLE-HEARTED LOVE FOR MANKIND.

It is through loving mankind that we have to express our thankfulness and love for God. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." (I Jn.4:11) The resurrected Lord asked St. Peter three times whether he loved Him. When he replied in the affirmative, our Lord asked him to tend His lambs and sheep (St. John 21:15-17) St. John says that without loving God's children, we cannot love God "He who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen" (1 John 4:20) " He who abides in love, abides in God and God abides in him" (1 John4:16) Our Lord says "This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you" (St. Jn 15:12). St. Paul says, "Let all that

you do, be done in love” (1 Cor. 16:14). The eight virtues that come from love, together with love is the fruit of the Spirit “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control” (Gal. 5:22-23) This will make us godly.

The person who abides in love, inherits the kingdom of heaven. “Then the king will say to those at his right hand: come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you clothed me. I was sick and you visited me. I was in prison and you came to me” (St. Matt 25:34-36). When we see others as God’s children and as fellow-beings, and identify ourselves whole-heartedly with them, we can love them as we love ourselves. Then the sacrifices we suffer for them will not make us sorry but joyful.

St. John says “We know that we have passed out of death unto life, because we love our brethren. He who does not love, abides in death” (1 Jn. 3:14)

3) DEEP CRAVING FOR THE GLORY OF GOD

When we are filled with love for God, we will have the inner urge to do everything for the glory of God “Whether you eat or drink what ever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31) says St. Paul. Our Lord says “ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven” (St. Matt 5:16)

When we are sincerely thankful to God, when we are whole heartedly loving mankind and when we do everything for the glory of God with deep craving, we will have the peace and joy which pass all understanding. Hence on no account shall we forget them.

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