

Right and Wrong Ways to Relate to God

THERE ARE TWO EXTREMES, each of which is bad, and which you must learn, therefore, to avoid. One is to seek your peace in Me, as you think, but without striving to conform yourself to Me. And the peace you are seeking, therefore, is not My Peace, but a sensual complacency in yourself which you would like to think is in Me. But it isn't. And that is why My Love for you cannot allow you to rest in that kind of peace—because it isn't mine.

Then, realizing that something is wrong, you swing to the opposite extreme, now trying [by your *own* efforts alone, without Me] to conform yourself to Me, in order to please Me—and by that motive your act is good, yet it is disordered and so, again, I cannot allow you to find your peace, i.e., My Peace, in it.

What We Do Wrong When Our Failings Come to Light

And here is the very heart of this lesson, that when I show you—through a severe temptation, or sometimes even permitting you to fall—how prone you are to evil, you conclude, rightly, that you are not, in the measure of your evil disposition, conformed to Me. I mean this, not merely in a general way, but in a very particular and precise sense, that you are not conformed to Me *now*. And consequently it is impossible for you to be in peace, My Peace, unless you are actually conforming yourself to Me—not in a general way, but just in the way that I want you to be conforming yourself to Me at this moment.

And here is the mistake you make—you do not understand that the very realization of your inadequacies is My Voice calling you to come to Me in order to get what you need to please Me. *And so the mistake is to seek what you need apart from Me*—and then things go from bad to worse, because then you allow yourself to be separated from Me more and more, and this in the illusion that you are pleasing Me thereby!

The Right Way to Act

Now do you see the lesson I would teach you? *That the more you recognize your lack of conformity to Me the more promptly you must run to Me and the more closely you must cling to Me, to My Heart*—not to remain as you were (that is the other extreme) but to become what I want you to be, realizing that *only as you are united with Me* can you receive the grace necessary to do what I am asking of you at this moment. And then, after this realization, as your soul is in My Peace, you will know, clearly, what you are to do by your own powers—and you will understand that each thing you are doing is pleasing Me—and then your peace will grow as you are actually conforming yourself to Me—*because your every act will be My action in you*. You must understand that My Peace which I give you is not something completed in which you can rest as in an end. No! It is My Life, your participation in My Life, which is a constant becoming.

Understanding How Our Own, Distinct Free Will Works within God's Will

You can see, too, in this, how the error comes from your incapacity to understand how the *distinct principle*—your own free will and its operation—is distinct, *not* as it is *separated* from Me,

but just as it is *united* with Me. But in your ignorance you are moved to undertake your responsibility in relation to Me by separating yourself from Me, as though it would not be your own act if you were united with Me. Whereas the truth is the very contrary – far from being your own act without Me, *it would not be any act at all*. And so, the natural consequence of your notions of freedom and responsibility is that your act becomes more and more disordered as you remove yourself more and more from the Principle of your acts, your Life. And this increasing disorder, you can see, gradually approaches the state of non-being, or nothingness.

Do you see now? Do you see how true it is that *without Me you can do nothing*? Ponder this lesson very much. It is the secret of My Peace, My Peace which I give to you.

