

A Selection of Writings by the Metropolitan of Aleppo, Paul Yazigi - 1

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



A. DIVINE DELIGHT AND HUMAN LOVE

“This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased”

“The Lord is God and has revealed Himself to us, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord”.

During the feast of Epiphany the church flock chants this hymn, which praises two events: The revelation of the Triune Lord to us and the coming of the God-Man Jesus Christ *‘in the name of the Lord’*. During Epiphany the Triune Lord was revealed to man and man was revealed to the Lord, namely, the man who pleased the Lord’s heart. These are the beloved Son and Man *‘in whom the Lord was well pleased’*.



It was also revealed to us how the Lord's delight is realized. The prefigurement of the image, which we ought to acquire and preserve in order to please the Lord, was also made clear.

In a beautiful exclamation Lord the Father names the Man who pleased Him: '*this is my beloved Son*'. The Lord '*is love*' and He loves everyone without exception, but the beloved Father's Son, is the One who loves the Father. In other words, the human form which was revealed and pleases the Lord's heart is not simply the image of the beloved man whom the Lord has created, but the image of the man, who loves the Heavenly Father unto the end, unto death, even unto the death of the cross.

Many people, Christians or heathen, have been trying to please their gods, according to the measure of their faith. They have been offering worship and sacrifices to the gods in order to gain their favor. Similarly the fathers in the Old Testament have kept the Lord's commandments to the letter and offered sacrifices and whole burnt offerings as a sign of their reconciliation with the Lord.

Nevertheless, the prophets have often made clear that the Lord does not find pleasure in whole burnt offerings, neither is He reconciled through sacrifices, since repentance is the true sign of reconciliation and the Lord does not despise a broken and contrite heart.

The Lord '*is love*' and expects that all His children to always be '*beloved*' to Him.

Our relationship with the Lord cannot be one of fear neither of gain. It can only be a relationship of love and this is what He expects and looks forward to receive from us.

The Lord does not need our fasting, prayers, almsgiving or any of the other virtues. It is us who need them but not in order to offer them as a gift or atonement since the Lord is neither a judge nor an adjudicator. He is the Lord of love. We need these virtues if our heart is to be flooded with love for the Lord and for our fellow human beings. All of these virtues are the means which will evaluate whether a tough person has been transformed into a kind one and whether our love has been withdrawn from volatile things and turned towards the One, Who is our Heavenly Father.

We fast in order to love the Lord; we engage in prayer and doing good deeds for the same purpose. Any virtue, which does not assist us in acquiring even more love and eros towards our Lord Jesus Christ and our neighbor, is nothing but labor without gain.

The Lord is love and expects us to love Him. Our salvation depends on this.

The Lord took delight in calling His Only Son 'beloved' and expects to be able to call us in the same way. The Lord revealed Himself as a man-loving Father during Epiphany. Therefore, we also ought to pray on this day so that we may become His beloved children, full of goodness, so that He can tell each one of us: 'This is my beloved son'. Amen.

B The World

The Church is not a shelter which cuts us off from the rest of the world in order to protect us but a school which equips us and dispatches us to preach to the world. The Divine Liturgy begins with the entrance to the Kingdom: '*Blessed is the Kingdom of the Father...*' and ends with the exit towards the world: '*let us go in peace*'!

We stand before the world not in fear, in insecurity, in contempt or as if we are departing from it, but with responsibility.

[To Be Continued]

Source: fdathanasiou.wordpress.com

Translated by: Filothei