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## SPIRITUAL TREATISES ON DIVINE LOVE:

How much God Deserves  
to be Loved.

—*Saint Alphonsus Liguori*



GOD is a treasury of all grace, of all good, of all perfection.

God is infinite, God is eternal, God is immense, God is unchangeable.

God is powerful, God is wise, God is provident, God is just.

God is merciful, God is holy, God is beautiful, God is brightness itself, God is rich, God is all things, and He is therefore worthy of love; and of how much love!

God is infinite; He gives to all, and receives nothing from any one. All that we have comes to us from God; but God has nothing from us: Thou art my God, for Thou hast no need of my goods.

God is eternal; He has ever been eternal, and always shall be. We can count the years and the days of our existence; but God knows no beginning, and will never have an end; But Thou art always the selfsame, and Thy years shall not fail?

God is immense, and is essentially present in every place. We, when we are in one place, cannot be in another. But God is in all places, in heaven, on earth, in the sea, in the depths, without us, and within us.

Whither shall I go from Thy spirit or

whither shall I flee from Thy face? If I ascend into heaven, Thou art there: if I descend into hell, Thou art present?

God is unchangeable; and all that He has ordained by His holy will from eternity, He wills now, and will do so forever. "For I am the Lord, and I change not."

God is powerful; and with respect to God, all the power of creatures is but weakness.

God is wise; and with respect to God, all human wisdom is ignorance.

God is provident; and with respect to God, all human foresight is ridiculous.

God is just; and with respect to God, all human justice is defective: And in His angels He found wickedness?

God is merciful; and with respect to God, all human clemency is imperfect.

God is holy; in comparison with God, all human sanctity, though it be heroic, falls short in an infinite degree: None is good but God alone?

God is beauty itself; yes, how beautiful is God! and with respect to God, all human beauty is deformity.

God is brightness itself; and with respect to God, all human brightness, even that of the sun, is darkness.

God is rich; and with respect to God, all human riches is poverty.

God is all things; and with respect to God, the highest, the most sublime, the most admirable of created things, and even if they were all united in one, are as nothing: All men are as nothing before Thee. He is, therefore, worthy of love; and, oh, of how much!

Ah, God is worthy of so much love, that all the angels, and all the saints of Paradise, do nothing but love God, and they will throughout all eternity be occupied only in loving Him; and in this love of God, they are and will be always happy.

Ah, God is so worthy of love, that He is obliged to love Himself with an infinite love; and in this same love, so necessary, but at the same time so delightful, which God bears to Himself, consists His beatitude! And shall we not love Him?

How did the saints love Him?

St. Francis Xavier used to loosen his clothes and throw himself on the ground, not being able to resist the impulse of holy love.

St. Stanislaus Kostka bared his breast, and used to run to fountains to refresh himself with the water.

The heart of St. Philip Neri became sensibly enlarged by the force of holy love.

St. Francis de Sales said, that if he knew that there was the smallest fibre in his heart that was not saturated with divine love, he would tear it out at once and cast it far from him. And St. Catharine of Sienna, St. Teresa, St. Mary Magdalene of Pazzi, and other souls like them, were often in transports, and ravished as it were through the violence of the holy love of God; and St. Mary Magdalene of Pazzi, not satisfied with loving Him so much herself, sometimes went about her convent, in order to give vent to her love, crying with aloud voice, "Love is not loved; Love is not loved." And shall we then not love Him?

Do you know why we do not love Him? It is because we know Him so little. The saints, who knew Him better than we do, loved Him so much. Let us then also try to know Him a little more.

Let us meditate from time to time on His divine attributes, on His divine perfections; let us at least, from time to time, raise our minds by a simple glance to Him in the way I have here

proposed, and our hearts will also become inflamed with this holy divine love.

It is condescension in so great a God, that He should permit Himself to be loved by such vile creatures as we are; and it is also His sweet commandment.

When God gave Moses His law on the top of Mount Sinai, before giving him any other precept, He taught him this: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole hearty and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole strength."

And He enjoined him first of all to imprint well these words in his own heart: And these words shall be in thy heart; and afterwards to promulgate them with ardor among the children of Israel: And thou shalt tell them to thy children. Let us also love Him as He deserves; let us fulfil perfectly this His precept, which is at the same time so noble and so sweet; which is in fine the first and greatest precept of the law: *This is the greatest and the first commandment.* And let us live and die in the fulfilment of this precept.