

“Revelations of Divine Love” by Julian of Norwich (1393) – Clarification of the **“List of Chapters”**

Two points need clarification: God is never angry, and elect souls have a part in them that never has sinned.

Julian is careful throughout her work to insist on believing and obeying all that the Holy Catholic Church teaches, and that it is only within her that we can walk the path that leads to God. In saying God is never angry, she ignores the mentions of God’s wrath in both the Old and New Testaments.

“God rejoices to be our Father, Brother, Husband.” Julian believes God revealed He is never angry, and she understands this in context of God’s chosen relationship with us as our Father, Brother, Husband, in the unique relationships of the three divine Persons with each soul. Our faith teaches us that in God wrath, like jealousy, is unlike our human emotions. God is not an angry father, brother, or husband as we suffer angry relations in life on Earth. It is like God’s jealousy which is that of the loving parent who wants his children to be well and jealously watches over them, unlike our jealousy which is about wanting what we do not have.

Similarly, God’s wrath is about being unchanging in his truth and goodness; so when human beings insist on remaining sinful or harming others they oppose God directly and will experience the full weight of God’s justice. His loving mercy requires that He treat everyone justly and truthfully. Those who welcome God’s will and obey Him and do his will experience more fully God’s tender love; but those who resist his will and refuse to obey it are actually standing in God’s way as an obstacle in a foolish attempt to prevent God from accomplishing his purposes, which they have no power to do.

It’s like foolish people who insist on affirming their freedom of choice by standing in front of a fast truck or train: the full weight of that moving vehicle will be experienced by them as “wrath”, but neither the truck nor the train is angry. So it is with the Holy Trinity in their relations and dealings with human beings and also angels. It is our good and God’s glory to welcome and obey God’s will.

In chapters 37, 50, 53, 72, 82, and 85 Julian testifies that God has shown her He gives special grace and care to his elect, the baptized, who believe in Jesus as the Son of God whom He sent into the world for salvation, and who try to live in love and obedience to the will of God. She had trouble understanding and believing that even though they sin the elect are never dead in God’s sight, and she asked God for “further enlightenment”.

Our Church teaches us that sin is deadly when it puts to death the life of the Holy Trinity in us and we are no longer in the state of grace or no longer in communion with the Holy Trinity. As St Paul put it, we cannot force God to become an accomplice in our sin. I believe that Julian never denies this teaching but ignores it; as she lets herself be led by God to view it from God’s point of view. God’s love is so stable for his elect that even though they sin He does not consider them dead to Him.

“God looks at the soul’s grief with pity, not blame; yet we do nothing but sin; in solace and fear God wants us to turn to him, and cling to his love, and see him to be our medicine; we must love, in longing and enjoyment; anything opposed to this comes from the enemy, not God. In all our troubles we have to be steadfast in the truth, and firmly trust in God; if our faith is unopposed it deserves no reward.”

Julian’s writings are like later revelations of the Sacred Heart of Jesus from 1673 to 1889 to Sister Margaret Mary Alacoque at Paray-le-Monial in France. St. Father Claude de la Colombière became her confessor and guided her. Similarly, from 1931 to 1938 the Lord Jesus dictated to Sister Faustina Kowalska in Poland his message of Divine Mercy for the whole world. In both of these private revelations, Jesus the Son of God relates how He suffers from an infinite desire, as Son of God, to pour Himself out in Mercy to souls in accord with the Father’s love and will, but that his burning desire is frustrated when souls resist and hesitate because of sin, ignorance, fear, and many other obstacles. He pleads with souls to repent and trust in Divine Mercy.