

ST LEO THE GREAT, HOMILY ON THE BEATITUDES

VIII. The blessedness of a pure heart

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God Matthew 5:8 . Great is the happiness, beloved, of him for whom so great a reward is prepared. What, then, is it to have the heart pure, but to strive after those virtues which are mentioned above? And how great the blessedness of seeing God, what mind can conceive, what tongue declare? And yet this shall ensue when man's nature is transformed, so that no longer in a mirror, nor in a riddle, but face to face 1 Corinthians 13:12 it sees the very Godhead as He is 1 John 3:2, which no man could see ; and through the unspeakable joy of eternal contemplation obtains that which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither has entered into the heart of man. Rightly is this blessedness promised to purity of heart. For the brightness of the true light will not be able to be seen by the unclean sight: and that which will be happiness to minds that are bright and clean, will be a punishment to those that are stained. Therefore, let the mists of earth's vanities be shunned, and your inward eyes purged from all the filth of wickedness, that the sight may be free to feed on this great manifestation of God. For to the attainment of this we understand what follows to lead.

IX. The blessedness of peace-making

Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the sons of God Matthew 5:9 . This blessedness, beloved, belongs not to any and every kind of agreement and harmony, but to that of which the Apostle speaks: have peace towards God ; and of which the Prophet David speaks: Much peace have they that love Your law, and they have no cause of offenses. This peace even the closest ties of friendship and the most exact likeness of mind do not really gain, if they do not agree with God's will. Similarity of bad desires, leagues in crimes, associations of vice, cannot merit this peace. The love of the world does not consort with the love of God, nor does he enter the alliance of the sons of God who will not separate himself from the children of this generation. Whereas they who are in mind always with God, giving diligence to keep the

unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace Ephesians 4:3, never dissent from the eternal law, uttering that prayer of faith, Your will be done as in heaven so on earth Matthew 6:10 . These are the peacemakers, these are thoroughly of one mind, and fully harmonious, and are to be called sons of God and joint-heirs with Christ Romans 8:17, because this shall be the record of the love of God and the love of our neighbour, that we shall suffer no calamities, be in fear of no offense, but all the strife of trial ended, rest in God's most perfect peace, through our Lord, Who, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.