

25. Purely out of Fatherly, Divine Goodness and Mercy.

Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him. *Ps. 103,13.*

God manifested His love in the creation of the world. Many are the blessings which He showered upon us according to the First Article of our holy Christian Creed. God has made us and all creatures. He has given us a rational soul and made us the foremost of all visible creatures. For us He created heaven and earth and all that is therein. The whole world was made for man. Sun, moon, and stars give light to our earth, which is the center of the universe. The life of all creatures is in reality only subservient to our welfare. Even the angels in heaven are our servants. God sustains the earth and all that is therein; but He mainly provides for man, who is a sinner and therefore does not deserve any love or kindness on the part of his Creator, and — oh, fatherly, divine goodness and mercy! — defends us against all danger and guards and protects us from all evil. He has made us His dear children in Christ Jesus and opens for us the way to eternal life for our Savior's sake, who has redeemed us with His precious blood. The holy and almighty God stoops down to us poor sinners and becomes our good and merciful Father.

What may have induced God to do all this? Does He derive any benefit from us? Could He not dwell in glory and in perfect happiness without us? What impelled Him to call us into existence and to overwhelm us, with His tender mercies? Any merit or worthiness in us? No; God owes us nothing. All His blessings He showers upon us purely out of His fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, and we must confess with Jacob that we are not worthy of the least of all the mercies with which He has blessed us so abundantly. This is the sentiment of every true Christian. Hence he sings his Maker's praise. "O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; because His mercy endureth forever."

Prayer.

O Lord, how great is Thy goodness towards us, who are not worthy of even the least of Thy manifold blessings! And how wonderfully infinite Thine omnipotence is in greatly multiplying the seed that decays in the soil! O Lord, Thou God of riches, all that men harvest is indeed Thine, for we cannot of ourselves cause anything to spring forth out of the earth; so if we get much or little, it is nevertheless more than we deserve. Thanks, therefore, be to Thy holy name for each and every thing that Thou hast given us! Thou alone art the God that didst sustain us from early infancy and dost bestow on us all manner of blessings. To Thee alone be all praise and honor. Amen.

All glory be to God on high,
Who hath our race befriended!
To us no harm shall now come nigh,
The strife at last is ended;
God showeth His good will to men,
And peace shall reign on earth again;
O thank Him for His goodness!

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