**Lesson 6: Receive the Love of God in the Signs That God Gives**

To generously receive and stay with the grace of God is the third essential habit of growing intimacy with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Why does Jesus command us to ask, seek, and knock? Why, when the Disciples ask Him to teach them to pray, does Jesus reply with the seven petitions of the Our Father? Because in relationship with God, we are always in a position of receptivity. We depend completely on God for every good thing. Our catechism says, “Recognizing this utter dependence with respect to the Creator is a source of wisdom and freedom, of joy and confidence” (CCC 301). To live according to this truth is to imitate Jesus who does nothing on his own. All of His words and works come from the Father and reveal the truth that He is the beloved Son, and that the Father and He are one. He demonstrates to us that to be able to receive God is, indeed, the most fruitful activity of the human person. At the Annunciation, Mary does not say, “I’ll do it”’ she says, “Let it be done to me.” The opposite of total dependence on God is some form of self-sufficiency which is the cause of foolishness, slavery, sorrow, and insecurity.[[1]](#endnote-1)

It is difficult for us to believe that living in dependence on and receptivity to God is especially pleasing to Him. We would much rather do something great for God to “earn” His love. However, the truth is that God’s love for us is gratuitous and unconditional. We can do nothing to cause God to love us or to stop loving us and to believe otherwise is to believe a lie.[[2]](#endnote-2)

God is laboring all the time to pour Himself into the simple, ordinary realities of this world. The greatest example of this is the Holy Eucharist. Here is a tiny wafer and some cheap wine and Jesus so completely pours Himself into them that they become Him: Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. So we can communicate to God, “Thank you; I love you, too, and I want to receive more of you.” We can say this without words when we receive words of Scripture that bring comfort or encouragement that we hold in our heart throughout the day, or consoling memories of a blessing we received years ago, or the majesty of God when our hearts are stirred by a beautiful sunset. So, take the time when relating your thoughts, feelings, and desires to God, to then be quiet and see how God reveals Himself to you in your heart. Remember that you can do nothing to cause this revelation except be open and receptive to His love.[[3]](#endnote-3)

God’s love for us is infinite and eternal, but our hearts are finite and limited. They cannot contain the infinite and eternal love of God. So God gives us signs of his love that can fit into our hearts here and now. The most important question to be able to answer in a specific, personal way at any moment is, “How are you loving me now, Lord?” The particular, personal love of God for us in this moment is our anchor. It is our life, our existence, and our all. Apart from this love, we are nothing and can do nothing. But, as we grow in the habit of receiving the particular graces God gives, we readily grow into the full stature of Christ and become more and more authentically the unique and unrepeatable persons God has made us to be.[[4]](#endnote-4)

1. Father Scott Traynor, JCL, *The Parish as a School of Prayer* (Omaha, NE: The Insititute for Priestly Formation IPF Publications, p. 23-24. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Ibid., p. 24. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Ibid., p. 25-26. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid., p. 26. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)