

Julian of Norwich and Ecological Consciousness
Annual Friends of Julian Lecture by Dr Claire Foster-Gilbert ~7th May 2022

HANDOUT

I harde a man telle of halye kyrke of the storye of saynte Cecylle, in the whilke schewynge I vndyrstode that sche hadde thre *wonndys* (my emphasis here and all italics in the quotations hereafter) with a swerde in the nekke, with the whilke sche pynede to the dede. By the styrrynge of this I conseyvede a myghty desyre, prayande oure lorde god that he wolde grawnte me thre *wonndys* in my lyfe tyme, that es to saye the *wonnde* of contricyoun, the *wonnde* of compassyoun and the *wonnde* of wylfulle langgyng to god (Short Text Chapter One).

Julian's wound of contrition: reverent dread

And alle thys our lorde shewde in the furst syght, and gave me space and tyme to behold it. And the bodely syght styntyed, and the goostely sygte dwelleth in my vnderstondyng. And I aboode with *reuerent dread*, ioyeng in that I saw, and desyeryng as I durst to see more, if it were hys wylle, or lengar tyme the same syght (Long Text ch 8).

For of alle thyng the beholdyng and the lovyng of the maker makyth the soule to seme lest in his awne syght, and most fyllyth hit with *reuerent drede* (LT ch 6).

[With] speciall grace [God] shewyth hym selfe to our soule... (LT ch 43)

mervelously enjoyeng with reuerente drede and so grett swetnesse and delyght in hym... (LT ch 43)

[love and reverent dread are] bredryn and they are rotyd in vs by the goodnesse of oure maker there is no drede that fully plesyth god in vs but reverent drede, and that is softe, for the more it is had, the less it is felte, for swetnesse of loue (LT ch 74)

Julian's wound of compassion: she is her even-Christians; she is everyman

Alle that I say of *me* I mene in person of *alle* my evyn cristen (LT ch 8).

For yf I looke syngulery to my selfe I am ryght nought; but in generall I am, I hope, in onehede of cheryte with *alle* my evyn cristen (LT ch 9).

for alle this syght was shewde in *generalle*' (LT ch 8).

In alle this I was much steryde in cheryte to myne evyn christen, that they myght *alle* see and know the same that I sawe (LT ch 8).

but I trust in our lord god that he shall of his godnes and for *iour loue* make *yow* to take it more ghostely and more sweetly then I can or may tell it (LT ch 9).

leue the beholding of a wrech that it was schewde to, and myghtely, wysely and mekely behold in god' (LT ch 8).

evry man, aftyr the grace that god gevyth hym in vnder standyng and lovyng, receyve them in our lordes menyng (LT ch 26).

Some texts to wound us by love

In this he shewed a littil thing, the quantitye of an hesil nutt *in the palme of my hand*; and it was as round as a balle. I lokid thereupon with eye of my understandyng and thowte: 'What may this be?' And it was generally answered thus: 'It is all that is made.' I mervellid how it might lesten [last], for methowte it might suddenly have fallen to nowte for littil. And I was answered in my understandyng: 'It lestheth and ever shall, for God loveth it; and so allthing hath the[ir] being be the love of God.' (Chapter 5)

Than with a glad chere our lord loked into his syde and beheld, enioyand; and with his swete lokyng he *led forth the undersondyng of his creture be the same wound into his syde withinne*. And than he shewid a faire delectabil place, and large enow for al mankynd that shal be save to resten in pece and in love... And with this our gode lord seyde ful blisfully, 'Lo how that I lovid the', as if he had seid: 'My derling, behold and se they lord, thy God, that is thy maker and thyn endles ioy.... This shewid our gode lord for to make us glad and mery. (Chapter 24)

The moder may geven hir child soken her mylke, but our pretious moder Iesus, he may fedyn us with himselfe; and doith full curtesly and full tenderly with the blissid sacrament that is pretious fode of very lif.... The moder may leyn the child tenderly to her brest, but our tender moder Iesus, he may homley *leden us into his blissid brest be his swete open syde*... gevyng the same vnderstandyng in this swete word wher he seith 'Lo, how I love the'... (Chapter 60)

And fro that time that it [the revelations] was shewid I desired oftentimes to witten what was our lords mening. And xv yer after and more I was answerid in gostly vnderstanding, seyand thus: 'Woldst thou wetten thi lords mening in this thing? Wete it wele: love was his mening. Who shewid it the? Love. What shewid he the? Love. Wherefore shewid it he? For love. *Hold the therin and thou shalt witten and knowen more in the same*; but thou shalt never knowen ne witten therein other thing without end.' (Chapter 86)