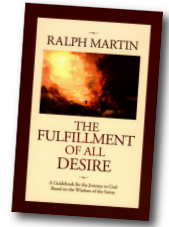


LEN 
2020

The Fulfillment of All Desire

Chapter 17



QUESTIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING & REFLECTION

There's Always More (pp. 415 - 443)

1. What is the difference between the trials a soul endures before entering the unitive way and the trials endured by a soul who has already entered into a spiritual marriage with Jesus?
2. According to St. Catherine, what spiritual benefits can a person in the unitive way receive from the trials and sufferings that come from God?
3. As a person grows in holiness, how does the understanding of suffering change?
4. How did St. Therese respond to the profound darkness that engulfed her during the last year of her life? How did she understand that darkness?
5. What does it mean to "die of love"?
6. According to St. John of the Cross, how does a person's desire for death while in the unitive way differ from the desire for death souls in the purgative or illuminative way might experience?

7. Why does St. Bernard say that no matter how much the Holy Spirit enlivens the sacrament, it is never enough for souls in the unitive way?
8. In your own words, describe the picture St. John and St. Bernard give of the beatific vision.
9. How, according to St. John, does the Holy Spirit help prepare us for the beatific vision?
10. Is the idea of the beatific vision biblical? Write out two or three of the Scripture verses that support this teaching.
11. As you've grown in faith, how has your understanding of suffering changed? Does the idea of "loving suffering" still seem strange? Why or why not? What might help you more fully embrace suffering as a blessing?
12. What do St. Therese's love, humor, and joy in the face of great suffering teach you? What about Mother Teresa's continued service through spiritual darkness – what lesson can you learn from her? How do the experiences of those two women affect your understanding of holiness?
13. Does reading St. John and St. Bernard's descriptions of the beatific vision give you a greater desire for holiness? Why or why not? If your answer was "yes", what in your life are you willing to change so that you too can see God face to face? If your answer was "no", what do you think still needs to happen so that your answer can be "yes"? How can God make that change possible?