

## **All that is True, All that is Good, All that is Beautiful**

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*“All that is good, all that is true, all that is beautiful brings us to God. Because God is good, God is beautiful, God is the truth.” -Pope Francis*

*“If something is true, it is good and beautiful; if it is beautiful, it is good and true; if it is good, it is true and beautiful.” -Pope Francis*

**W**hen we look at our lives, things are not that bright. Life is hard. Look at the news. In our fallen, sinful world, evil seems to be having the upper hand. When we experience the suffering, it seems the world has gone mad, and it has. Pain, suffering, violence and evil are necessary part of our world.

Still human heart searches for the good, the true and the beautiful. There is a perennial longing for the ideal, which is absolute Truth, Goodness and Beauty.

### **Seeking for Truth**

Truth is being original, authentic and genuine. Nothing we do can ever be opposed to the truth, that is, opposed to

reality which has its being in God. When our senses are in good condition and functioning properly under normal circumstances, and when our reason is functioning honestly and clearly, we can come to know reality and have the ability to make true judgments about it. Through study, reflection, experimentation, argument and discussion, we believe that an object under discussion may manifest itself in its various relations, either directly or indirectly, to the mind.

We believe that by our nature, human beings tend towards the truth. Even though due to our fallen nature we may sometimes seek to ignore or obfuscate the truth, we are nonetheless obliged to honour and bear witness to it in its fullness. We are bound to adhere to the truth once we come to know it and direct our whole life in accordance with the demands of truth. As such humans seek truth directly or indirectly all the time.

### **Open to Goodness**

Goodness, which is related to the truth of every being, is understood as the perfection of being. A thing is good to the degree that it enacts and perfects those powers, activities, and capacities appropriate to its nature and purpose. We know what a good pair of scissors, a good eyesight, a good person, and a good life imply. We have to know a thing's purpose, nature, or form to engage in an authentic discussion of "The Good." This takes us further to what is a good law, a good government, a good father, or a good man. Such questions may grow richer, deeper and more complex. In all cases we are open to goodness that comes from all sides.

## Contemplating the Beautiful

Beauty can evoke wonder and delight, which are the foundation of a life of wisdom and inquiry. Beauty involves apprehending unity, harmony, proportion, wholeness, and radiance. It often manifests itself in simplicity and purity, especially in mathematics and science. Often beauty has a type of pre-rational (striking) force upon the soul, for instance when one witnesses a spectacular sunset or the face of one's beloved. Beauty can be understood as a type of inner radiance or shine coming from a thing that is well-ordered to its state of being or is true to its nature or form. Beauty pleases not only the eye or ear, but also the intellect in a celebration of the integrity of our body and soul. It can be seen as a sign of God's goodness, benevolence and graciousness, of His presence and His transcendence in the world. It can serve as re-enchantment with the cosmos and all reality and assist in journeying to a rich and deep contemplative beholding of the real.

## Concluding Remarks

In the traditional philosophy, truth, goodness or beauty are called "transcendentals" since they transcend (or go beyond) every individual objects and are universally applied. Although associated in particular with Platonism the ideas may have an earlier origin, appearing for example in the *Bhagavad Gita* to describe "words which are good and beautiful and true." (Bhagavad Gita Ch.17, v.15).

Since God created everything and found them good (Gen 1), it is natural that humans can trace goodness in everything. In this way they can reach God. So John Henry Newman can say: "All that is good, all that is true, all that is beautiful, all that is beneficent, be it great or small, be it perfect or

fragmentary, natural as well as supernatural, moral as well as material, comes from God.”

Thus Christian life gives us the ability to discern the good, the true and the beautiful, even in the ugly, painful and the tragic experiences we encounter. Christian life enables us to trace out the good, true and beautiful even in the evil. In this sense, for a believing Christian, even the experience of evil, indirectly can lead to the absolute goodness, God.

Thus we can resonate with St. Paul, who said it beautifully: “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things” (Philip 4:8).

## References

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