

Spiritual Testimonies 24-25-26-27-28
Saint Teresa of Avila

24. True Humility-Put my Counsels in writing

(Avila, Incarnation, 1572)

Fearing about whether or not I was in a **state of grace**, He told me: **“Daughter, light is very different from darkness. I am faithful. Nobody will be lost unknowingly. He who finds security in spiritual favors will be deceived. True security is the testimony of a good conscience. But no one should think that through his own effort he can be in light or that he can do anything to prevent the night, because these states depend upon my grace. The best help for holding on to the light is to understand that you can do nothing and that it comes from me. For even though you may be in light, at the moment I withdraw, the night will come. This is true humility: to know what you can do and what I can do.**

“Don’t fail to write down the counsels I give you, so that you don’t forget them. Since you want the counsels of men in writing why do you think you’re losing time by writing down those I give you? The time will come when you will need them all.”

25. The Nature of Union

(Date & Place Uncertain)

In explaining the nature of union to me, He said:

1. **“Don’t think, daughter, that union lies in being very close to me. For those too who offend me are close, although they may not want to be. Neither does it consist in favors and consolations in prayer, even though these may reach a very sublime degree. Though these favors may come from Me, they are often a means for winning souls, even souls that are not in the state of grace.”**

I was experiencing a **lofty elevation** of the **spirit** hearing these words. The Lord gave me an **understanding** of what the **spirit** is and what state my soul was in at that moment ... It seems that the spirit is the **higher part of the will**.

2. Getting back to **union** ... it consists in the **spirit** being **pure** and **raised** above all **earthly things** so that nothing in the soul wants to turn aside from **God’s will**; but there is such **conformity** with God in **spirit, will**, and **detachment** from all, and **involvement** with Him, that there is **no thought** of **love of self** or of any **creature**.

3. ... if this is union, then we can say of a soul with **determination** like this that it is always in the **prayer of union**. It is true that this prayer of union lasts only a **short while**. But with respect to walking in **uprightness** and making **progress**, union does last; but it cannot be said that the soul is in union as it is when in **contemplation**. ... The dust of our **misery, faults**, and **impediments**, in which we again immerse ourselves is so great that it would be **impossible** to have the **purity** the spirit has when joined to God; for the spirit then leaves and rises above our wretched misery. If this experience is union, ... our **will** and **spirit** being made one with God’s, it is impossible for anyone not in a **state of grace** to have it; ...

It would be very **difficult**, unless by a special grace from God, to **understand** when there is **union** since we **cannot know** when we are in the **state of grace**....

26. Do Not Renounce what Awakens Love
(Avila, Date Uncertain)

I read that it was an **imperfection** to have **ornate paintings**, so I didn’t want to keep the one I had in my cell. Even before reading the book, it seemed to be a **practice of poverty** to only have paper images... Having forgotten about this, I heard the following: **what I wanted to do was not a good mortification (what was better poverty or charity)**; that since **love** (or

charity) was the better, I shouldn't renounce anything that **awakened my love**, nor should I take such things from my nuns... What the devil did among Lutherans was take away all means to **awaken love**, and so they **went astray**. "**My Christians, daughter, must now more than ever do the opposite of what they do.**"

I understood that I had a great **obligation** to serve our Lady and St. Joseph; for often when I went completely off the path, God gave me salvation again through their prayers.

27. Spiritual Improvement at the Incarnation

(Avila, Incarnation, June 1572)

On the eight day of Pentecost the Lord granted me a **favor** and gave me hope that this house would continue to **improve**—I mean that the **souls** in it would.

28. A Favor on St. Mary Magdalene's Feast

(Avila, Incarnation , July 22, 1572)

On the feast of St. Mary Magdalene the Lord **confirmed** a **favor** He had granted me in Toledo, **choosing me** in the place of a certain person who was absent. Amen