



Love in Jeanne-Marie Bouvier de la Motte Guyon (1648-1717)

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Madame Guyon defends the controversial theory of "pure love." According to her, pure love designates the love of God exclusively for God's own sake. Loving God for the sake of benefits God has conferred or might confer represents an inferior love. Even concern for one's salvation should be abandoned in the act of pure love. This pure love is essential for the mystical union, the enduring union between the bridegroom (God) and the bride (the human soul), Guyon considers the summit of the spiritual life. "Whoever does not hear the voice [of the heavenly spouse] is ignorant of pure love and full of self-love and a worldly attachment to creatures. She is incapable of experiencing the ineffable effects of pure charity" (1688 11)

Mystically, the repeated act of pure of pure love leads to the annihilation of the soul's selfhood and its transformation into the living image of God.

Primary Sources:

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