

**XVI REVELATIONS OF  
DIVINE LOVE SHEWED TO  
MOTHER JULIANA OF  
NORWICH 1373**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649081967

XVI revelations of divine love shewed to Mother Juliana of Norwich 1373 by George Tyrrell

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

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**GEORGE TYRRELL**

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XVI  
REVELATIONS  
OF  
DIVINE LOVE  
SHEWED TO  
*MOTHER JULIANA*  
OF NORWICH

1373

WITH A PREFACE BY  
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LONDON  
KEGAN PAUL, TRENCH, TRÜBNER & CO. LTD  
PATERNOSTER HOUSE, CHURCH LANE

1902

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Printed by BALLANTYNE, HANSON & Co.  
At the Ballantyne Press

## PREFACE

“WHAT! Wouldst thou wit thy Lord's meaning in this thing? Wit it well; Love was His meaning. Who shewed it thee? Love. Wherefore shewed He it thee? For Love. Hold thee therein, and thou shalt wit it more in that same. But thou shalt never wit therein other without end.” This is the key to the true interpretation and criticism not only of Mother Juliana's Revelations, but also of the Christian revelation and of every religion so far as it reaches after the fulness of Christ. Nay, it is the key to the riddle of Nature and to the riddle of human life—all alike in their several ways are “Revelations of Divine Love”—however hard at times it may be for Faith, with tear-dimmed eyes and trembling fingers, to unravel the knot. “Wit it well: Love was His meaning. Who shewed it thee? Love. Wherefore shewed He it thee? For Love.” Beneath the life of those senses which reveal to us that world of appearances, which the unreflecting so easily confound with the reality

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which it only symbolises; beneath the life of the understanding, whose forms and frames (contrasting in their permanence and universality with the unsteadiness and uncertainty of that chaos of fleeting phenomena which they but classify and set in order) have seemed to some to merit the name of Reality; beneath even the life of the higher, though self-centred and self-regarding emotions and sentiments, æsthetic or spiritual; deep down at the very basis of the soul, is to be sought the only life that in an absolute and independent sense deserves the name of "real," because by it alone are we brought into conscious relation with other personalities, and made aware of our own. Whatever else we call real is so, but in some secondary and derived sense. Only in so far as it resembles a person can we think of it at all, and only in so far as it affects a person, ourself or another, can we desire it or care about it in any way. It is precisely by love and its dependent affections that we are brought into conscious and active relation with the whole world of personalities outside our own, so as to make therewith in some sort one many-membered spiritual organism. It is love which at once saves and yet overcomes that separateness and individual distinction which is of the very essence of personality, and thereby welds the several grains of corn into one living



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bread. Loveless, self-centred, torn altogether from its connection with the whole, the soul may still live the surface-life of sense or thought or reason, but its grasp on reality is relaxed, as it were, in spiritual death: "Though I understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, and have not love, I am nothing"—the veriest nonentity, a withered leaf snatched by the breeze from the living bough. In this deeper sense it is true to say that union is the condition of distinctness; and society, of personality. "We are nothing else but wills," says Augustine, *Nihil aliud sumus quam voluntates*. A man *is*, in his veriest reality, what he loves; with him "to be" is "to love"; if he have not love he is nothing—he is as a sounding brass or tinkling cymbal compared with a living cry from the heart; appearance, not reality. The fulness, therefore, of a man's life is to be measured by the number of persons and groups of persons in whom his affections are interested—by the nature, depth, and variety of those affections, whether of sympathy or antipathy, of love or of aversion; and the whole movement and life of this world of wills, like that of notes in a sunbeam, or of the star-dust that swims in space, is one of ceaseless shiftings and mutual adjustments, whereby, through a maze of seemingly lawless confusion,

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each will finds at last its predestined orbit in the spiritual universe. Hence it is that a man is estimated chiefly by his relation to others; by his likes, his dislikes, and his indifferences, which make him what he is, be it great or little, good or evil. Hence, too, that sense of spiritual enlargement and re-enforcement on the one hand, and on the other, of impoverishment and contraction, according as our will is drawn into closer communion with others, or driven away into isolation and estrangement. Hence, once more, the firm *Non omnis moriar* of him who, by identifying himself with that "Living Will which shall endure when all that seems shall suffer shock," has laid hold of eternal life and reality, and has embraced an imperishable cause.

As man lives his narrow bodily life in the bosom of Nature long before he understands her at all comprehensively, or rises to that belief in her unity as a single system which so multiplies his power of dealing with her and drawing on her bounty; so too he is bound by the bonds of a blind rudimentary charity to the world of wills and personalities long before he rises to a clear conception of that sovereign and central will, over all and through all, by which alone the rest are explained and brought into one coherent self-sufficing system. When the law of Love is thus discerned in its universality as the

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Alpha and Omega of all spiritual movement, controlling the seeming chaos of conflicting wills to its own irresistible purpose, then are the possibilities of man's inward life multiplied in the same degree as those of his outward life have been multiplied by the conceptions of physical science. Thus it is that religion answers the problem as to the meaning of man's deepest life—the life of those personal affections and sympathies by which we are endlessly opposed and re-united, sorted and re-sorted, into groups and sub-groups: "Wit it well! Love is the meaning"—a Divine Love which gives us a standard and criterion whereby to discern between love and love, and to guide our feet through the labyrinth of warring affections into the way of peace.

It is in furnishing such practical guidance that a doctrine or doctrinal system possesses religious truth and value as distinct from that which is merely scientific, historical, or ethical. For one reason or another its coherence with the rest of our knowledge and understanding may be at times, or in points, hard to establish; but eventually all our theories of the world, visible and invisible, are but instruments of life, practical ways of taking things so as to use and control them to our profit. Nor should we ever, in case of conflict, be swayed by mere reasoning to disbelieve what experiment had proved true. At the