

# God as 'That Tremendous Lover'

from *The Hound of Heaven*  
by Francis Thompson

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# Ignatius of Antioch

## 35-107 AD (Traditional Dates)

An Apostolic Father (Knew at least John)

Other Apostolic Fathers:

- Clement of Rome
- Polycarp

- Seven Epistles: *Ephesians, Magnesians, Trallians, Romans, Philadelphians, Smyrnaeans, Polycarp*
- John Calvin believed they were “rubbish published under Ignatius’ name. Why?”
- Established “monarchial episcopate.”
  - “to the church also which holds the presidency, in the location of the country of the Romans, worthy of God, worthy of honor, worthy of blessing, worthy of praise, worthy of success, worthy of sanctification, and, because you hold the presidency in love, named after Christ and named after the Father” (Letter to the Romans)
- Established early Church believed in Real Presence. (Authenticity nearly unanimous)
  - “They abstain from the Eucharist and from prayer, because they do not admit that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, the flesh which suffered for our sins and which the Father, in His graciousness, raised from the dead.” (Letter to Smyrna)

# Catechism of the Catholic Church

1374 The mode of Christ's presence under the Eucharistic species is unique. It raises the Eucharist above all the sacraments as "the perfection of the spiritual life and the end to which all the sacraments tend." In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist "the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained." "This presence is called 'real' - by which is not intended to exclude the other types of presence as if they could not be 'real' too, but because it is presence in the fullest sense: that is to say, it is a substantial presence by which Christ, God and man, makes himself wholly and entirely present."

The Pew study, issued Aug. 5, 2019, showed that 69% of all self-identified Catholics said they believed the bread and wine used at Mass are not Jesus, but instead "symbols of the body and blood of Jesus Christ." The other 31% believed in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, known as transubstantiation.

"Most Catholics who believe that the bread and wine are symbolic do not know that the church holds that transubstantiation occurs," said Gregory Smith, associate director of research at Pew Research Center in Washington. "Overall, 43% of Catholics believe that the bread and wine are symbolic and also that this reflects the position of the church.

"Still, one in five Catholics — 22% — reject the idea of transubstantiation, even though they know about the church's teaching," Smith said.

The numbers who believe in transubstantiation are higher among Catholics who go to Mass at least once a week, but are hardly overwhelming. About five of every eight churchgoing Catholics believe in the church's teaching of transubstantiation.



A close-up photograph of a dark blue, heavily riveted metal door. The door is covered in numerous small, raised rivets. A large, horizontal metal latch is visible, secured with a padlock. The padlock is silver-colored with a circular face and a keyhole. The text "II. 'Naught shelters Thee, who shelters not Me.'" is overlaid in white on the left side of the image.

II. "Naught shelters Thee,  
who shelters not Me."





**(For, though I knew His love Who followèd,  
Yet was I sore adread  
Lest, having Him, I must have naught beside).**

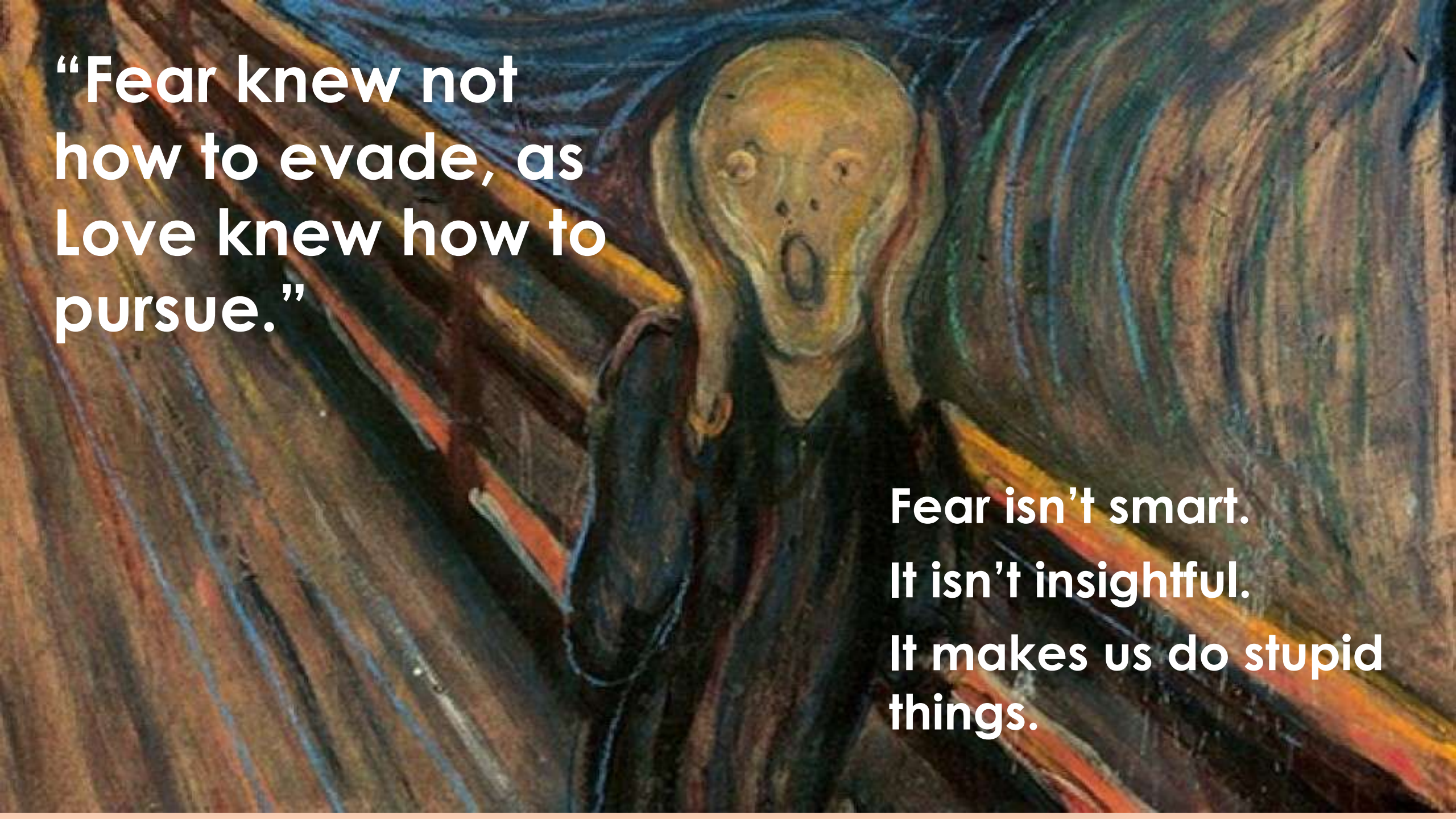


“But if one casement parted wide,  
The gust of His approach would  
clash it to.”

How does  
fleeing  
God ruin  
our love  
life?





The background of the image is a reproduction of 'The Scream' by Edvard Munch. It depicts a figure in a dark, swirling, turbulent sea, with a face that is pale and wide-eyed, expressing intense emotional distress or fear. The colors are dark and moody, with streaks of blue, green, and brown in the background, and a dark, swirling sea in the foreground.

“Fear knew not  
how to evade, as  
Love knew how to  
pursue.”


Fear isn't smart.  
It isn't insightful.  
It makes us do stupid  
things.





Across the margent of the world I fled,  
And troubled the gold gateways of the stars,  
Smiting for shelter on their clangèd bars;  
Fretted to dulcet jars and silvern chatter  
the pale ports o' the moon.





For everyone who does  
evil hates the **Light**,  
and doesn't come to the  
Light for fear that his  
deeds will be exposed

John 3:20

Knowing-Jesus.com





stars





I said to Dawn: Be sudden—to Eve: Be soon;  
With thy young skiey blossoms heap me over  
From this tremendous Lover—  
To all **swift things** for swiftness did I sue;  
Clung to the whistling mane of every wind.



...I **tempted** all His  
servitors but to find  
My own betrayal in their  
constancy,

In faith to Him, their  
fickleness to me,  
...Their traitorous trueness,  
and their loyal deceit.





**“Rarely is our rebellion an open rejection of God’s authority.” (Francis Lebuff, SJ)**





# God IS the Tremendous Lover

- ❖ His love is Eternal.
- ❖ His love is all knowing.
- ❖ His love is the most intense.
- ❖ His love is insistent.
- ❖ His love is munificent.
- ❖ His love is over-whelming.
- ❖ His love is changeless.





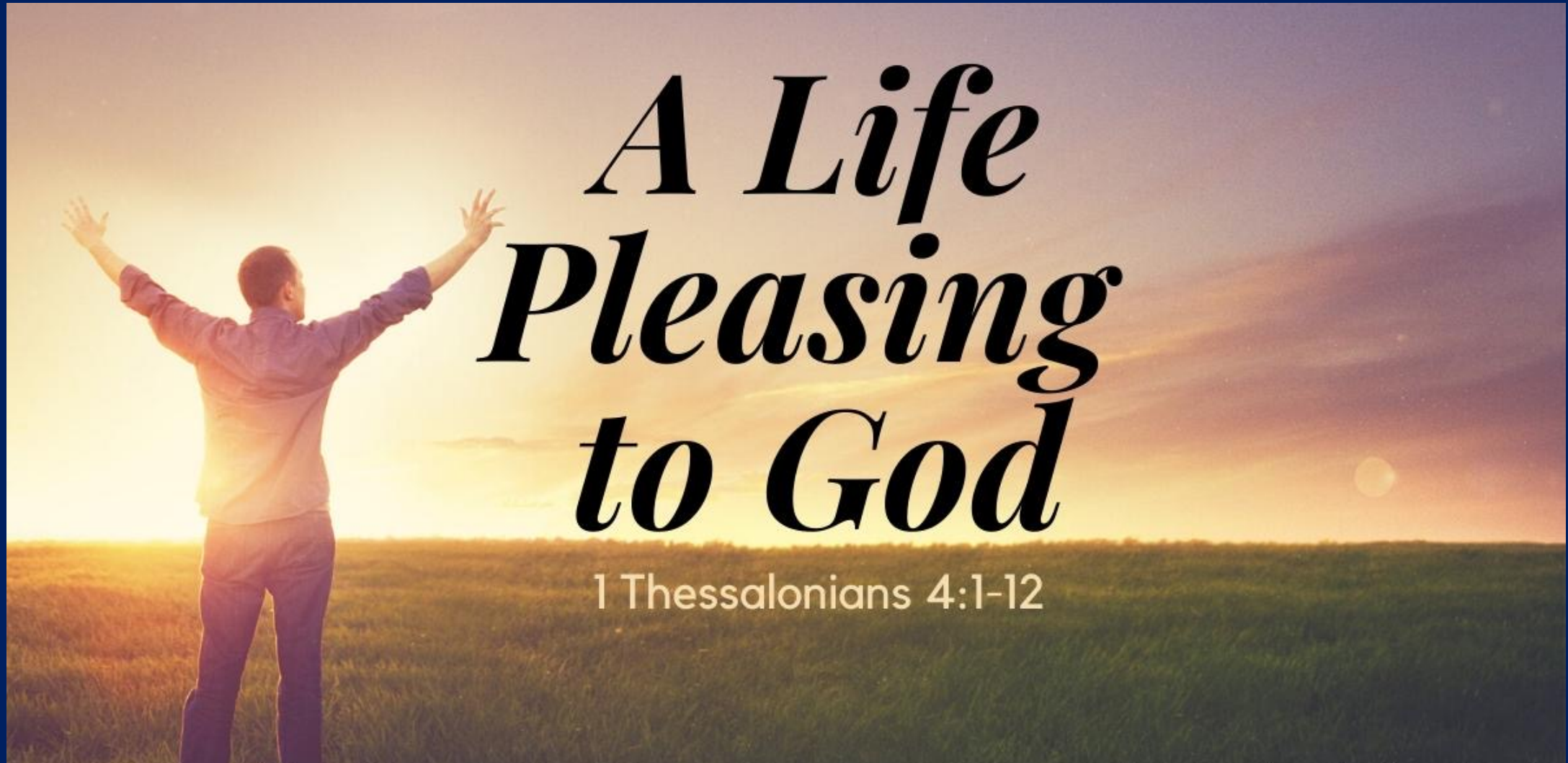
Fear could suggest  
no avenue, down  
which to flee, that  
Love did not  
discover.

You Can't Hide  
from God


Debbie Lacy



III. “Lo, naught contents thee who contents not Me.”





A person is walking away from the viewer on a dirt path that leads towards a bright, colorful sky. The sky is filled with soft, glowing clouds in shades of yellow, orange, and pink, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The path is flanked by grassy fields, and the overall atmosphere is peaceful and hopeful.

**Act Justly, Love Mercy,  
Walk Humbly With Your God**

**Micah 6:8**





I sought no more that after which I strayed  
In face of man or maid;  
But still within the little children's eyes  
Seems something, something that replies,  
*They* at least are for me, surely for me.



“It’s weird that the greatest moments of clarity occur during times of such utter confusion and stress.”

*Nishan Panwar*





# The Mystery of Grace

IT'S NOT THAT SOME  
PEOPLE HAVE  
WILLPOWER AND SOME  
DON'T.

IT'S THAT SOME PEOPLE  
ARE READY TO CHANGE  
AND OTHERS ARE NOT.



(from "Poppy" by Francis Thomson)

"O child! I love, for I love and know;

"But you, who love nor know at all  
The diverse chambers in Love's guest-hall,  
Where some rise early, few sit long:...

"Who know not love from amity,  
Nor my reported self from me;  
A fair fit gift is this, meseems,  
You give — this withering flower of dreams.

"O frankly fickle, and fickle true,  
Do you know what the days will do to you?  
To your love and you what the days will do,  
O frankly fickle, and fickle true?

# Why children?





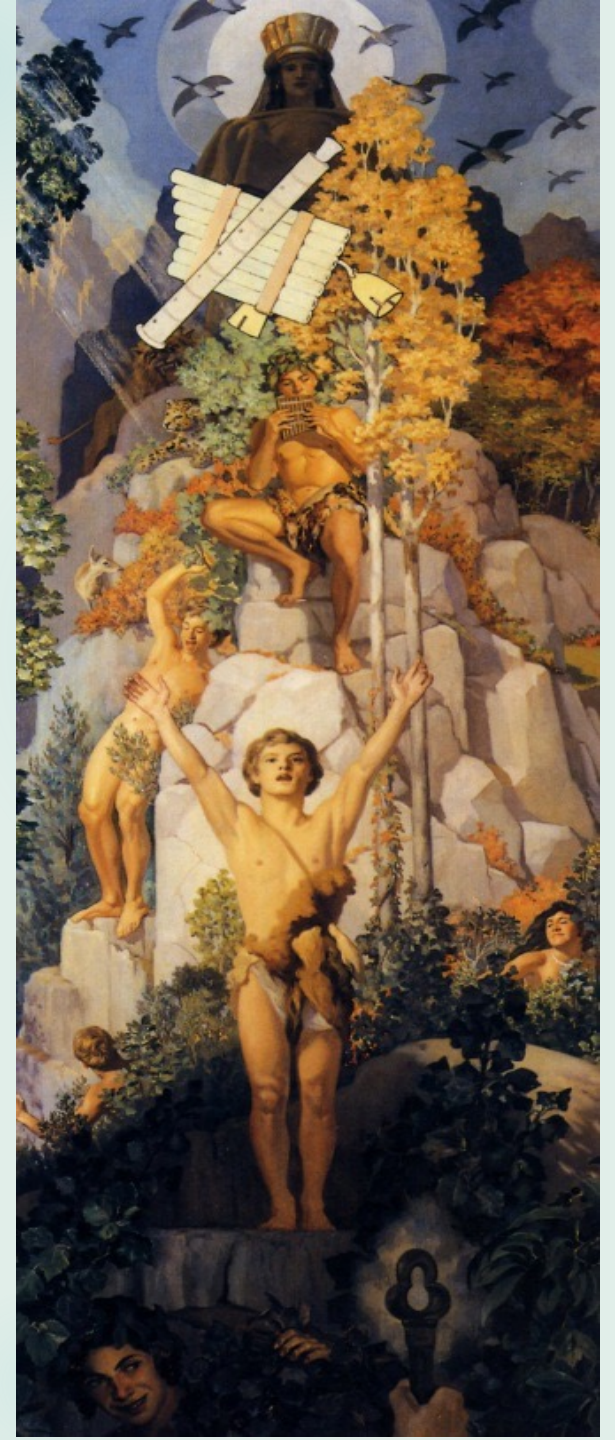
I turned me to them very  
wistfully;

But just as their young eyes  
grew sudden fair,  
With dawning answers  
there,  
Their angel plucked them  
from me by the hair.





**"Come then, ye other children,  
Nature's—share  
With me" (said I) "your delicate fellowship;  
Let me greet you lip to lip,  
Let me twine with you caresses,  
Wantoning  
With our Lady Mother's vagrant tresses,  
Banqueting  
With her in her wind-walled palace,  
Underneath her azured dais  
Quaffing,  
as your taintless way is,  
From a chalice.....**





**I laughed in the  
morning's eyes.  
I triumphed and  
I saddened with  
all weather,  
Heaven and I  
wept together,  
And its sweet  
tears were salt  
with mortal  
mine.**











But not by that, by that, was  
eased my human smart.  
In vain my tears were wet on  
Heaven's grey cheek.  
For ah! we know what each  
other says,  
These things and I; In  
sound *I* speak—  
*Their* sound is but their stir,  
they speak by silences.  
Nature, poor stepdame,  
cannot slake my drouth;



Even in the perfection of Eden, it was “not good for the man to be alone.” Genesis





"You speak, and you think She answers you. It is the echo of your own voice.

You think you hear the throbbing of her heart, and it is the throbbing of your own.

I do not believe that Nature has a heart; and I suspect that like many another beauty, she has been credited with a heart because of her face." (A Renegade Poet and Other Essays, F. Thompson, 1910)





**“The human heart can secure no real sympathy from creatures that know not suffering.” (F Lebuff, SJ)**





# IV. “Lo, all things fly thee, who fliest Me.”







Naked, I wait thy Love's uplifted stroke!  
My harness, piece by piece Thou hast hewn from me,  
And smitten me to my knee;  
I am defenceless utterly....

And pulled my life upon me; grimed with smears,  
I stand amidst the dust o' the mounded years—  
My mangled youth lies dead beneath the heap...





And now my heart is as a broken fount,  
**...Must thy harvest fields  
Be dunged with rotten death?**



V. “Thou drivest love from thee who drivest Me.”





“How little worthy of any love thou art!  
Whom wilt thou find to love ignoble thee,  
Save Me, save only Me?

All which I took from thee, I did but take,  
Not for thy harms,  
But just that thou might'st seek it in My arms.

All which thy child's mistake,  
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home  
.Rise, clasp My hand, and come.”







**Shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly?**

**"Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,  
I am He Whom thou seekest!"**