

## THOMAS TRAHERNE

*A few quotations demonstrating Traherne's understanding and evidence of himself 'standing in' the Headless perspective as revealed by Douglas Harding.*

"But it is an happy loss to lose oneself in admiration at one's own Felicity: and to find GOD in exchange for oneself." -- Centuries

### **From Centuries of meditations**

Cent 1/28—Your enjoyment of the world is never right, till every morning you awake in Heaven; see yourself in your Father's Palace; and look upon the skies, the earth, and the air as Celestial Joys : having such a reverend esteem of all, as if you were among the Angels. The bride of a monarch, in her husband's chamber, hath no such causes of delight as you.

Cent 1/29—You never enjoy the world aright, till the Sea itself floweth in your veins, till you are clothed with the heavens, and crowned with the stars : and perceive yourself to be the sole heir of the whole world, and more than so, because men are in it who are every one sole heirs well as you. Till you can sing and rejoice and delight in God, as misers do in gold, and Kings in sceptres, you never enjoy the world.

Cent 3/3—The corn was orient and immortal wheat, which never should be reaped, nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and stones of the street were as precious as gold: the gates were at first the end of the world. The green trees when I saw them first through one of the gates transported and ravished me, their sweetness and unusual beauty made my heart to leap, and almost mad with ecstasy, they were such strange and wonderful things: The Men! O what venerable and reverend creatures did the aged seem! Immortal Cherubims! And young men glittering and sparkling Angels, and maids strange seraphic pieces of life and beauty! Boys and girls tumbling in the street, and playing, were moving jewels. . . . Eternity was manifest in the Light of the Day. . . something infinite behind everything appeared which talked with my expectation and moved my desire. . . . The streets were mine, the temple was mine, the people were mine, their clothes and gold and silver were mine, as much as their sparkling eyes, fair skins and ruddy faces. The skies were mine, and so were the sun and moon and stars, and all the World was mine; and I the only enjoyer of it. I knew no churlish proprieties, nor bounds, nor divisions: but all proprieties and divisions were mine.

Cent 1/85—...Men do mightily wrong themselves when they refuse to be present in all ages: and neglect to see the beauty of all kingdoms, and despise the resentments of every soul, and busy themselves only with pots and cups and things at home, or shops and trades and things in the street: but do not live to God manifesting Himself in all the world, nor care to see (and be present with Him in) all the glory of His Eternal Kingdom. By seeing the Saints of all Ages we are present with them: by being present with them become too great for our own age, and near to our Saviour. Traherne C1/85

Cent 4/9—Once more we will distinguish of Christians. There are Christians that place and desire all their happiness in another life, and there is another sort of Christians that desire happiness in this. The one can defer their enjoyment of Wisdom till the World to come, and dispense with the increase and perfection of knowledge for a little time: the other are instant and impatient of delay, and would fain see that happiness here, which they shall enjoy hereafter. Not the vain happiness of this world, falsely called happiness, truly vain: but the real joy and glory of the blessed, which consisteth in the enjoyment of the whole world in communion with God; not this only, but the invisible and eternal, which they earnestly covet to enjoy immediately: for which reason they daily pray Thy kingdom come, and travail towards it by learning Wisdom as fast as they can. Whether the first sort be Christians indeed, look you to that. They have much to say for themselves. Yet certainly they that put off felicity with long delays are to be much suspected. For it is against the nature of love and desire to defer. Nor can any reason be given why they should desire it at last, and not now. If they say because God hath commanded them, that is false: for He offereth it now, now they are commanded to have their conversation in Heaven, now they may be full of joy and full of glory. Ye are not straitened in me, but in your own bowels. Those Christians that can defer their felicity may be contented with their ignorance.

Cent: 1/30—Till your spirit filleth the whole world, and the stars are your jewels; till you are as familiar with the ways of God in all Ages as with your walk and table: till you are intimately acquainted with that shady nothing out of which the world was made: till you love men so as to desire their happiness, with a thirst equal to the zeal of your own: till you delight in God for being good to all: you never enjoy the world.

Cent 4/86—Here up on earth souls love what Gd hates and hate what God loves. Did they keep their eye open always upon what He loves, and see His love to them, and to all, they could not choose but love as He does. And were they mirrors only that return His love, one would think it impossible, while He shines upon them, to forbear to shine, but they are like the eye, mirrors with lids, and the lid of ignorance or inconsideration interposing

## Extracts from the Poems

### **From My Spirit**

My Naked Simple Life was I.  
That Act so Strongly Shind  
Upon the Earth, the Sea, the Skie,  
That was the Substance of My Mind.  
The Sence it self was I.  
I felt no Dross nor Matter in my Soul,  
No Brims nor Borders, such as in a Bowl  
We see, My Essence was Capacitie.  
That felt all Things.  
The Thought that Springs  
Therfrom's it self. It hath no other Wings  
To Spread abroad, nor Eys to see,  
Nor Hands Distinct to feel,  
Nor Knees to Kneel:  
But being Simple like the Deitie  
In its own Centre is a Sphere  
Not shut up here, but evry Where.

.. That Being Greatest which doth nothing seem !  
Why, 'twas my all, I nothing did esteem  
But that alone. A strange mysterious Sphere !  
A deep Abyss  
That sees and is

### **From "The Anticipation"**

From everlasting he these joys did Need,  
And all these Joys proceed  
From him Eternally.  
From Everlasting His felicitie  
Compleat and Perfect was:  
Whose Bosom is the Glass,  
Wherin we all Things Everlasting See.  
His name is NOW, his Nature is forever.  
None Can his Creatures from their Maker Sever.

*Lots of unreferenced quotations at:*

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/232759747/Some-quotes-from-Thomas-Traherne#scribd>