

14. *If God stopped thinking about me*

You ask: "Am I right to believe that if God stopped thinking about me for a single instant, I would cease to exist? Is that an error? I would be very sad if it were, because since this idea came to me one day during mental prayer, I have felt so much closer to the Lord. More precisely, I have sensed him so much closer to me."

Have no fear at all. What you have understood is perfectly orthodox.

Everything that exists has been created by God, and is preserved in existence by him. Hence, nothing exists that is not *willed* by him—willed not once and for all, but at every instant. So, there is nothing that has not been *thought* by him, since nothing can be willed unless it has first been thought. If God ceased to preserve a being in existence, this being would immediately fall back into non-existence. The same would happen if he stopped willing it or thinking of it.

Now I hope that you are completely reassured. You should note, however, that while it is not an error to distinguish between thought, will, and act in God, we must understand that this is a human way of speaking. God thinks, wills, and acts in one selfsame action.

I can clearly grasp this sentiment of God's proximity that your "idea" awakened in you. When someone thinks about us, he or she becomes more present to us than through physical proximity. The latter can only be corporeal. I am reminded of a wife living with a husband who is no more present to her, than if he were living at the antipodes. Presence and absence are first of all of the spiritual order.

But follow the truth you have glimpsed, to its ultimate conclusion. Understand that God has been thinking about you *for all eternity*. Your coming into existence was simply the realization in time of this eternal thought which is a thought of love. God had forever cherished this thought when he created you.

You incarnate God's thought. You are his thought, but in the embryonic state. Life is given to you—and grace is operating in you—so that it may attain its plenitude.

Indeed, God can think and will only a perfect being, one that has attained plenitude. The divine thought that you are, is therefore the thought of a saint, like no other saint, for two identical thoughts never spring up in God.

By cooperating with God's work within you, you will become the saint that God delighted in inventing from all eternity.