

A transfiguring love

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Patristic reading

If the face of a loved one clearly and completely changes us, and makes us cheerful, gay and carefree

If the face of a loved one clearly and completely changes us, and makes us cheerful, gay and carefree, what will the Face of the Lord not do when He makes His Presence felt invisibly in a pure soul? ... Holy love consumes some, according to him who said: Thou hast ravished our heart, Thou hast ravished our heart! (Song 5:9). But sometimes it makes others bright and joyful, for it is said: My heart hath hoped in Him, and I am helped and my flesh hath flourished again (Ps 27:7); and: When the heart rejoiceth the countenance is cheerful (Prov 15:13). So when the whole man is, in a manner, commingled with the love of God, then even his outward appearance in the body, as in a kind of mirror, shows the splendour of his soul. That is how the God-seer Moses was glorified (cf. Ex 34:29).

St John Climacus, *The Ladder* XXX,10