Traherne Lexicon

A Reader's Companion to Centuries of Meditations

471 entries with historical senses
Passage references and explanatory notes

A companion to the Diotimos Editions annotated text
October 2026

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Introduction

A companion for reading

This lexicon accompanies Thomas Traherne's *Centuries of Meditations* in the Diotimos Editions annotated edition of 2026. Its 471 articles explain the book's characteristic words, recurrent images, scriptural figures and habits of argument. They range from everyday things, such as air, corn and water, to the governing ideas of felicity, enjoyment, love, infinity and possession. The scope is the complete work: four numbered Centuries followed by the unfinished Fifth. The numbering runs through 410 positions, but there are 409 actual meditations. At II.88 the supplied edition prints only an editorial notice: its explanatory note says that Traherne skipped that number, with no missing text. The Fifth Century ends at V.10.

Traherne repeatedly gives familiar words unfamiliar work. To enjoy is to enter into delighted possession; a want can disclose a capacity; a common thing can be a greater treasure than a rarity. These senses are best learned by returning to the passages where they operate. The lexicon therefore offers interpretation alongside lexical explanation. It does not replace continuous reading, and a cross-reference is an invitation to compare, not a claim that two words mean the same thing.

The alphabetical articles follow the structure of the supplied *Stobaeus Lexicon*. Traherne wrote in English, so the line beneath each headword gives English forms and useful equivalents rather than an invented Greek lemma. Related forms and less prominent senses can be found through the lexical index. Longer articles make room for the distinctions that carry the argument; shorter ones explain a particular image, older usage or local difficulty.

How to read an entry

The word identifies the sense that matters here, including older uses that a modern reader might miss. **In Traherne** follows the word or idea through the *Centuries*. This is a reading of the cited passages, not a set of definitions attributed to Traherne. Some articles include additional named discussions where a central concept needs more space.

The places gives selected, annotated references. These are guides to fruitful reading, not exhaustive concordances. **In this edition** points out a lexical, spelling or editorial issue that affects interpretation. **See also** links to other articles. The source note attached to the forms line records the textual basis of the article. Headwords sometimes normalize an inflected form or name a clearly present idea; the article states the relation to the wording of the text.

Three indexes supplement the alphabetical sequence. The **Lexical forms and aliases** index takes the place of the template's Greek and bilingual lookup functions. The **Passage index** leads from a cited meditation to the articles that discuss it. The **Thematic index** groups connected readings without imposing a single system on the book. These indexes are linked in the digital editions.

References and textual conventions

References take the form **I.3**, meaning the First Century, meditation 3; **V.10** is the last surviving meditation. An edition-page reference gives the printed page on which the meditation begins in the supplied 2026 PDF, not the PDF viewer's page count. A meditation may continue over several pages. These opening-page locators were checked against that PDF; the Century and meditation numbers remain the stable references across PDF, EPUB and Markdown.

The underlying text is the supplied Diotimos edition, which identifies Bertram Dobell's 1908 edition and its public-domain transcription as its copy-text and describes manuscript-based corrections. Its introduction, explanatory footnotes and other 2026 material are editorial apparatus, not Traherne's prose. An article that uses a modern explanatory note identifies it as such. Historical definitions here are contextual reading glosses; no independent dictionary, manuscript collation or scholarly edition is silently claimed as a source.

Short quotations retain the wording of the supplied text. Its original capitalization can be rhetorically significant without making every capitalized word a technical term. Brackets and struck-through readings in the source belong to that edition's textual presentation and should not be confused with new words supplied by this lexicon. Biblical phrases and inherited images are discussed as Traherne deploys them; the articles do not turn an allusion into proof of a particular unmentioned source.

Lexicon

Abundance

abundance; abundant; abundantly; overflowing plenty[1]

The word. Abundance is a fullness that exceeds a narrow allowance. Its verbal neighbours, abounding and overflowing, suggest a source that remains plentiful while communicating itself.

In Traherne. Traherne makes abundance a property of goodness as well as a quantity of possessions. The prayer to become abundant in Christ's goodness asks for enlarged pity and desire for other people's happiness. What increases is the giver's power of loving. In the later account of the soul, abundant beams are freely communicated refreshment: inward riches become effective by shining upon others. This answers a possible misunderstanding of the book's language of treasure. Fulness does not reach its perfection by being enclosed; the richest soul has the greatest capacity to benefit. Nor does the divine abundance make created things dispensable. Space must be spacious enough for bounty, and creatures provide its delighted recipients.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.63** The speaker asks to become abundant in Christlike goodness, pitying misery and thirsting for others' happiness. (Edition p. 39.)
- **IV.82** The soul's abundant beams are valued as free, refreshing communications. (Edition p. 251.)
- **V.4** Infinite room answers the otherwise unbounded effusions of divine bounty. (Edition p. 267.)

In this edition. The adjective "abundant" can describe goodness, while "abundance" names the soul's beams. Neither use is adequately glossed as material affluence.

See also. Bounty; Communication; Goodness.

1 Primary text: I.63, IV.82, V.4. The three passages connect abundance with compassion, communication, and the receptivity of space respectively.

Accident and substance

accident; accidental; substance; subsistence[2]

The word. An accident may be a contingent occurrence or a nonessential feature; in philosophical argument it is distinguished from the substance in which a feature inheres. Substance can also mean a thing's effective content rather than its appearance.

In Traherne. Traherne moves between these senses. "Accidental" riches are additions generated by custom rather than indispensable gifts of nature. God's simplicity excludes composition from substance and accident, while the soul's invisible substance is nonetheless rich and real. The ordinary noun need not invoke that technical distinction: the fact that the same treasures belong to everyone is a delightful "accident," an advantageous circumstance. The reader should therefore follow the local argument rather than impose one scholastic definition everywhere. When practical principles are seeds, their "substance" is what produces joy; verbal embellishment is the attractive husk. His preference for reality over ornamental circumstance thus has theological, economic, and literary forms.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.79** Shared and undiminished ownership is called a delightful accident. (Edition p. 111.)
- **III.63** God is not compounded of substance and accident, but is a simple being and pure act. (Edition p. 171.)
- **IV.81** The immaterial soul is described as possessing a rich and precious substance. (Edition p. 250.)
- **IV.94** The fruitful substance of principles matters more than the refinement of their expression. (Edition p. 260.)

In this edition. Do not translate every "accident" mentally as a mishap, or every "substance" as physical matter. Traherne's immaterial substance explicitly rules out the latter equation.

See also. Being; Essence; Matter; Principle.

2 Primary text: II.79, III.63, IV.81, IV.94. The selected places deliberately represent different senses rather than one unvarying technical doctrine.

Account and reckoning

account; accounteth; accounted; count; reckon[3]

The word. To account something a good is to esteem or judge it such. To reckon can be to enumerate benefits or to make a judgment of obligation. Both senses retain the image of bringing things into an intelligible account.

In Traherne. Valuation is never merely numerical in the Centuries. God accounts service to a person as service to Himself, investing the recipient with representative dignity. The child's inability to understand why money is "accounted" valuable exposes the learned conventions on which familiar prices depend. A very different reckoning occurs in the attempt to number God's thoughts: enumeration is acknowledged to be impossible, yet the attempt becomes praise. These uses connect an economy of exchange with an economy of gratitude without making them equivalent. What matters is the rule by which value is assigned. Common social estimates can diminish real treasures; divine accounting magnifies persons and converts acknowledgment of an unpayable debt into enjoyment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.6** God accounts what is done to the speaker as done to Himself. (Edition p. 68.)
- **III.9** The monetary valuation of gold puzzles the inexperienced child. (Edition p. 135.)
- **IV.74** The immeasurability of divine thoughts prompts an undertaking to reckon and glorify. (Edition p. 243.)

In this edition. "Accounted" commonly means esteemed, not entered in a financial ledger. "Reckon" in the scriptural language of IV.74 is an act of grateful enumeration.

See also. Esteem; Value; Obligation; Gratitude.

3 Primary text: II.6, III.9, IV.74. II.6 and III.9 use evaluative accounting; IV.74 develops the scriptural language of counting divine thoughts.

Action and activity

act; action; activity; active; operations[4]

The word. Action is an exercise of power; activity is its energetic employment. In philosophical passages act also means actuality, the fulfilment of a capacity, rather than simply an outward deed.

In Traherne. The distinction between capacity and act structures Traherne's account of spiritual growth. Faculties become actual enjoyment when they know and love their objects. The Fourth Century explicitly turns from the history of contemplative happiness to principles for blessed operations. It does not abandon contemplation: right conduct also improves the conditions of contemplative life. Christ's example teaches Paul activity toward the nations, so the quietness of meditation cannot justify indifference to others. At the theological limit, God is one eternal act, never waiting to become the knowledge and wisdom He can be. Human activity imitates that perfection without erasing the difference between an already perfect God and faculties requiring exercise.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.61** The crucified Christ teaches Paul activity and zeal toward all nations. (Edition p. 37.)
- **II.84** Divine actuality supplies the exemplar for the soul's conversion of power into act. (Edition p. 114.)
- **III.68** Virtues and faculties are actualized through exercise about their objects. (Edition p. 174.)
- **IV.1** Active happiness consists in blessed operations and assists contemplation. (Edition p. 198.)

In this edition. "Act" in II.84 is an actuality-term; "activity" in I.61 names energetic conduct. Reading both merely as busy outward work loses the relation between them.

See also. Capacity; Contemplation; Virtue; Power; Work.

4 Primary text: I.61, II.84, III.68, IV.1. The article distinguishes the practical vocabulary of activity from the philosophical use of act.

Adam

Adam; our first parents; man in Paradise[5]

The word. Adam is the first human being in the Genesis narrative and, for Traherne, the exemplary first recipient of creation. His name can identify the historical figure, the origin of a fallen human history, or the representative person whose situation the speaker makes his own.

In Traherne. Adam's solitude makes an argument about the world's destination. When there is only one enjoyer, the entire creation is evidently fitted to that person. Subsequent people do not divide the original gift into diminishing shares: each becomes another enjoyer and another treasure for the rest. Adam therefore proves a claim about every reader rather than reserving a privilege for the first man.

The comparison with infancy adds a history of perception. The child's delighted, unpossessive vision resembles Paradise because acquired prejudices have not yet hidden the natural gifts. It does not establish that the child's knowledge is complete or that ordinary childhood is literally outside fallen history. Traherne can say both that corrupt examples derive from Adam's sin and that a remembered infant mind was far more prone to excellent things than to evil. The stress falls on the transmission of disorder through adult lives and social teaching.

Adam also supplies the voice of confession. In the prayer at I.75, the speaker identifies himself with the one who offended through an apple against the giver of the whole world. Eden is thus neither merely an irrecoverable past nor a romantic alibi for innocence. Its gift reveals the enormity of sin, and Christ's redemption renews the possibility of receiving what sin misvalued.

One enjoyer, many heirs

The argument from Adam is easiest to misread as a fantasy that other people should disappear. Traherne draws the contrary consequence. Adam himself belongs among the later reader's treasures, and the increase of persons increases the inheritance. The world's first undivided gift becomes a model for gifts that can remain entire in many enjoyments. What is to be recovered is the scope and gratitude of the first reception,

5 Primary text: I.14, I.75, III.1, III.8, IV.53. I.75 does not name Adam, but its apple, Paradise, and first-person confession make the Adamic identification explicit in substance.

not the exclusion of subsequent humanity. This is why the Adamic analogy leads naturally from creation to neighbour-love.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.14** The creation of one original enjoyer discloses the whole world as each person's gift. (Edition p. 10.)
- **I.75** The speaker assumes Adam's situation in confessing the exchange of a whole world for an apple. (Edition p. 47.)
- **III.1** Remembered childhood apprehensions are compared with Adam's vision in Paradise. (Edition p. 128.)
- **III.8** Adam's sin is related to the outward transmission of corrupt customs and examples. (Edition p. 134.)
- **IV.53** Adam's fear of divine enmity gives way to a restored acknowledgment of redeeming love. (Edition p. 230.)

In this edition. When Traherne passes from "Adam" to "I," the shift is devotional identification, not a textual confusion of speakers. Claims about original corruption must be read with III.8's explicit qualification that all corruption is still derived from Adam.

See also. Eden; Fall; Child and childhood; Original sin; Heir and inheritance.

Adequate object

adequate object; adequate[6]

The word. An adequate object fully answers the power directed towards it. Adequate here means corresponding to its whole extent, rather than merely good enough for a limited purpose.

In Traherne. Each person can receive the whole attention of divine love while millions of others receive it too. The expression therefore joins personal intimacy to a world whose services reach the enjoyer through other creatures and people. The supplied note explains the technical comparison: all visible things together answer to sight. Traherne applies such fullness to each recipient of God's love. Elsewhere, adequacy names an apparent equality between souls. He then wonders that one soul can comprehend many others without exhausting its capacity. Exact

6 Primary text: II.15, II.71. Supplied 2026 editorial note 97 at II.15 provides the scholastic explanation and the example of sight.

correspondence is the starting expectation, not the final boundary of understanding.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.15** Each enjoyer is the adequate object of eternal love amid the world's many inhabitants. (Edition p. 73.)
- **II.71** The expected equality of two souls opens into the wonder of comprehending innumerable souls. (Edition p. 106.)

In this edition. Read adequate as a strong claim of fullness; the modern sense of barely sufficient weakens both passages.

See also. Object; Love; Equality; Capacity.

Admiration

admiration; admire; wonder at[7]

The word. Admiration is wondering contemplation of what exceeds an ordinary measure. It includes astonishment and delighted recognition, a stronger response than the modern sense of merely thinking well of something.

In Traherne. Admiration is both an opening into felicity and an activity of the enlarged soul. To lose oneself in admiration at one's happiness is to find God through His gifts. It does not cancel understanding: the world has first to be considered in its value and service. At the Cross, the object of angelic admiration draws the mind away from scattered distractions. The term can even name the thing wondered at, as in "the admiration of Angels." Its movement is therefore from discovery to sustained regard and praise. The final enlargement is not endless novelty-seeking. A creature seen as God's living image can satisfy curiosity so thoroughly that ordinary searching is swallowed up in wonder.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.18** A happy loss of oneself in admiration becomes discovery of God in His gifts. (Edition p. 12.)
- **I.56** The Cross is the object of angelic admiration and concentrated meditation. (Edition p. 34.)

7 Primary text: I.18, I.56, IV.67. The three passages move from admiring gifts to the Cross and the soul's likeness to God.

- **IV.67** The soul's divine likeness satisfies curiosity and overwhelms admiration. (Edition p. 239.)

In this edition. "Admiration" can mean the wondrous object as well as the beholder's response. The older astonishment-sense is important in I.56.

See also. Wonder; Contemplation; Beauty; Praise.

Adoration

adoration; adorations; adore; worship[8]

The word. Adoration is reverent worship, often embodied in lifted eyes, hands, and praise. Its inward act is esteem directed toward divine excellence, not simply the outward posture that expresses it.

In Traherne. Traherne repeatedly makes adoration participatory. The reader is to behold Christ with the eyes of worshippers everywhere and delight in their adorations. Their separate devotions become an enlargement of one's own soul, reaching across places and generations. In the prayer to Jesus, adoration stands among humiliation, ardour, joy, and thanksgiving: reverence does not displace affection. Nor does the painful appearance of the crucified body exclude it. The descent into suffering reveals a love that commands adoration even in visible deformity. Worship is consequently a way of reading appearances through the action they manifest, and a way of making the happiness of other worshippers one's own.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.62** Adoration belongs to a many-sided response to Christ's descending love. (Edition p. 38.)
- **I.85** The reader joins the adorations of worshippers across nations and generations. (Edition p. 54.)
- **I.89** Christ is adored in the depths of humiliation and bodily suffering. (Edition p. 56.)

In this edition. The plural "adorations" at I.85 refers to acts of worship. It need not imply a multiplication of divine objects or a special liturgical rite.

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8 Primary text: I.62, I.85, I.89. The prayers and directions cited ground adoration in Christ's love and participation in others' worship.

See also. Worship; Reverence; Praise; Communion; Cross.

Affection

affection; affections; rational affection; inward love[9]

The word. Affections are the soul's directed movements of love, desire, joy, and related feeling. The word is wider than fondness and does not by itself mark an irrational emotion opposed to understanding.

In Traherne. Traherne makes affections constitutive of the soul's beauty. In the miniature scheme at II.83 they provide its colours, while objects provide lineaments and actions graces. Their task is to answer real worth. Rational affection is therefore guided by clear causes and divine ends, and love requires an art of management if it is to become proportionable. Yet regulation does not mean narrowing the soul. Its multiplicity of affections equips it for an equally various inheritance; infinity supplies room in which desire and love can expand. Affections fail when socially taught desires detach them from their proper objects. They flourish when intellectual apprehension, valuation, and practical love become mutually supporting powers.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.69** Rational affection is distinguished from mere appetite and rude propensity. (Edition p. 105.)
- **II.83** Affections supply the colours of the soul's developing form. (Edition p. 113.)
- **III.42** The variety of affections equips human beings to enjoy their treasures. (Edition p. 157.)
- **V.3** Infinite room prevents desires and affections from being imprisoned. (Edition p. 266.)

In this edition. Do not reduce "affections" to tenderness or treat them as intrinsically opposed to reason. Traherne expressly calls an affection rational.

See also. Appetite; Love; Passion; Inclination; Soul.

9 Primary text: II.69, II.83, III.42, V.3. II.69 supplies the explicit rational qualification; II.83 presents a schematic metaphor rather than an anatomy.

Affliction

affliction; afflictions; calamities; trials; distresses[10]

The word. An affliction is a suffering or adversity borne by someone: illness, loss, persecution, or another distress. It need not imply that the sufferer is being punished for a particular fault.

In Traherne. Afflictions test whether happiness rests only on agreeable circumstances. The Holy Spirit enables the speaker to turn them into pleasures, while the Fourth Century compares trials to polishing and winter to a season in which the Christian oak flourishes. This is an account of how suffering may be borne within divine love, not a denial that it hurts. Traherne's language of transformation depends on prior gifts and assurance: because all things have been given, adversity can become another occasion for faithful action. The scriptural afflicted person is heard rather than despised. That emphasis prevents the vocabulary of trial from becoming a warrant for contempt toward those in distress.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.98** The Comforter makes afflictions bearable within the enjoyment of divine love. (Edition p. 63.)
- **III.73** The cited psalm insists that the afflicted person's cry is heard. (Edition p. 180.)
- **IV.91** Trials become treasures and are compared with polishing and winter growth. (Edition p. 258.)

In this edition. The rhetoric of delight in affliction describes a spiritual transformation of adversity. It should not be mistaken for a lexical claim that "affliction" itself means pleasure.

See also. Patience; Grief; Faith; Holy Spirit.

10 Primary text: I.98, III.73, IV.91. III.73 is a psalmic citation and commentary; I.98 and IV.91 supply Traherne's own applications.

Age and ages

age; ages; all ages; generations[11]

The word. An age is a period of human or cosmic history, though it may also mean a person's lifetime. In the plural it often gathers all successive periods into one field of contemplation.

In Traherne. Ages are among the treasures that enlarge the present person's life. The understanding can visit scriptural events and share the joys of worshippers in remote generations without moving the body. This presence is not historical indifference: distinct events remain distinct and are known through their particular manifestations of divine love. In the Fifth Century, temporal succession is compared with a voyage past stationary shores. We move, while the region of ages is already before God. The analogy helps distinguish our limited progress through time from the understanding's capacity to anticipate or recollect it. To possess ages is thus to let one's present interests extend beyond the span of one's own biography.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.55** The soul visits biblical persons and events across ages by understanding. (Edition p. 33.)
- **I.85** Participation in other generations' worship enlarges the present soul. (Edition p. 54.)
- **V.8** Ages form a standing region through which finite lives pass like travellers in a ship. (Edition p. 270.)

In this edition. "All ages" usually concerns historical reach, not the age of every individual. The spatial image of a region of ages is an explanatory analogy, not an ordinary geographical claim.

See also. Time; Eternity; Presence; Remembrance.

11 Primary text: I.55, I.85, V.8. The entry concerns the temporal noun; it does not count unrelated words containing the letters "age."

Air

air; the air; airy space[12]

The word. Air is the transparent, breathable medium between earth and heaven. Traherne treats it as a body with beneficial operations, although its unobtrusiveness makes it easy to overlook.

In Traherne. Air is a particularly effective test of value because almost everyone receives it and no jewel can perform its services. It refreshes the body, gives the senses their surroundings, and permits objects to remain visible instead of obstructing them. Its transparency, which makes it disappear from habitual notice, is precisely one of its excellences. The comparison with pearls and diamonds exposes the inconsistency of admiring a costly object for qualities possessed more generously by the common medium. Air belongs among the obvious things selected for study by trust in divine goodness. Its ordinary presence is evidence of bounty rather than evidence of worthlessness.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.21** Air visits the lungs, refreshes the senses, and leaves objects unobstructed. (Edition p. 14.)
- **I.34** Air's transparency makes it more valuable than innumerable pearls and diamonds. (Edition p. 21.)
- **III.53** Air heads the list of common things whose service proves real value. (Edition p. 165.)

In this edition. The physiological references to repairing spirits and cooling blood belong to the passage's historical account of breathing. They are not modern respiratory terminology.

See also. Breath; Common things; Light; Value.

12 Primary text: I.21, I.34, III.53. I.21 provides the bodily description; I.34 and III.53 develop its evaluative significance.

Alchemy and philosopher's stone

alchemists; Philosopher's Stone; chemist; elixir[13]

The word. Alchemy sought transformations of matter, famously the conversion of base metals into gold through the philosopher's stone. Its language could also describe the transformation and refinement of a life.

In Traherne. Traherne uses the art in two sharply different ways. An alchemist who claims to possess the stone but never uses it exposes his own pretence: similarly, knowledge of happiness that never becomes enjoyment is counterfeit. Yet the royal chemist becomes a positive image when the fallen world presents evils as well as beauties. Wisdom must extract good from evil, converting poisons into medicines and occasions of injury into occasions of generosity. The successful transformation belongs to conduct and perception. It does not certify the material claims of the unsuccessful alchemist.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.11** The unused philosopher's stone tests the credibility of professed happiness. (Edition p. 206.)
- **IV.21** The royal chemist turns poisons into cordials and draws good from evil. (Edition p. 212.)

In this edition. The 2026 notes supply the historical accounts of the stone and medicinal alchemy. Traherne's contrast concerns the use of happiness, not an endorsement of a chemical recipe.

See also. Cordial; Enjoyment; Evil; Wisdom.

Alexander the Great

Alexander the Great; that young man[14]

The word. The Macedonian conqueror enters as a proverbial figure of ambition that has exhausted one world and desires others. Traherne expressly presents the story of his tears as an ingenious fiction.

In Traherne. Alexander closes the meditation on Pyrrhus and Cineas. The accumulation of land and income cannot satisfy a soul whose desire exceeds finite quantities. The image of conquered worlds

13 Primary text: IV.11, IV.21; historical explanation: 2026 edition notes to IV.11 and IV.21.
14 Primary text: I.22; source-history caution: 2026 edition note to I.22.

dwindling to tennis-balls makes even imperial acquisition look small beside spiritual capacity. Alexander therefore illustrates both a mistake and a truth: conquest misdirects desire, but the desire's vastness reveals the soul's nobility. Traherne is not proposing that contentment requires simply shrinking the soul. The larger argument will supply it with a different kind of whole to enjoy.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.22** Alexander's supposed tears for more worlds follow Pyrrhus's futile plan to conquer before resting. (Edition p. 14.)

In this edition. The 2026 note distinguishes the proverb from Plutarch's report of tears at not having conquered even one world. Do not repeat the familiar tale as established biography.

See also. Ambition; Desire; Pyrrhus and Cineas; World.

All and everything

all; all things; everything; all in all; wholly[15]

The word. "All" is Traherne's recurring universal term. It can gather a class, embrace creation, or name the full range of a soul's possible enjoyment. "Everything" often tests the universal claim one particular object at a time.

In Traherne. The book's expansive language depends on a distinction between possessing all things and controlling them exclusively. A sun in its proper place can serve every eye. Another person's enjoyment need not subtract from mine; when that person's happiness is itself my treasure, it adds a further good. "All" consequently belongs with "each," not only with "whole." The astonishing claim is that every person can receive the whole gift while other persons remain entire recipients.

Traherne also uses universality to test the quality of love. A love bounded by one private interest has not assumed the divine likeness. To love people in every age is to treat remote happiness as something that concerns the present soul. The universality is intensely particular: persons

15 Primary text: I.14, I.15, II.79, IV.69. The cited passages explicitly join universality to individual enjoyment and reciprocal love.

are to be loved with an intimate familiarity, as though each were the sole object. The same word thus joins cosmic scope to individual dignity.

"All things" must nevertheless be read through the book's discrimination of value. It does not command approval of sin, cruelty, or false valuation. The two worlds of I.7 make that clear: relinquishing humanly devised vanities is how one receives the created world's true riches. Universal enjoyment is the action of an educated judgment, not indiscriminate consumption. Its practical form is to prize each thing's service, delight in other recipients, and return thanks to the giver.

The rhetoric of accumulation

Traherne's repeated lists of angels, kingdoms, persons, ages, and treasures perform an exercise in enlargement. They keep the reader from taking one already familiar possession as the measure of all possible good. Their repetition is cumulative rather than merely redundant: physical things, spiritual faculties, historical events, and other enjoyers enter the same growing field. Yet the field is not a warehouse. Each new object must be received according to what it is and the services it renders. A universal pronoun becomes meaningful only through that patient attention to particulars.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.14** Everything serves the enjoyer in its proper place, as Adam's undivided inheritance makes evident. (Edition p. 10.)
- **I.15** Every person is an end of the world and an enrichment of others' inheritance. (Edition p. 10.)
- **II.79** Exclusive-seeming possession and the desire for companions become mutually perfective. (Edition p. 111.)
- **IV.69** All persons in all ages are to be loved intimately, as though each were alone. (Edition p. 240.)

In this edition. The scope of "all" is controlled by its sentence. "All nations," "all treasures," and "all things" should not be silently flattened into the same list. Repeated capitals intensify emphasis but do not supply a separate technical definition.

See also. Whole; World; Possession; Love; Person; Common things.

Allegory and parable

parables; figures; types; representative images[16]

The word. A parable is a story or figurative utterance that discloses a truth through another subject. Allegory names an extended correspondence of meanings; it is a useful descriptive category here, not an abstract term Traherne develops in these passages.

In Traherne. The opening promise to speak in parables announces the discovery of secrets hidden in familiar things. What is strange is not necessarily an exotic object: it is the reader's unrecognized inheritance of the ordinary world. Later, the Cross gathers types, ceremonies, figures, and prophecies into one intelligible spectacle. Such correspondence does not make material things unreal. The tree, body, light, or journey remains effective precisely because its visible character can carry an intelligible relation. A reading that decodes every object into a detachable moral would miss this insistence on the worth of the created object itself. Traherne's figurative language enlarges a thing's significance without automatically abolishing its literal value.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.3** A scriptural promise of parables introduces the concealed meaning of worldly inheritance. (Edition p. 5.)
- **I.59** The Cross unites types, ceremonies, figures, and prophecies. (Edition p. 36.)
- **I.60** Jacob's ladder and the burning tree illuminate Christ's action and its universal reach. (Edition p. 37.)

In this edition. "Parables" is the attested opening word. "Allegory" is retained as a reader's heading, not as evidence that Traherne announces a systematic allegorical method.

See also. Image; Scripture; Mystery; Cross.

16 Primary text: I.3, I.59, I.60. I.3 quotes Scripture; I.59–60 supply Traherne's own application of figurative correspondences.

Altar

altar; offering-place; altar of the heart[17]

The word. An altar is a place of sacrificial offering. Its transferred senses retain the relation among gift, giver, and the one to whom the offering is made.

In Traherne. The heart becomes an altar when love is a perpetual fire and the soul a living sacrifice. At the larger scale, the world is simultaneously temple, altar, fuel, and the matter of praise. These compressed roles show that thanksgiving is made from benefits already received: creation supplies both the occasion and substance of its own grateful return. The image also has a critical use. An altar to an unknown God figures the philosophers' aspiration toward a felicity whose nature they have not yet discovered. Mere acknowledgment of a desirable end is less than the knowledge that makes delighted worship possible.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.91** The praying heart is an altar on which love should burn continually. (Edition p. 58.)
- **II.94** The world supplies altar, fuel, and matter for returning benefits as praise. (Edition p. 121.)
- **III.56** The altar to an unknown God represents an uncomprehended felicity. (Edition p. 167.)

In this edition. These are transferred uses, not instructions for furnishing a church. III.56 adapts the Athenian altar as a figure for the philosophers' imperfect knowledge.

See also. Sacrifice; Temple; Praise; Return.

Amasis

Amasis; King of Egypt; Quid Pulcherrimum[18]

The word. Amasis is the Egyptian king named in the anecdote asking the Greek wise men what is most beautiful. Their answer supplies Traherne with a point of departure: the world.

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17 Primary text: I.91, II.94, III.56. Each occurrence assigns the altar a different role in the understanding of praise and felicity.

18 Primary text: II.21; identification and classical comparison: 2026 edition note to II.21.

In Traherne. The anecdote opens a substantial account of creation as the manifestation of divine attributes. Its function is to unsettle habitual indifference: what strangers or philosophers can judge supremely beautiful has become invisible through being seen every day. Traherne then asks how material things express immaterial wisdom, goodness, and love. The answer is relational and practical, involving breathable air, fruitful earth, light, and delight. The name is thus useful chiefly as the doorway into the argument, not as a claim that Egyptian kingship authorizes Traherne's theology.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.21** The question about supreme beauty leads to the world's capacity to manifest God. (Edition p. 77.)

In this edition. The 2026 note identifies Ahmose II and compares Plutarch's more elaborate scene, including Thales. Traherne's compressed version should not be expanded silently into that source's narrative.

See also. Beauty; Creation; Plutarch; World.

Ambition

ambition; ambitious; desire for advancement[19]

The word. Ambition is an aspiring desire for honour, greatness, or advancement. Traherne does not give it a uniformly vicious sense: its moral character depends on the good toward which aspiration is directed.

In Traherne. Enjoyment of the world satisfies ambition by placing greatness in an inheritance already given, rather than in competitive preferment. The survey of human nature accordingly includes great and everlasting ambition among providentially fitted powers. Yet the child's ambition to please adults helps extinguish early vision, and the desire to gratify others becomes a source of conformity to error. The danger is not aspiration as such but taking a mistaken audience's estimates as the measure of one's worth. True enlargement can make one too great for allurements because it provides a more adequate object. Ambition is redirected, while the hunger for genuine excellence remains alive.

19 Primary text: I.24, III.7, III.42, IV.44. The contrast is internal to the primary text: III.42 commends the power that III.7 and IV.44 show becoming misdirected.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.24** Worldly enjoyment rightly understood satisfies ambition rather than merely suppressing it. (Edition p. 16.)
- **III.7** The desire to win adult approval helps corrupt childhood perception. (Edition p. 134.)
- **III.42** Enduring ambition belongs to the naturally supplied means of human enlargement. (Edition p. 157.)
- **IV.44** An ambition to please can entangle goodness in false honours and conformity. (Edition p. 224.)

In this edition. The positive occurrences should not be paraphrased away as though Traherne always meant pride. Conversely, the word's positive potential does not excuse the social ambition criticized in III.7.

See also. Honour; Greatness; Emulation; Pride; Education.

Amphion

Amphion; Melody of Amphion[20]

The word. Amphion is the legendary musician whose playing drew stones into the walls of Thebes. He provides an image of apparently effortless movement produced by attraction rather than visible force.

In Traherne. Traherne inserts the story into a crowded series of attractions: medicine draws the sick, a feast the hungry, a miracle the curious, and music the stones. All prepare the question of how the crucified Christ draws the soul. The apparently coercive language of being drawn is resolved through desire and perceived benefit. No physical chain is required. Amphion therefore belongs to the meditation's account of willing response; his marvel intensifies the appeal without becoming a separate allegory in which each feature must have a Christian equivalent.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.57** The moving stones are one example in the sequence leading to voluntary attraction toward Christ. (Edition p. 35.)

20 Primary text: I.57; mythological identification: 2026 edition note to I.57.

In this edition. The identification comes from the 2026 note. Traherne names the musician and Thebes but gives no extended myth or claim of historical fact.

See also. Attraction and loadstone; Commodity; Cross; Music.

Angels

angels; holy angels; cherubim; cherubims; seraphim[21]

The word. Angels are created spiritual persons associated with divine service and heavenly knowledge. Traherne's references to cherubim and seraphim often intensify the brightness, love, or contemplative dignity of that spiritual life.

In Traherne. Angels are not ornamental additions to a human world. They belong to the world's full extent and serve as companions in the enjoyment of God. Their intellectual feeding on an acorn makes visible the difference between consuming an object and comprehending the relations that sustain it: sun, moisture, root, and created end become a world of joys within the one thing. Human spiritual growth is repeatedly called angelical because the soul can know across distance and love beyond bodily appetite. The distinction between human beings and angels remains, however. Bodily life offers certain advantages and conditions peculiar to humanity; likeness is not an assertion that the reader has changed species. Angels also prevent inherited treasure from becoming solitude: heavenly intelligence includes fellowship.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.18** Angels are included in the full extent of the world given for enjoyment. (Edition p. 12.)
- **I.26** Their spiritual feeding on an acorn comprehends its relations and end. (Edition p. 17.)
- **I.67** The speaker rejoices in angelic happiness while valuing his own created likeness to God. (Edition p. 41.)
- **III.1** The recovery of childhood apprehensions is promised as an angelical enlargement. (Edition p. 128.)

21 Primary text: I.18, I.26, I.67, III.1. The selected passages emphasize created companionship and modes of enjoyment rather than a complete hierarchy of angels.

In this edition. "Cherubims" is the supplied text's plural form alongside "Cherubim." Such forms should be retained in quotation rather than silently made evidence of a different order of beings.

See also. Spirit; Knowledge; Fellowship; Man and mankind; Heaven.

Anger

anger; angry; wrath; displeasure[22]

The word. Anger is a response to perceived wrong or resistance. Divine anger and human anger are related terms but must be distinguished by their objects and the moral setting of each passage.

In Traherne. The Cross displays mercy and anger together, making sin visible without cancelling the sinner's value. Elsewhere the person dissatisfied with his own contracted spirit may properly be angry with it. The aim is a change of judgment, not vindictive assertion against another person. The account of becoming a child again also refuses to make innocence simply the short duration of a child's anger: a deeper purification of the whole soul is required. Anger thus belongs within Traherne's account of ordered affections rather than supplying a sufficient explanation of either divine justice or human conversion. In each case the reader must ask what is opposed and toward what good the opposition is directed.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.38** A person may be angry with the baseness and narrowness of his own spirit. (Edition p. 23.)
- **I.59** The Cross displays divine mercy and anger together with human sin and value. (Edition p. 36.)
- **III.5** Childlike purity means more than the brevity and weakness of childish anger. (Edition p. 132.)

In this edition. "Wrath" in prayers about Christ's suffering has a theological force that ordinary irritability does not capture. The entry does not equate divine judgment with a human loss of temper.

See also. Justice; Passion; Sin; Mercy.

22 Primary text: I.38, I.59, III.5. The references preserve the distinct inward, theological, and childhood contexts of anger.

Annihilation

annihilate; annihilated; unsuppose; remove in imagination[23]

The word. To annihilate is to reduce to nothing. Here it occurs in a thought experiment: imagined removal of the created world tests whether the space in which it stands can also be removed.

In Traherne. Traherne invites the reader to unsuppose heaven and earth and observes that room remains. Infinity is thereby presented as prior to the finite boundaries supplied by the senses. The experiment does not announce a coming destruction of everything or prescribe self-annihilation as a devotional method. Its work is epistemic and metaphysical: the imagined absence of objects makes the inescapability of their encompassing extent more apparent. The Fifth Century returns to the same test and identifies that extent as a field of treasures, not an empty negation. Annihilation is therefore used to reveal what cannot be annihilated in this act of thought.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.81** The imagined annihilation of heaven and earth leaves the place they occupied. (Edition p. 112.)
- **V.3** Removal of the world again makes the persistence of endless extent apparent. (Edition p. 266.)

In this edition. "Annihilation" is the normalized noun-heading for Traherne's verbs. The object removed is the world in imagination, not the praying self.

See also. Nothing; Space; Infinity; Imagination.

Anselm

St. Anselm[24]

The word. Anselm is the medieval theologian and Archbishop of Canterbury, dated 1033–1109 in the supplied note. Traherne invokes him as an example of love's refusal to consent to sin.

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23 Primary text: II.81, V.3. Both references explicitly frame the removal as hypothetical or imaginative.

24 Primary text: I.91. Supplied 2026 editorial note 79 provides Anselm's identification, dates, and Eadmer's report of the saying.

In Traherne. The prayer to Jesus asks for love stronger than death, unquenchable by waters, and resistant to every separation. Within that sequence, Anselm supplies an extreme imagined choice: suffering hell would be preferable to sinning against the beloved Lord. The comparison expresses the priority of fidelity over personal ease. It is surrounded by overflowing fountains, depths, flame, the sea, and the tabernacle's enduring lamp. These images enlarge the petition from momentary intensity to constancy. The sun's continuous shining finally becomes a rebuke to intermittent human love, and the soul asks to become a living sacrifice.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.91** Anselm's preference for suffering rather than sin strengthens a prayer for invincible, continual love of Christ. (Edition p. 58.)

In this edition. The supplied note attributes the reported saying to Anselm's biographer Eadmer; Traherne himself gives no title or documentary citation.

See also. Hell; Sin; Love; Sacrifice.

Antipodes

Antipodes; antipodes; other side of the world[25]

The word. The antipodes are people or places on the opposite side of the globe. In these meditations the word carries a spatial sense, not the looser modern meaning of an extreme opposite.

In Traherne. The term helps Traherne escape the assumption that the observer's immediate horizon is the whole world. Space extends above the heads of distant inhabitants as well as above our own. The sun's alternation also benefits people beyond our sight: perpetual daylight for us would mean permanent darkness for them. A supposedly improved arrangement is exposed as a private convenience purchased at others' expense. Both uses connect enlarged understanding with a more comprehensive account of divine provision.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.19** The antipodes help widen the imagined universe beyond the observer's local heavens. (Edition p. 12.)

25 Primary text: I.19, II.9.

- **II.9** Unending day here would leave the opposite side in darkness and frustrate its created goods. (Edition p. 70.)

In this edition. Read the solar example as Traherne's counterfactual within his account of providence; it is not a modern astronomical model of a stationary sun.

See also. Earth; Providence; Space; Sun.

Apostasy

Apostasy; apostacy[26]

The word. Apostasy is a falling away or abandonment. Traherne gives the religious term an unusually intimate scope: departure from the soul's proper apprehension and enjoyment of God's gifts.

In Traherne. The loss of childhood vision is called the speaker's apostasy even though the narrative does not describe a formal change of religion. What falls away is the immediate sense of the world's purity, divinity, and personal belonging. Recovery requires reason to gather again what intuition once supplied. Elsewhere even a momentary interruption of attention would count as apostasy in glory; perfect union makes such a lapse impossible there. The word consequently marks the seriousness of attention without making ordinary earthly distraction equivalent to a deliberate public renunciation of faith.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.2** Childhood's intuitive knowledge is recovered after the speaker's apostasy. (Edition p. 128.)
- **II.89** The imagined lapse of perfected attention is called eternal apostacy. (Edition p. 118.)

In this edition. The two spellings refer to the same word. The 2026 notes explain falling away; neither passage alone establishes a biographical conversion or denominational departure.

See also. Consideration; Child and childhood; Conversion; Fall.

26 Primary text: III.2, II.89; historical gloss: 2026 edition notes to III.2 and II.89.

Appetite

appetite; appetites; rude propensity[27]

The word. Appetite is a natural inclination toward a desired satisfaction, often associated with bodily desire. It may extend beyond hunger, but does not by itself include the rational ordering of desire toward a worthy end.

In Traherne. In the Adamic confession, appetite deceives the speaker into exchanging the giver of the world for an apple. The smallness of the object makes the misjudgment startling: a natural power has been directed against a far greater good. II.69 makes the distinction explicit. Human love should not proceed merely as appetite or brutish propensity; its causes and purposes should be understood. Yet Traherne does not imagine felicity as the extinction of wanting. The lyric of Sabbaths on earth describes a delight exceeding all appetites, indicating fulfilment on a scale ordinary cravings cannot measure. Appetite requires interpretation and government, while the capacity for desire remains essential to happiness.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.75** The first-person confession associates deceptive appetite with the fall through an apple. (Edition p. 47.)
- **II.69** Rational, well-ordered love is distinguished from mere appetite. (Edition p. 105.)
- **III.47** The poem's life of Sabbaths exceeds the measure of ordinary appetites. (Edition p. 161.)

In this edition. "Appetite" should not automatically be narrowed to eating: II.69 applies it to the manner of loving. The apple in I.75 is a specific devotional example.

See also. Desire; Affection; Fall; Virtue.

27 Primary text: I.75, II.69, III.47. The lyric in III.47 is part of the primary meditation, not an editorial illustration.

Apprehension

apprehension; apprehensions; apprehend; misapprehend[28]

The word. Apprehension is the mind's grasp or conception of an object. Although the word can elsewhere mean anxiety, Traherne usually needs the cognitive sense: the way something becomes present and intelligible to a person.

In Traherne. An object alone cannot ensure its enjoyment. People see the same things with different apprehensions and consequently inhabit very different worlds of value. The pure apprehensions of infancy provide a remembered instance of receiving created things before fashion has assigned them distorted meanings. Mature understanding must recover their truth rather than merely repeat a childhood feeling. IV.15 gives the practical test: a saw mistaken for a knife cannot be used well. Misunderstanding the world or one's soul is a more consequential version of that error. Apprehensions are the "cement" of soul and object because correct use and enjoyment depend on the relation they establish. Their superiority to objects in contemplative happiness does not mean the objects are unreal; it means their reality cannot enrich us through a false conception.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.1** Infant apprehensions supply a remembered light in which the universe can still be seen. (Edition p. 128.)
- **III.68** Different apprehensions explain why shared objects yield unequal understanding. (Edition p. 174.)
- **IV.15** The misidentified tool demonstrates the dependence of use and happiness on right apprehension. (Edition p. 209.)

In this edition. "Pure and virgin apprehensions" means uncorrupted ways of conceiving, not fears about chastity. "Apprehend" likewise often means grasp intellectually.

See also. Understanding; Knowledge; Use; Child and childhood; Object.

28 Primary text: III.1, III.68, IV.15. IV.15 explicitly articulates the relation among apprehension, use, enjoyment, and happiness.

Aristotle

Aristotle; perfect exercise of perfect virtue[29]

The word. Aristotle appears as a named authority for the relation of felicity to the exercise of virtue. Traherne gives an English formulation of that relation, not an extended exposition of Aristotle's ethical system.

In Traherne. The quotation becomes intelligible through Traherne's preceding account of faculties and objects. Knowledge, life, and love do not fulfil their purpose by remaining idle capacities. A perfect life extends to its objects, sees them, and loves them; virtue is their right exercise. Traherne therefore reads the inherited formula through his own universal account of enjoyment. The appeal to Aristotle supports activity rather than the withdrawal of happiness into a possession no one uses. It does not establish that Aristotle endorsed all of Traherne's Christian claims about eternity or the world as a personal inheritance.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.68** Aristotle's account of felicity is explained as the perfected exercise of knowing and loving objects. (Edition p. 174.)

In this edition. The wording is Traherne's English citation and interpretation. No Greek original or exact ancient locator is supplied by this article from the meditation alone.

See also. Felicity; Virtue; Action and activity; Philosophy.

Art and artifice

art; curious art; art of loving; invention[30]

The word. Art is purposeful skill, learned method, or devised workmanship. It is wider than the modern fine arts. Artifice may name its constructed quality, but Traherne does not make everything humanly made intrinsically fraudulent.

In Traherne. The art that teaches a child to esteem gold can collaborate with error, erecting invented wealth in place of natural

29 Primary text: III.68. Aristotle is explicitly named in III.68; other possible Aristotelian echoes require separate attribution and are not counted here.

30 Primary text: II.69, III.9, III.11, V.5. The places exhibit contrasting evaluations of art; no blanket opposition between human making and divine creation is assumed. For artist, see III.41 and the 2026 edition's explanatory note to that meditation.

treasures. Yet children are also to learn that God makes lesser objects through human ministry; the correction concerns comparative worth, not the denial of workmanship. There is an art of managing love, and divine wisdom itself is the painter's art that fills the infinite field of creation. The term thus crosses the apparent boundary between nature and contrivance. A skill is good when it serves the true capacities and ends of its object. It goes wrong when cleverness imposes a false scale of value or becomes sufficient justification for its own products.

Artist

The greatest artist in III.41 is a master of an art or science. The surrounding examples include astronomy, medicine, grammar and poetry, not only visual workmanship. Their learning becomes fruitful when its objects are known for their value and as the learner's own concern. Mere expertise for talk or display does not satisfy that demand.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.69** The art of love is its rational and proportionate management. (Edition p. 105.)
- **III.9** Art and error cooperate in producing conventional riches. (Edition p. 135.)
- **III.11** Humanly made objects can be acknowledged as God's gifts while assigned a subordinate value. (Edition p. 137.)
- **V.5** Divine wisdom is the art in the extended figure of creation as painting. (Edition p. 268.)
- **III.41** The artist exemplifies mastery of a discipline, whose value depends on the purpose of knowing. (Edition p. 156.)

In this edition. "Curious" beside art usually suggests skilful or elaborate workmanship. "Artifice" and "contrivance" are lookup equivalents here, not claims that these exact abstract nouns occur in the cited sentences.

See also. Skill; Invention; Nature; Value; Limner and pencil.

Atheist

Atheists; one who denies God[31]

The word. An atheist is a denier of God. In the cited meditation the word identifies the imagined opponent of an argument from the soul, rather than a documented individual or a school with a stated system.

In Traherne. The invisible soul is presented as a miracle more astonishing than visible wonders. Its knowledge contains innumerable objects, and its love sends out inexhaustible streams, though it has no bodily dimensions. Traherne concludes that consideration of a single soul would convince all atheists. This is the culmination of an argument about intelligible powers, not a historical report that such persuasion occurred. The force of the claim depends on his understanding of thought and love as effects requiring divine wisdom and power.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.81** The soul's immaterial powers culminate in the assertion that its consideration would convince all atheists. (Edition p. 250.)

In this edition. The primary form is "Atheists." The abstract heading "Atheism" is an access term; the text does not offer a taxonomy of unbelief here.

See also. Soul; Reason; Miracle; God.

Attraction and loadstone

attract; drawn; loadstone; cords of love[32]

The word. A loadstone is a naturally magnetic stone. Attraction names a movement toward something, including a desire whose object is not yet distinctly known.

In Traherne. The opening meditation contests the maxim that the unknown cannot be loved. Hidden attraction toward the earth's centre and iron's movement toward a loadstone provide natural analogies for the soul's expectation of some great good. The point is the felt influence of an incompletely apprehended object, not a claim that spiritual love is a

31 Primary text: IV.81. IV.81 is the explicit named occurrence and is argumentative rather than biographical.

32 Primary text: I.2, I.56, I.57. I.2 supplies the magnetic comparison; I.56–57 develop its devotional and voluntary counterparts.

measured magnetic force. At the Cross the imagery develops into cords of love and the movement of heavy things toward a centre. The drawn soul travels by thought and affection, not feet. Desire is powerful without being straightforward compulsion: crowds drawn to a feast, miracle, or beloved object move voluntarily. Attraction therefore mediates between freedom and the compelling worth of what is loved.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.2** Loadstone and earthly centre exemplify an influence felt before its object is clearly known. (Edition p. 4.)
- **I.56** The Cross draws thought and affection as heavy things tend toward a centre. (Edition p. 34.)
- **I.57** Examples of freely gathering crowds distinguish attraction from visible compulsion. (Edition p. 35.)

In this edition. Retain the historical "loadstone" in quotation; "lodestone" is its modern spelling. The physical comparisons are analogies within the argument, not scientific demonstrations of spiritual causation.

See also. Desire; Inclination; Centre and circumference; Love; Freedom.

Authority

authority; jurisdiction; law-giver; authoritative example[33]

The word. Authority is a recognized power to command, guide, or establish what others accept. Its exercise may be legal and sovereign or informal, as when a child trusts the judgment of adults.

In Traherne. Divine authority is pictured as advocacy for the person loved. God commands His subjects to love the speaker and treats what is done to that person as done to Himself. Authority magnifies the recipient instead of merely demanding submission. The childhood narrative shows the danger of trusting human authority without sound objects of judgment. The child reverences elders, follows their examples, and eventually forgets the treasures they never mention. These are not equivalent authorities or a general rejection of teaching. They show that a

33 Primary text: I.70, III.7, III.11. The contrast between I.70 and III.7 concerns the use and object of authority, not a claim that all authority is corrupting.

command's power over the hearer must be distinguished from the truth of the valuation it transmits. The responsible teacher uses influence to disclose, rather than replace, the world's excellence.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.70** The divine law-giver employs authority to secure love and honour for the human recipient. (Edition p. 44.)
- **III.7** Adult authority helps direct the child away from early apprehensions. (Edition p. 134.)
- **III.11** Parents and nurses are urged to teach judgments confirmed by the things themselves. (Edition p. 137.)

In this edition. Only the first two places use "authority" itself; III.11 supplies the corrective educational practice. The entry includes influence through example as well as explicit command.

See also. Law; Commandment; Education; Parents.

Avarice and covetousness

avaricious; covetousness; covet; love of propriety[34]

The word. Avarice and covetousness ordinarily mean acquisitive desire carried into vice. Traherne also uses the vocabulary provocatively for the underlying wish to possess and enjoy great goods, which need not remain vicious.

In Traherne. When covetousness fastens upon scarce, insufficient treasures, it produces competition, oppression, and invented wants. But the desire for all is not simply amputated. In II.79 the avaricious humour and the communicative humour are satisfied together: every person receives all while sharing the enjoyment with others. The point is not that ordinary greed becomes harmless by changing its name. The kind of possession has changed. Nonexclusive enjoyment supplies what accumulation promised but could never secure. Hence fruition can sate covetousness and free a person from the love of money at once. Read the local qualification carefully: "covet" may recommend ardent desire for true goods, whereas covetousness among the works of darkness names a socially destructive misdirection.

34 Primary text: I.33, II.79, II.98. II.79 uses "avaricious" positively within a qualified account of transformed possession.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.33** Covetousness belongs to the disorders generated by scarce and invented treasures. (Edition p. 20.)
- **II.79** The desire for private possession is reconciled with the desire for companions. (Edition p. 111.)
- **II.98** Enjoyment frees a person from money-love while satisfying the acquisitive appetite. (Edition p. 124.)

In this edition. Do not silently replace every occurrence of "covet" with the same condemnatory gloss. The text deliberately reuses the language of acquisitiveness to reveal a different object and mode of possession.

See also. Desire; Possession; Propriety; Riches; Envy.

Awakening

awake; awaken; awaking; quicken[35]

The word. Awakening is a passage from sleep or inattention into active awareness. Its spiritual use does not discard the bodily image: it makes an already present world newly available to the soul.

In Traherne. To awake in Heaven each morning is to recognize sky, earth, and air as the Father's palace. No relocation is required. The prayer for the Holy Spirit asks that every power of the soul be awakened into Christ's mind, while the exhortation to awaken the soul turns toward an expansive love beyond bodily limits. These are related but distinct movements: renewed perception, divine enabling, and the exercise of love. Awakening can also begin with uncertainty; news stirs a young hearer's hope that some still unknown happiness is being announced. Its value lies in the object eventually discovered and retained, not in excitement alone.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.28** Morning awakening becomes recognition of the world as heavenly gift. (Edition p. 18.)
- **I.95** The Spirit is asked to awaken the soul's powers into Christlike life. (Edition p. 61.)

35 Primary text: I.28, I.95, II.51, III.25. Each selected primary passage uses an awakening verb; the heading is a normalized access form.

- **II.51** Awakening is joined to an enlargement of love beyond bodily limitation. (Edition p. 96.)
- **III.25** News awakens expectation of an undiscovered happiness. (Edition p. 146.)

In this edition. The noun-heading gathers several verbal forms. It should not be read as a claim about a later religious movement called an Awakening.

See also. Repose; Light; Remembrance; Holy Spirit; Expectation.

Babel

Babel; a Babel of Confusions[36]

The word. Babel evokes the biblical association of human building with confusion. In Traherne's opening distinction it names the humanly fabricated world of vanity and competitive wealth.

In Traherne. The image resolves an apparent contradiction in devotional language. One must both contemn the world and enjoy it because "world" names two different orders. God's creation is Adam's joy and the temple of his glory; the Babel made by human beings consists of invented riches, pomps, and vanities introduced by sin. Abandoning Babel is therefore not withdrawal from earth, air, or human fellowship. It is a rejection of valuations that obscure them. Confusion is the governing feature: people pursue the wrong goods under the name of happiness.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.7** The world made by people is distinguished from divine creation as a Babel of confusions. (Edition p. 7.)

In this edition. This is a figurative occurrence, not a description of an archaeological site or a geographical journey. The plural "Confusions" reinforces disorder in value.

See also. World; Vanity; Invention; Corruption.

36 Primary text: I.7. I.7 is the explicit Babel occurrence and supplies the controlling two-world distinction.

Balance and proportion

balance; proportion; proportionable; improportionable[37]

The word. A balance weighs; proportion expresses a fitting relation between quantities, powers, or ends. To be proportionable is to answer the worth of the thing concerned, not necessarily to possess a measurable numerical ratio.

In Traherne. The world becomes dust in a balance when compared with the understanding's reach. Traherne uses the smallness of a weighed object to reverse the reader's first estimate of body and soul. Elsewhere he denies any proportion between the whole world and the soul's relation to eternity, while still demanding proportion in love and conduct. There is no contradiction: measurable comparison fails at the first level, whereas moral fittingness remains necessary at the second. An enjoyer rendered useless amid magnificent gifts would be out of keeping with the divine purpose. Proportion therefore asks that response correspond to value, not that love be restricted to a comfortably finite allotment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.19** The understanding comprehends the world like dust in a balance. (Edition p. 12.)
- **II.69** The art of love makes it rationally ordered and proportionable. (Edition p. 105.)
- **II.70** No proportion measures the soul's eternal reach against the bodily world. (Edition p. 105.)
- **IV.47** Uselessness would be disproportionate to the glory of humanity's end and gifts. (Edition p. 226.)

In this edition. The balance image is figurative weighing. "Improportionable" is the negative form used for a moral mismatch, not merely a geometrical irregularity.

See also. Measure; Greatness; Affection; End and means.

37 Primary text: I.19, II.69, II.70, IV.47. The article keeps quantitative comparison distinct from fittingness of love and purpose.

Baptism

baptizeth with fire; spiritual kindling[38]

The word. Baptism here is approached through the scriptural verb for baptizing with fire. The image suggests an overwhelming spiritual action that kindles and transforms rather than a discussion of ritual procedure.

In Traherne. The exhortation occurs when Traherne contrasts bodily confinement with love's unbounded usefulness. The reader is to live by the nobler part, imitate the one who baptizes with fire, awaken the soul, and become an enlarged seraphim. Fire expresses the animation of a love that can bless thousands. The passage does not explain water baptism, the age of recipients, or sacramental efficacy; supplying those doctrines from this single occurrence would exceed its evidence.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.51** Baptizing with fire appears in an exhortation to awakened and universally beneficial love. (Edition p. 96.)

In this edition. The abstract noun is a normalized lookup heading. The attested wording is the verb "baptizeth," and the immediate context governs the article's limited scope.

See also. Fire; Holy Spirit; Love; Awakening.

Beatific vision

beatific vision; Beatific Sight; sight of Happiness[39]

The word. Beatific means making blessed or happy. The beatific vision is the sight of God enjoyed by the blessed. Traherne relates this theological expression to earthly apprehension of divine happiness, while preserving distinctions between present participation, angelic contemplation, and the life to come.

In Traherne. III.60 calls the spectacle just described a great part of the beatific vision. Its antecedent in III.59 is humanity's enjoyment of

38 Primary text: II.51. II.51 supplies the primary occurrence; sacramental references elsewhere should not be mistaken for a fuller treatment here.

39 Primary text: III.47, III.59, III.60, III.98. Supplied 2026 editorial notes 210 and 255 gloss the Beatific Sight and identify the discussion of angels with Gregory the Great's Homilies on the Gospels 34 and Moralia in Job II.3.

God's treasures after God's likeness. Seeing this happiness transforms the observer, draws the soul into communion, and reveals creatures in a divine light. The practical consequence is inward restoration: the speaker must be changed to enjoy the treasures already rightly placed around him.

The poem in III.47 both anticipates and distinguishes heavenly fulfilment. Contentment, freedom, and victory amid earthly trials stand next to the Beatific Sight. Temptations and tears remain, and the next life promises further joy. Present blessedness is therefore real without being identical in every respect to the final vision.

III.98 turns to angels who continue their inward contemplation while fulfilling outward ministry. Their example encourages readers to retain divine greatness in understanding or, when vivid awareness fails, in memory and action. The argument does not require withdrawal from service. Nor does it make the angel itself unlimited: the angelic spirit remains circumscribed, while God's omnipresence enlarges its knowledge.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.47** Places earthly triumph next to the Beatific Sight while anticipating another life. (Edition p. 161.)
- **III.59** Defines blessed enjoyment through likeness to God's manner of enjoying. (Edition p. 169.)
- **III.60** Calls the apprehended happiness a great part of the beatific vision. (Edition p. 169.)
- **III.98** Makes simultaneous angelic contemplation and service a practical example. (Edition p. 195.)

In this edition. The supplied notes gloss Beatific Sight and identify Gregory the Great behind the angelic discussion. Read the qualifications great part and next closely: they connect present and heavenly happiness without erasing the distinction between them.

See also. Vision; Felicity; Angels; Contemplation; Gregory the Great.

Beauty

beauty; beautiful; fair; amiable form[40]

The word. Beauty is an excellence that attracts delighted perception. It may belong to visible figure and colour, to the relations and services of things, or to an inward life of wisdom and love.

In Traherne. The opening promise is to unfold an interior beauty already present in the reader's inheritance. Traherne does not set that beauty against the delight of the senses; he asks the reader to discover more than the surface. A grain of sand can manifest wisdom and power, and an object's service can be more valuable than the visible beauty that first attracts attention. The world is beautiful as a work and as a gift addressed to an enjoyer.

II.20 gives beauty a precise place in an argument about divine visibility. A beautiful body involves a pleasing variety of figures and colours, but no finite visible body can adequately display infinity or eternity. Even the most beautiful object becomes unnoticed through constant familiarity. The difficulty may therefore lie less in God's failure to reveal Himself than in the viewer's habituated disregard. The world itself is proposed as the body through which divine beauty becomes manifest as far as visibility allows.

Beauty also becomes the soul's own form. Understanding receives amiable ideas; love makes that knowing person delightful to others. Thus the observer is not left outside the scene as a neutral spectator. Learning the beauty of things alters the beauty of the one who knows them. A mature response joins perception, valuation, action, and reciprocal delight.

The difficult beauty of the Cross

The Cross prevents this vocabulary from becoming a simple preference for pleasant surfaces. Traherne describes a body exhausted, wounded, and disfigured, then asks how such a spectacle can delight. The answer turns on the love expressed through suffering. He does not redescribe the wounds as visually agreeable. Rather, a more comprehensive apprehension reads the personal action within the terrible

40 Primary text: I.3, I.27, II.20, II.84, I.89. I.89 preserves the painful appearance of Christ's body; its interpretation is not a denial of that appearance.

appearance. The same distinction that allows a common object to disclose unsuspected wealth also requires the beholder to remain with what is painful. Beauty as manifested goodness can demand compassionate attention instead of aesthetic distance.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.3** The inheritance of the world possesses an interior beauty that needs to be unfolded. (Edition p. 5.)
- **I.27** Spiritual service and manifested goodness exceed merely visible surface beauty. (Edition p. 17.)
- **II.20** The argument about a visible divine body tests variety, manifestation, and habituation. (Edition p. 75.)
- **II.84** Objects and knowledge beautify the soul in likeness to eternal wisdom. (Edition p. 114.)
- **I.89** The disfigured body of Christ becomes the occasion of love and adoration. (Edition p. 56.)

In this edition. "Beauty" does not always mean prettiness, and "amiable" means worthy of love. Conversely, the vocabulary of inward beauty does not authorize erasing the text's exact delight in colour, light, and bodily form.

See also. Colour; Glory; Love; Sight; Soul; Lustre.

Beholding

behold; beholding; looking upon; see with the soul[41]

The word. To behold is to direct and sustain one's regard toward something. In devotional use bodily sight and intellectual presence can cooperate, though the object may be historically or spatially distant.

In Traherne. Traherne distinguishes the availability of objects from the eyes and affections with which they are beheld. The Cross, though absent to bodily sight, is accessible to the soul's concentrated attention. Beholding is therefore a practice: withdrawing scattered thoughts, discerning what is before the mind, and allowing its value to move the affections. It need not produce easy pleasure. The wounded body asks the viewer to remain rather than depart to amusement, while the vision of

41 Primary text: I.48, I.57, I.89, III.68. The references include both fulfilled and frustrated sight, preserving the term's dependence on the beholder's relation to the object.

another's happiness can torment those incapable of sharing it. Right beholding includes a relation of love. A spectator who recognizes beauty without learning to enjoy or communicate it has not reached the term's fullest promise.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.48** Seeing others' happiness without possessing it becomes a torment. (Edition p. 29.)
- **I.57** Christ is seen by the soul as the brazen serpent was seen by bodily eyes. (Edition p. 35.)
- **I.89** The praying beholder remains with the spectacle of Christ's suffering. (Edition p. 56.)
- **III.68** What matters is not only the object but the eyes and affections of its beholder. (Edition p. 174.)

In this edition. Beholding is not automatically the same as enjoying. I.48 expressly distinguishes seeing from possessing, while III.68 explains the faculties required for fuller reception.

See also. Sight; Contemplation; Apprehension; Eye; Cross.

Being

being; beings; existence; to be[42]

The word. Being may mean existence, an existent thing, or what something is. Traherne also uses "being" as an ordinary participle or a causal connective; those grammatical uses should not all be turned into metaphysical terms.

In Traherne. The philosophical noun is most sharply defined in the account of God as a simple being whose essence is to be. Divine existence is not a neutral substrate to which perfection is subsequently added. God is wholly actual and perfect, and therefore able to satisfy the soul's highest demand for goodness. Created beings have existence as a gift and possess differing powers through which that gift may become enjoyable. Immateriality does not make the soul a lesser reality: its invisible being can know, love, and contain objects intellectually beyond the reach of a body. Traherne's language of being therefore links actuality with value

42 Primary text: I.67, II.23, III.63. III.63 supplies the explicit essence-and-act account; the other references distinguish divine and created being.

while refusing to equate reality with visibility. Existence matters because beings are capable of relations, services, and delighted reception.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.67** God is named the most glorious of beings, whose image is the highest created dignity. (Edition p. 41.)
- **II.23** The inward human being exceeds bodily visibility through knowledge and love. (Edition p. 80.)
- **III.63** God's simple being is pure act, inseparable from perfection. (Edition p. 171.)

In this edition. Context must decide whether "Being" is the metaphysical noun. Capitalization alone is unreliable because the prose capitalizes many emphatic words.

See also. Essence; Accident and substance; God; Creature; Nothing.

Belief

belief; believe; unbelief; implicit faith; assurance[43]

The word. Belief is assent to something as true. Traherne distinguishes an initially accepted truth from the fuller assurance achieved when its grounds and implications become clear.

In Traherne. His remembered difficulty about Scripture concerns its manner of arrival rather than the excellence of its contents. A heavenly message seemed inadequately authenticated until its historical transmission was understood as better than a private angelic delivery. The movement toward belief accordingly requires examination, not merely stronger desire. IV.6 allows that implicit faith can produce obedience while urging its growth into assurance through knowledge. The dignity of the soul, goodness of the works, and beauty of the laws become intelligible evidence. This is not a substitution of bare inference for faith. Believed truths must become sufficiently real to be enjoyed. The decisive question is whether assent has opened into a lived acknowledgment of the goods it affirms.

43 Primary text: III.32, III.33, IV.6. III.32–33 belong to the autobiographical account of learning; IV.6 gives the general distinction between implicit faith and assurance.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.32** Unbelief arises over how Scripture has been authenticated, despite its excellent matter. (Edition p. 151.)
- **III.33** The historical mode of revelation is argued to surpass a private angelic message. (Edition p. 152.)
- **IV.6** Implicit faith is to mature into assurance through understanding divine gifts and laws. (Edition p. 201.)

In this edition. Belief and assurance are related but not interchangeable. The doubts in III.32 are narrated stages of inquiry, not Traherne's final dismissal of Scripture.

See also. Faith; Knowledge; Scripture.

Benefactor and beneficence

benefactor; beneficence; bountiful giver; doing good[44]

The word. A benefactor confers a benefit; beneficence names doing good to another. The relation includes the recipient's acknowledgment of intention and generosity, not only a measurable successful result.

In Traherne. God's identity as benefactor makes the soul's unlimited asking intelligible: the giver delights to give. The human response is not meant to remain attachment to the gift alone. Once self-love is satisfied, attention can turn toward the benefactor and overflow into love of others for His sake. This provides a route from reception to generosity rather than condemning reception as necessarily selfish. IV.88 guards the giver's intention against judgment solely by outcome. A frustrated benefit still imposes an obligation of gratitude where the kindness was genuinely intended. The standard applies first to human friendship and then to God, whose gifts may be obstructed by human perverseness.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.22** The benefactor's readiness to give answers the insatiable soul's asking. (Edition p. 14.)
- **IV.55** Satisfied self-love turns toward the benefactor and becomes love of others. (Edition p. 231.)

44 Primary text: I.22, IV.55, IV.88. IV.88 expressly distinguishes the intention of kindness from its prosperity or success.

- **IV.88** An intended benefit deserves gratitude even when its success is prevented. (Edition p. 255.)

In this edition. "Beneficence" is the explanatory name for the activity treated under the attested "benefactor." "Benefit" and "benefactor" should not be collapsed: the latter directs attention to agency and intention.

See also. Benefit; Bounty; Gratitude; Self-love; Generosity.

Benefit

benefit; benefits; advantage; useful gift[45]

The word. A benefit is a good conferred or an advantage actually afforded. It differs from a gift considered merely as an object passed from one person to another.

In Traherne. The opening argument insists that love intends benefits as well as magnificent gifts. A whole world would not satisfy friendship unless its use could advance the recipient's happiness. Benefit is therefore a relational and practical term: the world's value becomes effective through the soul's recognition and enjoyment. The relation then turns back toward the giver. Praises are benefits transformed and returned, not an independent payment capable of balancing the account. The return also extends laterally, since seeing others receive good becomes a benefit to the one who loves them. This vocabulary makes use inseparable from gratitude without reducing creation to disposable instruments.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.6** Love seeks the benefits and uses of its gifts, not magnificence alone. (Edition p. 6.)
- **I.27** Delight in the benefits given to all becomes a heavenly mode of enjoyment. (Edition p. 17.)
- **II.94** Benefits received and understood return as praise. (Edition p. 121.)

In this edition. "Benefit" need not mean financial advantage. Its scope includes the knowledge, love, dignity, and enjoyment made possible by a gift.

45 Primary text: I.6, I.27, II.94. The selected passages move from the giver's intention through shared benefit to grateful return.

See also. Use; Gift; Benefactor and beneficence; Praise; Gratitude.

Birth

birth; born; from the womb; born again[46]

The word. Birth marks entry into human life. Traherne also speaks of being born to an inheritance, indicating an original destination or right, and of being born again into a renewed manner of apprehending it.

In Traherne. The recollected light of birth is a divine gift rather than an achievement of study. Because it makes other gifts intelligible, it is among the most important endowments the speaker can recover. Yet the story is not simply an appeal to chronological beginnings. The child who later feels desolate learns that remembered joys from birth should continue to sustain him; past gifts must remain inwardly present. Rebirth similarly means more than starting over. It entails removing acquired false colours and habits so that things can appear in their truth. Birth thus supplies both the historical image of receiving life and the normative image of receiving the world rightly.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.1** The light accompanying birth is remembered as the condition of enjoying other gifts. (Edition p. 128.)
- **III.5** Being born again is explained as purification of acquired habits and valuations. (Edition p. 132.)
- **III.23** The joys received from birth should remain present against the child's fear and desolation. (Edition p. 144.)

In this edition. The language of birth moves among chronology, entitlement, and spiritual renewal. Those senses overlap without making "born again" a literal second physical birth.

See also. Child and childhood; Infancy; Conversion; Heir and inheritance.

46 Primary text: III.1, III.5, III.23. III.5 combines the images of rebirth and becoming a little child in Traherne's own exposition.

Blessing

blessing; blessings; blessed; to be a blessing[47]

The word. A blessing can be a bestowed good, the happiness attending it, or a good conferred through a person. The word's movement between receiving and giving is especially important in Traherne.

In Traherne. Bodily faculties are blessings that arrive before acknowledgment and become overlooked because they are so near. False social valuations make common blessings harder still to prize. Their recognition changes what it means to be blessed: the recipient can become an object of delight and service to others. IV.47 states the reciprocal relation directly, finding blessedness in being a blessing. This is not a demand that gratitude make the original gift unnecessary. Rather, the benefit reaches a fuller form when the enjoyer becomes active and lovable within the same society of good. Blessing connects an original dependence on gifts with the dignity of becoming a giver.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.66** Senses and bodily members are unrecognized blessings that preceded awareness. (Edition p. 41.)
- **III.13** Corrupt inventions obstruct the esteem of common blessings. (Edition p. 138.)
- **IV.47** Being blessed is fulfilled in becoming a blessing and delight to others. (Edition p. 226.)

In this edition. "Blessed" can describe genuine felicity, not merely a spoken benediction. Conversely, "a blessing" may be a person who benefits others rather than an object received.

See also. Gift; Benefit; Felicity; Gratitude; Service.

47 Primary text: I.66, III.13, IV.47. The entry distinguishes gifts called blessings from the interpersonal act of becoming one.

Blindness

blindness; blind; blinded; absence of right sight[48]

The word. Blindness is the absence of sight. Traherne uses it literally in hypotheses about perception and figuratively for failure to understand the value of what is present.

In Traherne. The world may be a mirror of infinite beauty while remaining unseen by those who inhabit it. This blindness is a failure of esteem, made worse by ingratitude and custom. Philosophers too can be blind when they deny the objects of felicity without showing what is genuinely to be enjoyed. The remedy is positive disclosure, not merely another prohibition. Physical blindness has a different role in II.81: an imagined person born without sight or hearing is still credited with an inward apprehension of infinity. Sensory limitation therefore does not stand for spiritual incapacity in every passage. The contrast clarifies the book's governing claim that bodily looking and intellectual seeing are related powers rather than identical acts.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.31** Moral blindness leaves the world's beauty and worth unrecognized. (Edition p. 19.)
- **II.81** A person hypothetically born deaf and blind can still apprehend infinite extent. (Edition p. 112.)
- **II.100** Philosophical blindness is corrected by showing the positive objects of happiness. (Edition p. 126.)

In this edition. Do not transfer the moral blame attached to figurative blindness into II.81's account of physical sensory deprivation. That passage argues for an inward power independently of bodily sight.

See also. Sight; Ignorance; Understanding; Eye; Custom.

48 Primary text: I.31, II.81, II.100. The places distinguish two uses of blindness rather than treating disability as a spiritual defect.

Blood

blood; bloody sufferings; bleeding; blood of the Cross[49]

The word. Blood is bodily life made visible, especially when shed. In the prayers at the Cross it is also the sign and cost of Christ's redemptive self-giving.

In Traherne. The book does not leave blood at the level of an abstract emblem. Christ's dryness, wounds, and exhausted body insist on the physical extremity of suffering. Yet the sight must be interpreted through the love of the sufferer: the visible wounds alone are too small to contain the full understanding of eternal love. Blood unites the redeemed community and obliges the speaker to a corresponding generosity with his own life, estate, and time. This does not turn every form of violence into holiness. The opening method explicitly prefers peace to bloodshed; the value of Christ's blood lies in loving sacrifice and redemption, not in injury as such.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.4** The speaker's promised advancement proceeds by peace rather than bloodshed. (Edition p. 5.)
- **I.64** Bloody wounds require knowledge of Christ's person and love to become fully intelligible. (Edition p. 39.)
- **I.79** The blood of the Cross unites the Church and prompts the offering of one's own resources. (Edition p. 49.)
- **I.89** The bodily desolation of the crucified Christ is described without softening its violence. (Edition p. 56.)

In this edition. "Blood" ranges from the physical substance to sacrificial and communal meaning. Read the devotional transfer through its stated relation to Christ rather than treating it as an interchangeable ornament for love.

See also. Body; Cross; Sacrifice; Redemption; Compassion.

49 Primary text: I.4, I.64, I.79, I.89. The cited prayers join bodily suffering to its redemptive meaning, while I.4 marks a clear rejection of violent methods of advancement.

Body

body; bodies; flesh and bones; limbs and members[50]

The word. A body is an extended, visible, and locally situated being or the physical organism of a person. Its limits distinguish it from the soul's intellectual presence without necessarily making it worthless.

In Traherne. Traherne's strongest contrasts can sound hostile to embodiment. Flesh and bones are confined, able to receive few pleasures, while love extends through all worlds. But the same passage calls the body a lantern for inward love and identifies its powers of seeing, feeling, eating, and drinking. Its worth depends on the life it makes possible rather than on bulk alone.

Other meditations openly celebrate bodily gifts. Eyes, ears, speech, and limbs exceed gold in value, and the smallness of the body is itself a work of wisdom. An endlessly large body would lack workable figure, motion, and relation to other beings. The soul is made greater by having an appropriately limited bodily instrument. This is not a simple contrast between evil matter and a good spirit.

The body of Christ puts the relation between visibility and inward meaning under the greatest pressure. It is called a pillar manifesting love, not a cloud hiding it. The broken visible form conveys a love whose full comprehensiveness requires understanding. Bodies can therefore reveal persons while never exhausting their value. To know oneself as more than a body is to enlarge the account of embodiment's purpose, not to abolish its gifts.

The earthly tabernacle

The bodily dwelling is an earthly tabernacle in III.94, where David's joy in the works of God seems to make the whole world a celestial temple. The edition identifies the bodily phrase through 2 Corinthians 5:1. Here the dwelling is filled with praise rather than treated merely as a prison: the speaker's inward abundance seeks outlets through instruments, nations and created things.

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50 Primary text: I.19, I.66, I.90, II.51, III.19. The references intentionally juxtapose the body's limitations, its intrinsic gifts, and its revelatory work in Christ. For the earthly tabernacle, see III.94; its bodily identification is explained in the 2026 note to III.94.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.19** Self-knowledge requires knowing the soul's powers beyond facial and bodily features. (Edition p. 12.)
- **I.66** Limbs and senses are celebrated as living treasures beyond precious metals. (Edition p. 41.)
- **I.90** Christ's body is the pillar through which love is manifested. (Edition p. 57.)
- **II.51** Bodily confinement is contrasted with love's reach, while the body remains love's lantern. (Edition p. 96.)
- **III.19** The poem argues that appropriately small bodies make human life more complete. (Edition p. 141.)
- **III.94** The earthly tabernacle belongs to the account of David's overflowing praise. (Edition p. 193.)

In this edition. The disparaging "carcase" and "heavy clay" are local comparisons of reach and usefulness, not adequate summaries of the book's anthropology. III.19 is verse and should be read as a sustained argument through imagined bodily scale.

See also. Soul; Flesh; Sense; Incarnation; Greatness.

Bondage

bondage; enslaved; enthrals; outward captivity[51]

The word. Bondage is subjection that prevents free movement or action. In these meditations it is chiefly the soul's captivity to hatred, false opinion, or fear of divine enmity.

In Traherne. The outward bondage of opinion and custom is learned through other people's lives. It blinds the child to gifts that were once naturally apparent. Traherne does not thereby deny all inward corruption; he explicitly traces the history of corrupt examples to Adam. The distinction concerns how misery is transmitted and maintained. Hatred supplies another form of captivity, since being compelled to hate God and people is called the greatest bondage hell can impose. Adam's fear that God must remain his enemy likewise enslaves him. Release comes through discovering and returning love, not merely asserting

51 Primary text: II.63, III.8, IV.53. III.8's explicit qualification concerning Adam must accompany any summary of its emphasis on social corruption.

independence. The free soul is more fully related to others because it is no longer held inside a hostile account of them.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.63** The necessity of hating God and people is hell's greatest bondage. (Edition p. 102.)
- **III.8** Custom and example create an outward bondage more influential than the speaker's remembered inward propensities. (Edition p. 134.)
- **IV.53** Adam's expectation of lasting divine enmity is an enslaving misery relieved by redemption. (Edition p. 230.)

In this edition. "Outward" in III.8 refers to the source of pressure in social opinion; its effects penetrate inward apprehension. It does not mean that the bondage is merely bodily.

See also. Freedom; Custom; Hatred; Fall; Education.

Book and writing

book; books; writing; written; characters[52]

The word. A book is both a physical receptacle of writing and an ordered means of communicating knowledge. Traherne's repeated comparisons between books, souls, and visible signs depend on both aspects.

In Traherne. The empty book is like an infant soul: capable of receiving all things, but not yet filled. Because it was given in love, the writer will return it filled with enriching truths. Form and purpose coincide: communication makes the recipient capable of enjoying what the book describes. Yet books have limits. The remembered apprehensions of infancy are said to be unattainable by book, so Traherne teaches them through narrated experience. That is an admission that verbal information must awaken a way of seeing, not a declaration that his own writing is useless.

The desire for a book from heaven eventually discovers Scripture as a gift already prepared before the speaker's birth. The difficulty then becomes recognizing its means of transmission and interpreting its

52 Primary text: I.1, III.1, III.10, III.27, III.32. The opening book is established by I.1 itself; no claim about its later manuscript history is needed for this article.

contents. Books can also be false treasures: a gilded book prized by a child for appearance joins the objects that crowd out heaven and earth. The question is what kind of attention reading or ownership establishes.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.1** The received blank book becomes the figure and instrument of an enriching exchange. (Edition p. 4.)
- **III.1** Infant apprehensions are not simply obtainable from books but must be taught through experience. (Edition p. 128.)
- **III.10** A gilded book becomes one of the conventional objects that eclipse larger treasures. (Edition p. 136.)
- **III.27** The longed-for book from heaven proves to have been prepared before the reader's birth. (Edition p. 148.)
- **III.32** The excellence of Scripture's matter is distinguished from doubts about its authentication. (Edition p. 151.)

In this edition. "Book" may identify the notebook being written, Scripture, learned books, or a decorative possession. An interpretation must first determine which object the local sentence names.

See also. Scripture; Word; Education; Communication; Experience.

Bosom

bosom; inward room; dearest affection[53]

The word. The bosom is the breast understood as a place of embrace, intimacy, and guarded inward thought. Figuratively it is the seat in which another person is tenderly held or valued.

In Traherne. To be the darling of God's bosom is to be pleasing to the giver of happiness. The image then expands into human relations: love enthrones its beloved in another's bosom, giving that person a place within the lover's life. This is dominion by affection rather than physical occupation. The prayer for communion in the bosoms of angels and people expressly glosses the image as inward room in their hearts. At the scale of infinity, the divine bosom names encompassing security. The same bodily word thus gathers nearness without confinement, belonging

53 Primary text: I.11, I.96, II.58, V.3. I.96 gives the text's own inward-affection gloss on the bosom image.

without exclusion, and an inwardness that can accommodate innumerable beloved persons.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.11** The gift of enjoyment makes the recipient pleasing to God as the darling of His bosom. (Edition p. 8.)
- **I.96** The bosoms of angels and people are explained as their dearest affection and inward room. (Edition p. 61.)
- **II.58** Love grants a throne and title within the lover's bosom. (Edition p. 100.)
- **V.3** Infinite divine extent is called the bosom and security of every creature. (Edition p. 266.)

In this edition. The figure need not be sexual or anatomically literal. "Reigning" in a bosom describes the power of being loved, not coercive control of the lover.

See also. Heart; Love; Room; Communion; Presence.

Bounty

bounty; bountiful; free bestowal; munificence[54]

The word. Bounty is liberal giving, especially generosity worthy of a great giver. It can also name the ample goodness disclosed in what is given.

In Traherne. Divine bounty is perfect because it gives excellent things freely, places them conveniently for enjoyment, and makes the enjoyer capable of receiving them nobly. Its very perfection can conceal it: gifts so near and constant are treated as though they were no gifts at all. The lesson is not to create scarcity so that gratitude becomes possible, but to prize possession while it remains. The same bounty requires room for its effusions in the Fifth Century's account of infinity. At every scale, generosity is measured by the good it communicates to recipients, not by costly display or difficulty of acquisition. Free availability becomes a sign of worth when judged from the giver's goodness.

54 Primary text: I.23, I.38, I.66, V.4. The places distinguish bounty's manner of giving from the recipient's sometimes defective acknowledgment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.23** Bounty prepares glorious treasures freely and makes their enjoyment easy. (Edition p. 16.)
- **I.38** The perfection of divine giving hides it from a contracted spirit. (Edition p. 23.)
- **I.66** Unnoticed bodily gifts expose how freedom and nearness can obscure bounty. (Edition p. 41.)
- **V.4** Infinite bounty requires an adequate field and receptacle for its giving. (Edition p. 267.)

In this edition. "Bounty" here is neither a reward for capture nor a commercial promotion. "Free" indicates unpurchased generosity, not worthlessness.

See also. Abundance; Gift; Benefactor and beneficence; Common things; Gratitude.

Brazen serpent

brazen serpent; serpent upon the pole; slayer of the serpent[55]

The word. Brazen means made of brass or bronze. The raised serpent recalls the scriptural object the afflicted Israelites looked upon to live; Traherne reads it as a figure of Christ lifted up.

In Traherne. The comparison distinguishes two modes of seeing. Israel saw the material serpent with bodily eyes; the meditator sees Christ through the soul. This spiritual sight is not treated as less urgent or less effective. The reader needs the reality signified by the earlier figure even more than the Israelites needed its visible sign. The change from serpent to the serpent's slayer also matters: Christ fulfills the saving figure while defeating the evil associated with the serpent. The image joins typology to the meditation's practical summons to attend to the Cross.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.57** The visible serpent is compared with the soul's apprehension of Christ crucified. (Edition p. 35.)

In this edition. The 2026 note links Numbers 21:8–9, John 3:14, and Genesis 3:15. "Brazen" here does not mean shameless or impudent.

55 Primary text: I.57; scriptural identifications: 2026 edition note to I.57.

See also. Christ; Cross; Image; Scripture.

Bread

bread; bread and water; ordinary sustenance[56]

The word. Bread is ordinary sustaining food. Its familiarity makes it useful in arguments about both indispensable created goods and the simplicity of a chosen life.

In Traherne. Without the sun there would be no bread, along with no fruit, gardens, warmth, or life. The ordinary loaf therefore contains services that a narrow act of consumption can overlook. In the account of study, bread and water name a modest provision acceptable to the speaker if it leaves time free for the inquiry into felicity. The ideal is not deprivation for its own sake: he contrasts sufficient simple food with the burden of maintaining a large estate. Bread belongs to the gifts that are genuinely needed, but the convention that equates wealth with elaborate consumption is denied.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.46** Imagining the absence of the sun reveals its indispensable service in the production of bread. (Edition p. 28.)
- **III.46** Bread and water are accepted as sufficient provision for a life devoted to study. (Edition p. 160.)

In this edition. The listed food at III.46 is a declared preference in a narrated choice, not evidence by itself of the speaker's diet throughout his life. The cited passages are not Eucharistic expositions.

See also. Food; Sun; Poverty; Study.

56 Primary text: I.46, III.46. The two references show ordinary nourishment and chosen sufficiency rather than a single sacramental meaning.

Breath

breath; breathe; breathings; inspire[57]

The word. Breath is the movement of air sustaining bodily life. Figuratively it carries the senses of spiritual animation and an inward affection becoming outward expression.

In Traherne. The account of air begins with breathing as an unpriced daily benefit. Later, the comparison between inhalation and exhalation explains praise: no one can return more praise than the benefits received and understood. Breath thus makes dependence compatible with active return. The prayer for the Holy Spirit asks Christ to breathe upon and inspire the soul, so that praises overflow from renewed life. Praises themselves are called the breathings of interior love. The pattern is not mechanical. Understanding and affection transform what is received; they do not merely expel a quantity equal to an intake.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.21** Breathing exemplifies air's intimate and indispensable service. (Edition p. 14.)
- **I.95** The prayer asks for spiritual breathing, inspiration, and enlivening. (Edition p. 61.)
- **II.94** Breathing supplies an analogy for benefits received and returned in praise. (Edition p. 121.)
- **III.82** Praises are the breathings of interior love. (Edition p. 186.)

In this edition. "Inspire" in the prayer carries the breathing image together with divine animation. The physiology and the spiritual figure remain distinguishable even as Traherne joins them.

See also. Air; Holy Spirit; Praise; Return.

57 Primary text: I.21, I.95, II.94, III.82. II.94 states the analogy explicitly, while I.95 and III.82 supply its devotional extension.

Bride and bridegroom

bride; bridegroom; spouse; beloved companion[58]

The word. Bride and bridegroom are the partners in marriage. In devotional language their relation expresses intimate belonging, delighted companionship, and the generosity of a shared life.

In Traherne. Traherne can call the individual soul God's bride and the Church Christ's glorious bride. These are related perspectives, not mutually exclusive identifications. The world is a token of love whose recipient is heir, child, and bride at once; each image discloses a different dimension of the gift. The monarch's bride in her chamber supplies an ordinary comparison, which the joy of inhabiting the Father's palace exceeds. Bridal intimacy also develops an ethical demand. The redeemed community is united by Christ's blood, and the speaker asks for love toward all its members to become as pure and regulated as His. At the end of the surviving Fifth Century, the omnipresent bridegroom is also king and defender: nearness and sovereign care coincide.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.16** Heir, child, and bride name complementary aspects of the recipient's relation to God. (Edition p. 11.)
- **I.28** The joy of a monarch's bride is surpassed by right enjoyment of the created world. (Edition p. 18.)
- **I.79** The Church as Christ's bride prompts a prayer for rightly ordered universal love. (Edition p. 49.)
- **V.10** The everywhere-present bridegroom governs and protects the beloved. (Edition p. 272.)

In this edition. The bridal figure is applied to the soul and the corporate Church. It is not restricted by the sex of an individual reader, nor does each occurrence describe a literal marriage.

See also. Marriage; Church; Love; Communion; Christ.

58 Primary text: I.16, I.28, I.79, V.10. The references distinguish individual, communal, comparative, and divine-protective uses of the marriage figure.

Brightness

brightness; bright; shining; radiance[59]

The word. Brightness is manifested light or lustre. Its transferred use suggests excellence made perceptible, especially the luminosity of wisdom, goodness, or a life that reflects them.

In Traherne. The world's brightness can paradoxically escape attention through its very greatness. The remedy is opened sight rather than a brighter object. Christ is addressed as the brightness of eternal goodness, while the speaker asks to become a mirror of that brightness. Reflection is active transformation: the mind is to receive the love it sees and reproduce its character. II.84 gives a more exact intellectual gloss by naming divine brightness the light of eternal wisdom. The vocabulary therefore connects visible radiance with intelligibility and exemplary life. It does not merely add splendour to things already known; it asks how excellence becomes present and recognized.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.37** Worldly brightness is overlooked because its magnitude seems impossible to enjoy. (Edition p. 22.)
- **I.87** The speaker asks to become a mirror of Christ's brightness. (Edition p. 55.)
- **II.84** Divine brightness is identified with the light of eternal wisdom. (Edition p. 114.)

In this edition. Brightness may be optical, intellectual, or revelatory. The light of wisdom in II.84 is not a claim about physical illumination.

See also. Light; Lustre; Mirror; Wisdom.

Brotherhood

brother; brothers and sisters; brother of Christ[60]

The word. Brotherhood is the relation of shared kinship, here extended into spiritual and universal human fellowship. The primary text

59 Primary text: I.37, I.87, II.84. II.84 supplies the explicit intellectual interpretation of the brightness figure.

60 Primary text: II.50, IV.22, IV.58. IV.22 provides the inclusive familial phrase and the practical example of hospitality.

includes both brotherhood with Christ and the mutual relation of people throughout the world.

In Traherne. To be Christ's brother belongs among the soul's great dignities. Its consequence is not an isolated superior status but a duty to recognize others as equally worthy of love. The house of Paradise is open because all people are brothers and sisters, including a stranger not previously seen. In IV.58 the reasoning becomes a severe test of material conduct: love of God cannot be separated from willingness to help the brother who represents Him. Spiritual kinship consequently takes form in hospitality and costly assistance. It does not wait for biological relation, familiar company, or evidence that the other person will repay the gift.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.50** Brotherhood with Christ is included among human spiritual dignities. (Edition p. 95.)
- **IV.22** Paradisal charity makes strangers brothers and sisters welcome in one's house. (Edition p. 213.)
- **IV.58** Love of a brother representing God demands practical help and potentially costly sacrifice. (Edition p. 233.)

In this edition. "Brotherhood" is a collective heading; Traherne explicitly includes "brothers and sisters." The usage should not be narrowed to a male society or literal siblings.

See also. Person; Charity; Society; Christ.

Business

business; occupation; distracting concern[61]

The word. Business is an affair that occupies attention. It need not mean trade, a company, or an economic enterprise.

In Traherne. The single concentrated use at II.89 is deliberately diminutive: a little trifling business can absorb the person whom the whole world waits upon. Against the claim that the soul should sustain the beauty of its objects within, ordinary distraction exposes the gap between present weakness and perfected attention. Traherne also calls God's tolerance of such interruptions a mercy. The meditation therefore

61 Primary text: II.89. II.89 is the explicit occurrence and controls this short article's scope.

combines a high ideal with acknowledgment of the unsettled conditions of earthly life. It does not establish that every practical occupation is trivial; its point is the disproportion between an absorbing concern and the neglected inheritance.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.89** Trifling business distracts the soul while divine mercy tolerates its interrupted attention. (Edition p. 118.)

In this edition. The older broad sense of an occupying affair is required. Reading "business" exclusively as commercial employment gives the criticism an unwarranted narrow target.

See also. Consideration; Care; Work; Contemplation.

Cabinet

cabinet; curious cabinet; repository of treasures[62]

The word. A cabinet is a small repository or collection of precious or curious things. Its scale and enclosed contents make it a natural image for stored and discoverable treasure.

In Traherne. The youthful seeker examines a curious cabinet in hope that happiness lies within it, then rejects it when its contents fail to answer his desire. In the Fifth Century, infinite extent itself becomes a cabinet equal in value and beauty to its treasures. The change is instructive: the finite collection's promise is fulfilled at a scale that cannot be exhausted by looking to the bottom. The metaphor preserves the intimacy of possession while removing confinement. Infinity is not merely an empty box for valuable objects; its own perfection is part of the treasure.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.25** The seeker searches a curious cabinet but does not find his desired happiness there. (Edition p. 146.)
- **V.3** Infinite divine extent is a cabinet equal in excellence to the treasures it contains. (Edition p. 266.)

62 Primary text: III.25, V.3. The two occurrences contrast an exhaustible collection with an inexhaustible field of enjoyment.

In this edition. "Cabinet" does not mean a governing ministry in these places. The image concerns a repository, with "curious" suggesting remarkable or skilfully made contents.

See also. Treasure; Room; Infinity; Desire.

Capacity

capacity; capable; power to receive; potentiality[63]

The word. Capacity is room or ability to receive and contain. Applied to the soul it also means a power that can be exercised but is not yet fulfilled in act. These spatial and dynamic senses cooperate throughout the Centuries.

In Traherne. The empty book establishes the first sense immediately: an infant soul is capable of all things without already containing them. The comparison distinguishes openness from accomplished knowledge. Later, sonship is given in capacity through the power to know, love, and prize as God does; the Holy Spirit makes that sonship actual through righteous and holy exercise. An endowment does not automatically produce the life for which it was given.

The language becomes deliberately immense when the understanding contains room for infinite blessedness. Traherne does not mean that the body occupies infinite physical volume. The mind can make things intellectually present, receive their relations, and extend love beyond its local position. Capacity is the condition of a happiness whose objects exceed finite consumption. Yet empty extension alone is not perfection. It needs the objects, apprehensions, affections, and activities through which the soul becomes richly alive.

V.4 applies the receptive sense to the field of divine operation. Infinite power must have an adequate capacity answering it; even nothing, understood as the privation of possible perfections, can be spoken of as capable of all in relation to omnipotence. The claim belongs to Traherne's speculative account of creation. It should not be detached from that argument and converted into a literal picture of a material container existing independently of God.

63 Primary text: I.1, I.99, II.82, IV.3, V.4. The human capacity–act distinction is explicit in I.99 and IV.3; V.4 applies capacity in a different, cosmic argument.

Potentiality and education

The distinction helps reconcile the book's two apparently opposed accounts of childhood. The infant is empty enough to receive an education and already gifted with a clear manner of apprehension. Neither description is a complete inventory of conscious knowledge. Early openness can be spoiled by custom; it can also be guided into understanding. Maturity should not suppress receptive wonder but give its powers their proper objects and sustained exercise. The fulfilled capacity is therefore richer than either untouched emptiness or a store of facts learned without enjoyment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.1** The blank book and infant soul are capable of receiving without yet containing. (Edition p. 4.)
- **I.99** Potential sonship becomes actual through the Spirit and righteous valuation. (Edition p. 64.)
- **II.82** Infinite space in understanding establishes the capacity for infinite blessedness. (Edition p. 113.)
- **IV.3** The contrast between capacity and act is applied to human philosophical and Christian maturity. (Edition p. 199.)
- **V.4** Infinite capacity answers divine power and provides room for bounty. (Edition p. 267.)

In this edition. "In capacity" generally means potentially, not in the modern administrative sense of holding an office. "Capable of all" describes receptivity; it does not assert that an infant already consciously knows every fact.

See also. Action and activity; Soul; Room; Infinity; Power; Heir and inheritance.

Carcase and eagles

carcase; eagles[64]

The word. Carcase is the older spelling of carcass, a dead body. Traherne's eagles gathering around it belong to a scriptural image that he applies to Christ's death and the saints' attraction to Him.

64 Primary text: I.56–57; interpretive history: 2026 edition note to I.56.

In Traherne. The disturbing physical picture becomes a lesson in contemplative movement. The reader travels toward the crucified body by thought, affection, and meditation rather than by walking. The following passage places the eagles among other examples of spontaneous attraction, showing how love draws without a visible chain. This does not make the Passion a mere spectacle: gathering means bringing the powers of the soul into sustained relation to Christ. The bleakness of the noun remains important because divine attraction is discovered precisely in the despised and wounded body.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.56** The scriptural saying follows the summons to make journeys of the soul toward the Cross. (Edition p. 34.)
- **I.57** Eagles open the series of creatures and persons freely drawn toward an object. (Edition p. 35.)

In this edition. The 2026 note identifies Matthew 24:28 and an older Christian interpretation. Keep Traherne's "eagles"; silently substituting another bird obscures his received wording.

See also. Attraction and loadstone; Cross; Meditation; Sacrifice.

Care

care; careful regard; solicitude; watchfulness[65]

The word. Care may be attentive concern for another's good or the anxious burden of maintaining one's own affairs. Traherne's praise and criticism of care depend on this difference.

In Traherne. The sun's complex services manifest the Creator's care, and the last meditation presents divine care as everywhere active. Concern is part of goodness, not a defect overcome by indifference. The account of choosing study over a great estate, however, treats care as time-consuming solicitude. Freedom from that burden permits attention to goods that anxiety would obscure. These claims need not imply that material needs are imaginary or that ordinary provision is wrong. IV.23 acknowledges toil and the risk of want in a fallen world, while seeking a

65 Primary text: II.8, III.46, IV.23, V.10. The citations distinguish benevolent attention from anxious solicitude rather than assigning one moral value to every use.

foundation deeper than uncertain human generosity. True care sustains life and love; disordered care consumes the life it means to secure.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.8** The sun's coordinated services display divine power and care. (Edition p. 70.)
- **III.46** A modest provision is preferred to an estate that would devour time in care and labour. (Edition p. 160.)
- **IV.23** Fallen conditions involve real labour, care, and risk of want. (Edition p. 213.)
- **V.10** Divine care is everywhere operative in the completion of creaturely bliss. (Edition p. 272.)

In this edition. "Without any care at all" in the narrative of III.46 should not be expanded into a claim that the speaker never attended responsibly to anything. The contrast there concerns burdensome provision and study.

See also. Providence; Labour; Trust; Study; Fear.

Cato

Cato[66]

The word. Cato here names the authority attached to the Distichs of Cato, a collection of Latin moral verses. It should not confidently be identified with either famous Roman statesman.

In Traherne. Traherne associates Cato with Plato and the Apostle as witnesses to the understanding of God as mind. He then supplies a Latin verse about worship with a pure mind and an expanded English rendering. Its place in the meditation matters: the human soul becomes like God by bringing its capacity for knowledge into activity and receiving the world's objects within itself. Worship accordingly requires an inward likeness and union, not merely an external gesture. The schoolroom moral authority is incorporated into this larger account of the soul's perfection, rather than presented as an independent theological system.

66 Primary text: II.84. Supplied 2026 editorial notes 150–151 identify the Cato attribution, Distichs I.1, school use, and relation of the Latin and English passages.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.84** The named Cato and the following verse support worship through likeness to the divine mind. (Edition p. 114.)

In this edition. The supplied note identifies a shortened quotation from Distichs I.1, traditionally ascribed to Dionysius Cato and used in Latin schooling.

See also. Mind; Spirit; Worship; Plato.

Cause

cause; causes; because; explanatory ground[67]

The word. A cause is what accounts for a thing's existence, character, or occurrence. In Traherne's ethical reasoning "causes" can also mean intelligible grounds for valuing and loving something.

In Traherne. To know why God fitted a faculty to an object is to perceive more than an isolated power. The inquiry into human nature therefore asks about the causes and fitness of wants, inclinations, and ends, then passes naturally into knowledge of divine goodness. Love too should act on clear causes, not blind propensity. Explanation and valuation are closely joined: discerning why a thing serves a worthy purpose makes it more fully enjoyable. At the broadest scale, eternity is called cause and end, author and perfection of all. That compressed formulation belongs to an account of the conditions within which finite duration is possible, not a list of ordinary events preceding other events.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.69** Rational love proceeds on clear causes toward divine ends. (Edition p. 105.)
- **III.42** Humanity investigates the causes and fitness of faculties and their objects. (Edition p. 157.)
- **V.7** Eternity is described as cause and end in relation to finite duration. (Edition p. 269.)

In this edition. A printed "because" is not itself evidence for a separate philosophical doctrine of causation. The selected places contain substantive explanatory claims.

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67 Primary text: II.69, III.42, V.7. The article distinguishes grounds of rational love from the metaphysical formulation in V.7.

See also. Reason; End and means; Wisdom; Principle.

Centre and circumference

centre; centres; circumference; middle; point[68]

The word. The centre is the middle point toward which distances or movements can be related; a circumference is the enclosing boundary of a circle. Traherne transfers these geometrical terms into accounts of attraction, inwardness, and infinite presence.

In Traherne. The centre of the earth first illustrates an unseen power of attraction. The Cross then becomes a centre toward which thought and desire move, gathering remote nations and times into one intelligible object. A different use appears when the world, enormous to the body, is called a little centre beside the soul's reach. Smallness of location does not imply poverty of inward content.

In the later meditations, divine omnipresence is whole in every centre, and every person is said to be alone the centre and circumference of infinite extent. This is not a geographical assertion that each body occupies the same privileged coordinate. It describes the inseparability of encompassing presence and individual reception. Every enjoyer finds himself surrounded, while understanding can embrace what surrounds him. Geometry becomes a language for a relation that ordinary bounded figures cannot finally contain.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.2** The unseen earthly centre exemplifies attraction before clear knowledge. (Edition p. 4.)
- **I.19** The world is a little centre when measured against the soul's intellectual reach. (Edition p. 12.)
- **I.56** The Cross draws nations and thoughts as a centre draws heavy things. (Edition p. 34.)
- **II.82** Divine omnipresence is wholly in every centre. (Edition p. 113.)
- **V.3** Each enjoyer is called the centre and circumference of infinite extent. (Edition p. 266.)

68 Primary text: I.2, I.19, I.56, II.82, V.3. The places trace several related uses without treating all centres as one technical object.

In this edition. "Centre" need not mark physical location in each occurrence. The compound claim in V.3 deliberately exceeds the ordinary geometry whose terms it borrows.

See also. Space; Omnipresence; Attraction and loadstone; Cross; Infinity.

Change

change; changed; changeable; transformation[69]

The word. Change is becoming otherwise, whether in location, judgment, conduct, or condition. Traherne distinguishes movement to a different place from the inward transformation necessary for happiness.

In Traherne. Heaven cannot be established by relocating a body while leaving its principles unaltered. An angel can be happy anywhere and a devil miserable because their ways of apprehending and willing differ. Human changeability, however, is not simply a flaw. A creature able to choose can participate freely in a divine likeness, whereas a fixed nature would lack that dignity of self-direction. The history of childhood provides the darker possibility: an original clarity is eclipsed through education and example. Transformation must therefore be assessed by its direction. The important question is not whether one's condition has become novel, but whether one's powers are being exercised toward their true objects.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.7** The child's early clarity is changed by the repeated influence of custom and example. (Edition p. 134.)
- **IV.37** Heaven is established through practised principles rather than change of place. (Edition p. 220.)
- **IV.79** The changeable human estate permits a choice toward union with God. (Edition p. 249.)

In this edition. "Change of place" is expressly distinguished from spiritual amendment. "Changeable" in IV.79 concerns the freedom to shape a life, not merely emotional instability.

See also. Choice; Conversion; Principle; Freedom.

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69 Primary text: III.7, IV.37, IV.79. IV.37 and IV.79 assign different values to spatial alteration and free transformability.

Charity

charity; universal charity; charities; loving service[70]

The word. Charity is Christian love directed toward the good of others. It includes almsgiving but is not confined to charitable donations or organized relief.

In Traherne. The fruits of true riches include charity because undiminished gifts permit people to delight in one another's happiness. In the Fourth Century, the house of Paradise gives this principle a practical form: a stranger is welcomed as one of a worldwide family, with knowledge and grace among the goods that may be shared. The account does not assume that everyone already behaves in this way. Barren hearts and the risk of want make dependence on human generosity uncertain. Charity is therefore both a social vision and a virtue exercised amid contrary conditions.

Its demand intensifies after the Fall. People who are worse are more to be pitied and tenderly desired, although better people afford greater delight. Traherne distinguishes benevolence from approving a person's faults. Christ's death for the unworthy binds the reader to greater charity, and the possibility of costly help tests whether universal language has become action.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.35** Charity grows from the enjoyment of common gifts and others' happiness. (Edition p. 21.)
- **IV.22** The house of Paradise practices universal hospitality and spiritual giving. (Edition p. 213.)
- **IV.23** The failure of human charity exposes dependence on divine provision. (Edition p. 213.)
- **IV.26** Greater need calls for greater pity without making vice more delightful. (Edition p. 215.)
- **IV.58** Charity is tested by willingness to help a brother at personal cost. (Edition p. 233.)

In this edition. "Particular charities" elsewhere can mean particular acts of assistance; "charity of Paradise" describes a comprehensive

70 Primary text: I.35, IV.22, IV.23, IV.26, IV.58. IV.26 expressly distinguishes the person's need of love from the greater delight afforded by goodness.

manner of love. The broader sense should not be reduced to money-giving.

See also. Love; Brotherhood; Compassion; Service; Person.

Charles I

King Charles the Martyr; Charles; king[71]

The word. The king named in I.61 is Charles I, executed at Whitehall on 30 January 1649. The title Martyr is Traherne's Royalist and Church of England designation. It records a confessional judgment about the king's suffering rather than an uncontested historical description.

In Traherne. Charles appears as a pupil of the crucified Christ. The meditation begins with a catalogue of virtues learned at the Cross: patience, meekness, self-denial, courage, prudence, charity, perseverance, and thanksgiving, among others. These are needed by a human being, a Christian, and a king alike. Royal office is thus brought within a common moral school, whose teacher is the apparently powerless man bleeding before the reader.

The king's example is paired with Paul's. Christ teaches Charles and also teaches the converted apostle activity and zeal toward all nations. Their juxtaposition joins endurance in suffering to energetic service; contemplation of the Cross is meant to form conduct. The paragraph ends by directing the reader to imitate Jesus in love toward everyone.

This brief reference gives the devotional passage a concrete political and ecclesial location. Traherne's admiration belongs within his interpretation of Christian kingship and suffering. The entry need not turn that single sentence into a comprehensive political programme, nor treat the label martyr as a neutral verdict on the causes or justice of Charles's execution.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.61** Names Charles as Christ's pupil within a catalogue of virtues, then pairs him with Paul and directs the reader toward universal love. (Edition p. 37.)

71 Primary text: I.61. Supplied 2026 editorial note 53 provides the identification, execution date, royalist devotional context, and Church of England commemoration.

In this edition. The 2026 note supplies the execution date and the Church of England's commemorative context. It also names the royalist Eikon Basilike as a contemporary presentation of the king's patience through imitation of Christ; it does not establish Traherne's direct borrowing from that work.

See also. King and kingdom; Cross; Patience; Example; Meekness.

Cherubim and seraphim

cherubims; Seraphim; seraphic[72]

The word. Cherubim and seraphim are angelic names. Seraphic means resembling the seraphim; the supplied note associates their burning imagery with ardent love of God.

In Traherne. In the childhood vision, aged people appear as immortal cherubim and young women as seraphic forms of life and beauty. The names intensify human dignity as it first strikes the beholder. They do not supply a systematic classification of those people. In the meditation on love, becoming an enlarged seraphim describes another possibility: the soul can extend loving attention beyond the body's confinement. The command follows the image of Christ baptizing with fire. Angelic language therefore links the wonder of seeing others with the active aspiration to become a blessing to them.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.3** Angelic names express the child's wonder at the beauty and dignity of people. (Edition p. 129.)
- **II.51** The enlarged seraphim figures love extending to all objects and benefiting others. (Edition p. 96.)

In this edition. Traherne adds an English plural ending in cherubims and uses the Hebrew plural Seraphim as a singular.

See also. Angels; Fire; Child and childhood; Love.

72 Primary text: II.51, III.3. Supplied 2026 editorial note 126 at II.51 supplies the seraphim's burning imagery, biblical association, and singular use of a Hebrew plural.

Child and childhood

child; children; childhood; little child; infant-like[73]

The word. Childhood is the beginning of embodied and social life, but also a figure for a receptive, uncorrupted manner of seeing. Becoming a little child is a spiritual reorientation rather than a wish to remain developmentally immature.

In Traherne. The Third Century's remembered child receives the world before learning the conventions that divide its riches into jealous possessions. Corn, trees, streets, people, and daylight appear fresh, enduring, and personally given. The narrative attributes extraordinary value to that apprehension without saying the child possessed a mature explanation of everything. Indeed, not knowing about death, quarrels, or exactions helps produce the apparent peace of Eden. Traherne's mature understanding knows more about human misery than the child's first vision could contain.

Childhood is also vulnerable. The power to learn can transmit false valuation as readily as truth. Adults repeatedly talk about trifles and fail to name common gifts; the child's desire to please them then helps extinguish the original clarity. In this account education is not an optional layer added to a self-contained innocent mind. Other people's thoughts become the environment in which the child perceives.

The return to childhood is consequently selective and demanding. III.5 refuses to define it merely as simple passions or careless reliance on providence. Evil habits, false colours, and prejudicial customs must be removed so that the objects themselves can be seen. Recovery is achieved through mature judgment, not through erasing acquired knowledge. The child becomes a teacher of wonder, while reason supplies the discrimination needed to keep that wonder truthful.

Preparing senses as well as objects

The practical consequence appears in the injunction to parents and nurses to magnify what is genuinely great. A stock of possessions cannot by itself teach enjoyment. Children need a language of value that agrees

73 Primary text: I.1, III.2, III.3, III.5, III.8. Additional primary educational counsel appears in III.11; it supports the discussion of parents' responsibility rather than a claim about modern developmental psychology.

with the things before them: the sun's glory, the person's dignity, and the world's availability. The same requirement governs the adult reader of the Centuries. A book can put objects before the mind, but it must also help prepare the light and faculties through which they become visible as goods. Childhood is thus a continuing problem for education, not merely a lost episode to lament.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.1** The infant soul's receptivity is compared with a book not yet filled. (Edition p. 4.)
- **III.2** Early delight is connected with ignorance of sin, sickness, death, and conflict. (Edition p. 128.)
- **III.3** The vivid catalogue of childhood perception leads to the wish to become a child again. (Edition p. 129.)
- **III.5** Childlike purity is defined as freedom from acquired false colours and habits. (Edition p. 132.)
- **III.8** Social examples are treated as a principal means of corrupting originally teachable nature. (Edition p. 134.)

In this edition. The autobiographical "I" offers remembered and interpreted experience, not a universal empirical report about every infant. Its language of Eden does not remove III.8's explicit connection of corruption with Adam.

See also. Infancy; Birth; Education; Innocence; Custom; Apprehension.

Choice

choice; choose; chose; free determination[74]

The word. Choice is the determination of a willing agent among possible courses or objects. It gives direction to powers whose mere possession does not guarantee a good life.

In Traherne. The world's disorders arise partly from a mistake in the choice of riches: scarce inventions are selected instead of freely available gifts. The narrative of study then supplies a concrete counter-choice, preferring a modest income with time for inquiry over an estate requiring

74 Primary text: I.33, III.46, IV.42, V.8. The places distinguish mistaken selection, a narrated practical decision, free agency, and divine determination.

consuming labour. More fundamentally, God makes people free agents for their own dignity, though this entrusts them with the ability to do what He hates. Choice matters because a freely performed duty can become the person's own glorious action. The divine choice mentioned in the meditation on eternity belongs to a different level: it stands eternally before God rather than occurring as human deliberation passes from uncertainty to a later decision.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.33** Mistaken choice of riches generates social and moral disorder. (Edition p. 20.)
- **III.46** A chosen life of study is preferred to the burdens of a large estate. (Edition p. 160.)
- **IV.42** Free agency is granted for creaturely dignity despite its possibility of evil. (Edition p. 222.)
- **V.8** Divine choice and determination are eternally present within the account of eternity. (Edition p. 270.)

In this edition. Do not treat every "choice" as a contest between commercial options, or divine choice as simply an enlarged human sequence of deliberation.

See also. Freedom; Will; Value; Duty; Providence.

Christ

Christ; Jesus; Lord Jesus; Saviour; Son of God; Redeemer[75]

The word. Christ names Jesus as the divinely appointed Saviour. Traherne's usual devotional titles stress His sonship, redemptive action, creative goodness, and relation to the person who addresses Him.

In Traherne. Christ joins the book's account of creation to its account of redemption. The end of being redeemed is communion in divine glory, not simply escape from punishment. The Saviour made the gifts before restoring their enjoyment; addressing the crucified Jesus as the giver of creatures reveals creation and redemption as works of the

75 Primary text: I.5, I.61, I.64, I.76, II.33. The account of voluntary redemptive suffering follows the express theological argument of II.33, including its distinction from an unwilling victim.

same love. This continuity prevents the natural world from becoming an insignificant prelude to a wholly unrelated salvation.

Yet restoration does not mean sin has made no difference. Heaven and earth are more valuable to the redeemed speaker because their enjoyment has been bought at such a cost. The gift includes renewed friendship with God, the love of people and angels, obedience to holy laws, and above all restoration to the divine image. Christ's love therefore becomes a rule of action. The command to love one another is renewed among sinners under fresh obligations, and the Cross teaches the virtues required in ordinary and public life.

The Second Century also insists on Christ's unique fitness to redeem. The suffering office is too great for angels and is undertaken by the Son willingly. Traherne's defence of its justice stresses willingness, ability, and the exaltation of the sufferer. The argument is explicitly theological; it should not be reduced to an interchangeable example of noble generosity. The one who supplies the pattern of human love is, in the text's confession, also the divine agent of salvation.

An example that gives what it teaches

Christ is not merely an admired model placed before an otherwise self-sufficient observer. His act restores the observer to the very relations in which imitation becomes possible. The reader learns to love people whom the Saviour has already loved and redeemed, and to enjoy a world already prepared and restored. This order matters: moral resemblance is the response to received love, while prayer asks for the power to make that response real. Creation, redemption, example, and inward enabling converge without becoming identical actions. The teacher's lesson is thus inseparable from the gift that establishes the pupil's life.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.5** The end of redemption is communion with God in eternal glory. (Edition p. 6.)
- **I.61** The Cross teaches a comprehensive range of virtues and active love. (Edition p. 37.)
- **I.64** Jesus is praised for creating the gifts before redeeming the enjoyer. (Edition p. 39.)
- **I.76** Redemption restores friendship, inheritance, divine likeness, and a renewed command of love. (Edition p. 48.)

- **II.33** The Son's unique redemptive office is explained through willing and capable self-offering. (Edition p. 86.)

In this edition. First-person prayers address Christ directly, while other passages teach about Him. Preserve these changes of address: a doctrinal paraphrase alone loses the exchange of love that the prayers enact.

See also. Cross; Redemption; Incarnation; Trinity; Creation; Love.

Christian

Christian; Christians; perfect and imperfect Christians[76]

The word. A Christian is a person related to Christ in faith and life. Traherne examines the term through degrees of maturity, treating its perfection as a love of wisdom rather than a merely nominal status.

In Traherne. The Fourth Century joins Christian, philosopher, and divine in one ideal of cultivated humanity. A mature Christian cannot be content with ignorance because loving Christ entails loving wisdom. Traherne allows imperfection and inexperience while insisting that defects do not constitute the positive character of Christian life. He also challenges the deferral of all happiness to another life. Communion with God is offered now, and the desire for its completion should stimulate present inquiry and practice. The polemic is directed inward as well as outward: the supposedly civilized Christian world can be judged more barbarous than societies it despises when it mistakes invented wealth for true riches.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.12** The Christian world is criticized for its corrupt scale of possessions and value. (Edition p. 137.)
- **IV.3** Christian, philosopher, and divine are joined in the ideal of developed humanity. (Edition p. 199.)
- **IV.5** Christian maturity is defined through the pursuit of wisdom rather than complacent ignorance. (Edition p. 201.)
- **IV.9** Deferring felicity is challenged as inconsistent with present love and desire. (Edition p. 204.)

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76 Primary text: III.12, IV.3, IV.5, IV.9. The entry follows the attested personal noun; "Christianity" is an access alias rather than a separately attested abstract headword.

In this edition. "Perfect Christian" denotes an ideal and degree of maturity within the argument. It should not be mistaken for a report that every professing Christian already possesses such wisdom.

See also. Christ; Philosophy; Divinity; Knowledge; Felicity.

Church

Church; churches; Holy Catholic Church; Church militant[77]

The word. Church may name a building, the community of Christian believers, or the whole redeemed society across earthly and heavenly life. The sense must be determined before interpreting the image attached to it.

In Traherne. The child who does not understand churches sees little more than alien surroundings among a world of forgotten gifts. The adult contemplative, by contrast, participates in the worship of the Church militant and the saints triumphant. Corporate devotion enlarges private enjoyment rather than replacing it. Christ's bride is the Holy Catholic Church, whose members are united by the blood of the Cross and ought to receive a correspondingly universal love. Divinity includes the Church's history, government, and succession among its subjects, but the climactic account emphasizes its fullness in Christ. Institutions, buildings, and the society of persons are connected without being interchangeable.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.54** Earthly and heavenly worship become present to the enlarged soul. (Edition p. 33.)
- **I.79** The Holy Catholic Church is Christ's bride, united by His blood. (Edition p. 49.)
- **III.14** Church buildings remain unintelligible in the speaker's period of spiritual estrangement. (Edition p. 138.)
- **III.43** Church history and government belong to the study of the estate of grace. (Edition p. 158.)
- **IV.100** The Church is called the fullness of the one who fills all in all. (Edition p. 263.)

77 Primary text: I.54, I.79, III.14, III.43, IV.100. The places distinguish architectural, corporate, historical, and eschatological uses.

In this edition. "Catholic" in the phrase "Holy Catholic Church" has a universal ecclesial sense and should not alone be used to assign the passage to a modern denominational category. "Militant" denotes the earthly community's struggle.

See also. Communion; Saint; Bride and bridegroom; Temple; Christ.

City

city; cities; gates; streets; civic habitation[78]

The word. A city is an inhabited civic place, with streets, houses, gates, and public life. In the Centuries it can be a concrete remembered environment, a distant source of assurance, or part of an intellectual prospect.

In Traherne. The city of childhood seems built in Heaven because ordinary civic features are received as gifts. Gates first appear to be the world's limit, then open onto the surprising glory of trees. That local experience does not remain a closed enclosure. In the later scene of fear in an empty field, the unseen presence of cities and kingdoms helps restore the sense of a populated and providentially sustained world. The contemplative traveller likewise seeks flourishing cities as an analogy for finding abundant objects of knowledge and delight. Cities are therefore neither merely corrupt markets nor merely heavenly emblems; their meaning depends on the life and relations apprehended within them.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.3** Gates, streets, people, and the temple form the remembered city's Edenic appearance. (Edition p. 129.)
- **III.23** Unseen cities and kingdoms counter the child's terror of isolation. (Edition p. 144.)
- **III.52** A traveller's choice of flourishing cities illustrates the search for fruitful intellectual objects. (Edition p. 164.)

In this edition. The primary childhood passage says "the city" without naming it. Identifying the historical city requires biographical evidence outside this meditation and is not necessary to its lexical meaning.

78 Primary text: III.3, III.23, III.52. No geographical name has been supplied where the cited primary text leaves the city unnamed.

See also. Country; Society; World; Child and childhood.

Clothing

clothed; clothes; clothing; disrobe; unclothe[79]

The word. Clothing is bodily covering and adornment. Its figurative forms can describe either the honours that invest the soul or habits that conceal its clear perception.

In Traherne. To be clothed with the heavens is to receive cosmic glory as intimately as one's own dress. Conversely, becoming a child requires disrobing false colours and unclothing evil habits. The metaphor has no fixed moral direction: what is put on matters. A preference for leather clothes in the narrative of study expresses sufficient provision rather than fashionable display. Later the soul is to clothe itself with patience, faith, and courage, ornaments exceeding money and precious metal. Traherne thus turns a familiar marker of social distinction into a test of worth. True clothing enables or expresses life; false adornment substitutes an acquired appearance for the riches of the person.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.29** The heavens become the enjoyer's figurative clothing. (Edition p. 18.)
- **III.5** False colours and evil habits must be stripped from the soul. (Edition p. 132.)
- **III.46** Leather clothes figure a modest sufficiency that preserves time for study. (Edition p. 160.)
- **IV.89** Patience, faith, and courage are ornaments more precious than money. (Edition p. 256.)

In this edition. "Habit" can suggest both settled disposition and clothing, but this article does not assume a pun in every occurrence. The explicit disrobing and clothing verbs carry the transfer.

See also. Ornament; Nakedness; Habit; Virtue.

79 Primary text: I.29, III.5, III.46, IV.89. The selected passages demonstrate positive and negative investments rather than an indiscriminate rejection of dress.

Clue

clue of Nature[80]

The word. A clue is originally a ball of thread; it can therefore be a guiding thread through a labyrinth. The modern sense of evidence for solving a puzzle retains only part of this image.

In Traherne. When the speaker recognizes his own delight in creation within David's psalms, nature proves to have guided him into celestial joy. The labyrinth is not simply a trap from which he must escape. Its inward destination is a discovery that natural apprehension and scriptural praise have been led by one Spirit. The thread image makes continuity visible: an apparently private experience is connected to an inherited devotional language. Following it requires attentive contemplation, not the collection of disconnected curiosities.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.70** The clue of Nature leads the speaker to the joys he recognizes in David. (Edition p. 178.)

In this edition. The 2026 note recalls the thread in the Cretan labyrinth. Theseus is explanatory background supplied by the editor, not a name used in this meditation.

See also. David; Nature; Scripture; Understanding.

Coin and money

money; penny; purse of gold; crown; farthing[81]

The word. Money is a conventional medium of exchange and a familiar measure of wealth. Individual coin names can also supply everyday scales by which Traherne challenges the adequacy of monetary valuation.

In Traherne. The child learns to prize a penny among objects that eclipse heaven and earth, while the mature speaker insists that the light making enjoyment possible cannot be bought. Money therefore exposes the gap between exchangeable goods and the faculties through which any

80 Primary text: III.70; historical image: 2026 edition note to III.70.

81 Primary text: III.6, III.10, IV.58, IV.89. IV.58 is an explicit hypothetical test of charity, not a narrated payment.

good is known. Yet its practical usefulness is not simply denied. The imagined single crown in IV.58 becomes the means of saving a brother, and its relinquishment can manifest a greater wealth of charity. The later warning places one virtue above a trunk of money while conceding that riches offered by God may be well used. The error is treating money as the supreme or sufficient measure of value.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.6** The illuminating gift could not be purchased even with all the world's precious metals. (Edition p. 133.)
- **III.10** A penny becomes a socially taught object of childish esteem. (Edition p. 136.)
- **IV.58** The last crown is imagined as an instrument of costly help to another. (Edition p. 233.)
- **IV.89** Virtue outranks money, though riches can be well used when given. (Edition p. 256.)

In this edition. "Crown" in IV.58 is a coin, not a royal headpiece. "Coin" is the collective access term for these specific monetary forms.

See also. Gold and silver; Value; Riches; Charity; Crown.

Colour

colour; colours; colors; false colours[82]

The word. Colour is visible hue and, by transfer, an appearance or expressive quality. Traherne uses painting language to connect outward visibility with the inward character it can reveal or disguise.

In Traherne. Beautiful bodies require a pleasing mixture of figures and colours. The same vocabulary supplies a compact account of the soul: affections are its colours. The metaphor makes feeling part of a knowable form rather than an invisible irrelevance. Colours can also falsify. The inherited assumptions stripped away in becoming childlike resemble a stain or jaundice that prevents seeing things truly. At the Cross, proper colours are disclosed through the blood of Christ: the value of the world is perceived through redemptive love. In the Fifth

82 Primary text: II.20, II.83, III.5, V.5. The Cross's proper-colour formulation also occurs at I.59; the four selected places emphasize distinct visual and inward functions.

Century's cosmic painting, divine beauty and power are the colours, so visible variety becomes the expression of creative perfection.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.20** Visible beauty is analysed as a pleasing variety of figures and colours. (Edition p. 75.)
- **II.83** Affections are the colours of the soul's developed form. (Edition p. 113.)
- **III.5** False colours and the image of jaundice explain distorted apprehension. (Edition p. 132.)
- **V.5** Beauty and power become the colours in the figure of divine painting. (Edition p. 268.)

In this edition. The supplied text uses both "colours" and "colors." Preserve the local spelling in quotation, while grouping the forms under one headword.

See also. Beauty; Picture; Affection; Sight; Limner and pencil.

Commandment

commandment; commandments; command; injunction of love[83]

The word. A commandment is a binding divine injunction. For Traherne its authority does not make it alien to happiness: the command directs the powers of the soul toward goods they were made to enjoy.

In Traherne. Loving God and all people reveals the created world as a field of mutual service. A command can therefore disclose the worth of its objects, not merely impose an obligation upon an otherwise neutral act. Christ renews the command of reciprocal love among sinners with new reasons for obedience supplied by His own love. The psalmic commandment is pure and enlightening, and its sweetness surpasses precious metal. In this account duty does not become optional because it is delightful. Rather, the delight properly belongs to a truthful recognition of what the injunction protects and makes available. Ignorance of commandments is consequently also ignorance of one's own glory.

83 Primary text: I.20, I.76, II.2, III.72. III.72 quotes and interprets a psalm; I.76 makes a direct Christological application.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.20** Divine laws apply the soul's powers to God, angels, and people as objects of love. (Edition p. 13.)
- **I.76** Christ renews mutual love under the obligations created by redemption. (Edition p. 48.)
- **II.2** Failure to understand commandments accompanies ignorance of human dignity. (Edition p. 66.)
- **III.72** The psalm's pure commandment enlightens and belongs among goods sweeter than wealth. (Edition p. 179.)

In this edition. The singular "commandment" may name a particular injunction or occur within a scriptural parallel for divine law. It should not be assumed to identify only the Decalogue.

See also. Law; Duty; Obedience; Love; Scripture.

Commodity

Commodity[84]

The word. Commodity here means advantage, benefit, or profit. The word does not chiefly denote a marketable article or raw material, though its economic associations remain suggestive.

In Traherne. Traherne pairs commodity with desire to explain why angels and human beings are drawn toward the saving spectacle of Christ. The language of force is deliberately paradoxical: what compels is a good freely recognized as desirable. The preceding examples range from sickness seeking a physician to stones moving at Amphion's music. Their shared structure is attraction toward benefit. This gives the devotion a practical intelligibility without reducing it to financial calculation: the profit at issue is entry into the life and joy disclosed by the Cross.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.57** Commodity and Desire name the inward attractions that draw without visible cords. (Edition p. 35.)

In this edition. The 2026 note supplies "advantage, profit." Reading a commercial object into the sentence mistakes the thing desired for the advantageousness that draws desire.

84 Primary text: I.57; historical gloss: 2026 edition note to I.57.

See also. Amphion; Attraction and loadstone; Benefit; Desire.

Common things

common; common things; obvious things; shared goods[85]

The word. Common things are widely available or shared and familiar. "Common" can also imply ordinary or undistinguished appearance; Traherne repeatedly challenges the move from availability to contempt.

In Traherne. Trust in infinite goodness leads the speaker to hypothesize that the best things should be most common. Air, water, light, persons, trees, and inhabited places can then be compared with rare jewels through their service, especially by imagining their removal. Commonness proves compatible with, and often indicative of, the greatest real value. The reversal is not simply a taste for rustic simplicity. Invisible goods can become common through memory and public esteem: laws, Christ's Passion, and the ways of God in past ages are available to many despite not being locally visible.

There is also an interpersonal reason to love common goods more. Their service to other people enriches them for the one who loves those people. Scarcity is no longer required to make possession delightful. Familiarity remains a danger, however: a continually present beautiful object can disappear from attention. The common gift must be repeatedly known and prized, not merely declared valuable once.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.3** The programme concerns things strange yet common and profitable yet unesteemed. (Edition p. 5.)
- **II.20** Constantly present beauty can become common and despised. (Edition p. 75.)
- **III.53** Common goods are selected for study and evaluated through service and imagined absence. (Edition p. 165.)
- **III.54** Invisible and past goods become common through public esteem and remembrance. (Edition p. 166.)

85 Primary text: I.3, II.20, III.53, III.54, IV.17. III.53–54 explicitly extend the inquiry from material common things to invisible and historical ones.

- **IV.17** A common joy is more delightful because it serves all the people one loves. (Edition p. 210.)

In this edition. "Common" need not mean legally held in common or universally distributed in equal material shares. The word can refer to availability, familiarity, public remembrance, or shared enjoyment.

See also. Value; Air; Light; All and everything; Custom; Enjoyment.

Communication

communication; communicate; communicative; self-imparting[86]

The word. To communicate is to impart or share. Traherne's sense is wider than exchanging messages: a lover may communicate goodness, treasures, delight, or the lover's own self.

In Traherne. The opening promise makes the book an act of communicating enriching truths. Later, communication provides a language for love's movement from a lover to a beloved while remaining the same love. It is therefore not merely transport of an external object. The soul's beams communicate the person wholly through willing goodness. Nor need sharing diminish what is shared. The communicative desire for companions can coexist with a complete enjoyment of all things, since the companion's joy is another treasure.

IV.18 sharply advances the argument beyond retirement. Principles of communication are better than principles of solitary reception because giving is more blessed than receiving. Yet Traherne immediately qualifies the opposition: communication itself is enjoyment, and in giving one receives the joy of giving. The resulting relation is reciprocal without requiring a commercial exchange of equivalent amounts. People are the greatest treasures because they can both give and receive.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.1** The book communicates enriching truths as an expression of friendship. (Edition p. 4.)
- **II.40** Love is distinguished as source, communication, and presence in the beloved. (Edition p. 91.)

86 Primary text: I.1, II.40, II.79, IV.18, IV.82. The places range from literary friendship to Trinitarian analogy and practical giving; these are related applications, not identical acts.

- **II.79** The communicative desire for companions completes enjoyment without dividing it. (Edition p. 111.)
- **IV.18** Giving and receiving jointly constitute happiness, and communication is itself enjoyment. (Edition p. 210.)
- **IV.82** The soul communicates itself wholly in free beams of goodness. (Edition p. 251.)

In this edition. Modern "communication" often suggests information transfer only. Keep the older self-imparting sense, especially in II.40 and IV.82, while distinguishing theological analogy from ordinary conversation.

See also. Communion; Gift; Love; Conversation; Fellowship.

Communion

communion; union and communion; participation; shared enjoyment[87]

The word. Communion is a participation held with another, especially fellowship in a shared good. It is more than proximity or casual company and need not refer specifically to the sacramental meal.

In Traherne. The stated end of redemption is communion with God in His glory. To enjoy the world as God does is to participate in His wisdom, goodness, and love, rather than stand outside the gift as a detached observer. The same movement joins the reader to saints across ages: delight in their worship and happiness makes their joys inwardly present. Communion thus preserves distinct persons while multiplying what each enjoys.

Human conversation can provide its everyday setting, but the two are not interchangeable. Friendships are vulnerable to change, whereas communion with God supplies the firm ground of happiness. This qualification does not cancel human fellowship. It protects it from the impossible demand that a finite companion be the sole and unchanging foundation of life. Communion is fullest where receiving another's good deepens love of both that person and the divine giver.

87 Primary text: I.5, I.85, II.18, IV.19. The article follows the explicit objects of communion in each selected place rather than imposing one institutional sense.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.5** Redemption aims at communion with God in eternal glory. (Edition p. 6.)
- **I.85** Shared adoration creates participation in saints' joys across places and ages. (Edition p. 54.)
- **II.18** Enjoying as God enjoys establishes communion and knowledge of Him. (Edition p. 74.)
- **IV.19** Changing human friendship is distinguished from the secure foundation of divine communion. (Edition p. 211.)

In this edition. Do not assume that every "communion" is a Eucharistic reference. These passages mainly concern participation in love, knowledge, glory, and enjoyment.

See also. Communication; Union; Fellowship; Saint; Enjoyment.

Compassion

compassion; compassionate; pity; tenderness[88]

The word. Compassion is a responsive concern for another's suffering. Its tenderness joins acknowledgment of misery to a wish for the sufferer's good, rather than stopping at distress in the observer.

In Traherne. Christ's love for the speaker is compassionate before the speaker can answer it. The prayers therefore seek a corresponding power to pity others deeply and thirst for their happiness. At the Cross, sorrow itself becomes a form of faithful companionship: remaining with the suffering beloved is more fitting than going away to amusement. The survey of human faculties also places tenderness and compassion among the powers that unite a person to others. They are not accidental weaknesses obstructing self-sufficiency. Their good use enlarges one's life beyond private comfort. Compassion differs from delight in a person's excellence, since the greater need of a fallen person can call forth greater care even where conduct is not admirable.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.62** Christ's eternal love is addressed as gracious and compassionate toward the speaker. (Edition p. 38.)

88 Primary text: I.62, I.63, I.89, III.42. IV.26 is an additional primary qualification on need and delight; the selected places establish compassion's devotional and human functions.

- **I.63** The prayer asks for deep pity of misery and ardent desire for others' happiness. (Edition p. 39.)
- **I.89** Compassionate sorrow remains with the suffering Christ instead of seeking diversion. (Edition p. 56.)
- **III.42** Compassion is a natural power through which persons may be united. (Edition p. 157.)

In this edition. "Pity" here can be an active wish for restoration, not a patronizing judgment of inferiority. Its distinction from delight in goodness is made especially clear at IV.26.

See also. Charity; Affliction; Love; Sympathy; Christ.

Complacency

complacency; satisfied delight; pleased rest[89]

The word. Complacency is pleased satisfaction in an object judged good. The older positive sense differs sharply from the modern implication of smug or uncritical self-satisfaction.

In Traherne. In the analysis of praise, complacency stands between knowledge and thanksgiving. One knows the good, rests with pleasure in it, and returns acknowledgment to its giver. The psalmist's complacency is reached by examining the incomparable excellence of God's works; it is not a refusal to examine them. Traherne consequently insists that readers need a rational knowledge of those works to understand the grounds of David's delight. This satisfaction is stable without being inert. It can express itself in repeated meditation, praise, and love because its object remains inexhaustibly valuable. The term is especially important wherever modern habits of reading would make the very settled joy Traherne commends sound like a moral defect.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.82** Complacency is one constituent of praise alongside knowledge and thanksgiving. (Edition p. 186.)
- **III.91** The psalmist rests delighted after examining the excellence of God's works. (Edition p. 191.)

89 Primary text: III.82, III.91, III.92. All three explicit uses occur in the discussion of psalmic praise and enjoyment.

- **III.92** Rational knowledge is needed to share the grounds of David's complacency. (Edition p. 191.)

In this edition. Keep the positive historical sense. "Complaisance," meaning an accommodating wish to please, is not an attested interchangeable word in these passages and should not be confused with it.

See also. Contentment; Delight; Praise; Knowledge; David.

Comprehensor

comprehensor; comprehensors[90]

The word. A comprehensor holds or apprehends things within understanding. The word also had a theological use for one who has attained the beatific vision, as distinguished from a wayfarer still approaching it.

In Traherne. Traherne calls the living soul a temple and comprehensor because things possess their fullest inward presence when known, prized, and enjoyed. This is more than remembering a list of objects. Their excellencies awaken proportionate pleasure, love of their giver, and thanksgiving. In the Fifth Century the plural joins comprehensors to enjoyers as eternity becomes a stable object in which ages are apprehended together. Intellectual inclusion and blessed enjoyment therefore reinforce one another; the technical theological resonance enriches, but does not replace, the ordinary action of comprehending.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.100** The soul comprehends Christ, angels, and divine eternity in living apprehension. (Edition p. 64.)
- **V.6** Comprehensors and enjoyers behold eternity as ages presented together. (Edition p. 269.)

In this edition. The scholastic distinction is supplied by the 2026 note to I.100. Do not assume every occurrence names only souls already in the afterlife.

See also. Capacity; Enjoyment; Temple; Understanding.

90 Primary text: I.100, V.6; theological background: 2026 edition note to I.100.

Conceit

conceit; conceits; conception; opinion[91]

The word. A conceit is a conception or opinion held in the mind. It need not mean vanity about oneself, although the opinion may be mistaken or complacently cherished.

In Traherne. The soul must be disentangled from people's conceits and customs if it is to recover clear apprehension. Here the word names received mental constructions that interpose between the person and the world. IV.7 isolates one especially destructive conceit: that a little knowledge is sufficient. That opinion licenses neglect of wisdom while people devote great effort to trades and possessions. Traherne answers it by making happiness a subject worthy of sustained labour. The diagnosis concerns an idea's consequences rather than merely its owner's temperament. A mistaken conception can regulate a whole life even when no one consciously boasts of it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.5** Human conceits belong among the inherited distortions from which childlike perception must be freed. (Edition p. 132.)
- **IV.7** The conceit that little knowledge is enough excuses neglect of wisdom. (Edition p. 202.)

In this edition. Read "conceit" primarily as opinion or conception. Automatically substituting "arrogance" loses the specific intellectual error in IV.7.

See also. Apprehension; Error; Custom; Knowledge.

Concernment

concernment; concernments[92]

The word. Concernment means relevance, importance, or a matter that concerns someone. The plural can name shared affairs or great objects of attention, rather than feelings of worry.

91 Primary text: III.5, IV.7. Both cited places attach the term to beliefs shaping perception and conduct rather than to pride alone.

92 Primary text: IV.96, IV.97.

In Traherne. Repeated meditation changes what celestial things mean to the reader. What seemed remote and irrelevant becomes near, solid, personally possessed, and momentous. Concernment thus links understanding with the recognition that something belongs within one's own understanding and enjoyment. The next meditation expands the scale to public matters, kingdoms, the world, and divine attributes. Their greatness initially seems unmanageable, but practice reveals the soul's ability to engage them. Traherne contrasts this capacity with bodily strength, which can be overwhelmed by bulk. A concernment's magnitude need not exclude it from the understanding's profitable use.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.96** Frequent meditation reveals personal relevance and ownership in apparently remote celestial things. (Edition p. 261.)
- **IV.97** Public concernments test and disclose the soul's capacity through experience and exercise. (Edition p. 261.)

In this edition. The word's emphasis is on what matters and pertains to us; reading it simply as anxiety obscures the argument.

See also. Interest; Relation; Meditation; Sufficiency; Impertinence.

Condescension

condescension; condescencions; stooping down; voluntary abasement[93]

The word. Condescension is the voluntary descent of one who is high toward someone low or needy. In this historical devotional sense it need not imply the insulting superiority now commonly associated with the word.

In Traherne. The crucified Christ's descent into humiliation manifests love through the extremity of bodily suffering. The beholder trembles before the distance voluntarily crossed, yet draws nearer rather than recoiling. In the commentary on the psalm, divine condescension to the poor and needy is a cause of David's joy and a motive for universal praise. The image therefore combines unequal condition with genuinely shared concern. Its ethical analogue is a sublime love ready to humble

93 Primary text: I.89, III.73, IV.69. The first two references name condescension; IV.69 supplies its explicit practical counterpart.

itself in the dust to serve a person. Greatness proves itself capable of service rather than protecting its rank against contact with the lowly.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.89** Christ's humiliating sufferings disclose the effects and expressions of His descending love. (Edition p. 56.)
- **III.73** God's stooping to the poor and needy becomes a cause of praise. (Edition p. 180.)
- **IV.69** The greatest love is ready to humble itself to serve the beloved. (Edition p. 240.)

In this edition. I.89 spells the plural "condescencions." Preserve that spelling in an exact quotation; the standard headword gathers it without adopting the modern pejorative sense.

See also. Humility; Compassion; Service; Christ; Love.

Conscience

conscience; make a conscience of; conscientious regard[94]

The word. To make a conscience of something is to treat it as a matter of moral obligation and to take care to perform it rightly. The phrase need not describe a voice of accusation after wrongdoing.

In Traherne. Traherne uses it in the account of actual sonship. God gives the power to see, know, and love; the Holy Spirit brings that power into righteous exercise. The person makes a conscience of prizing heaven and earth as God prizes them. An apparently inward act of valuation thus becomes accountable conduct. Esteem is not merely taste, and the world's neglect is not morally indifferent. The phrase also prevents the book's language of enjoyment from sounding like permission to follow any passing pleasure: delight must answer the objects' real worth.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.99** Actual sonship includes making a conscience of valuing things in the divine likeness. (Edition p. 64.)

94 Primary text: I.99. I.99 is the explicit occurrence and is interpreted through its contrast between capacity and act.

In this edition. The idiom means to act conscientiously about a responsibility. The meditation does not develop a separate psychological faculty or a theory of guilty feelings.

See also. Duty; Righteousness; Esteem; Heir and inheritance.

Consideration

consideration; consider; inconsideration; attentive examination[95]

The word. Consideration is sustained attention that examines a thing's nature, relations, and worth. It is often the act by which a familiar object becomes an intelligible and enjoyed good.

In Traherne. The animal consumes an acorn without considering its relations; the angelic intelligence receives a world of joy within it. Wine similarly supplies bodily moisture without thought, but considering its source in love transforms its enjoyment. The faculty does more than add learned information. It discerns the services that join an object to the giver and to other recipients. Inconsideration is accordingly a spiritual lid: the soul can close itself to the love shining upon it. The later claim that one soul would convince atheists rests on the same confidence in directed attention. What is near, invisible, or habitual may demand more consideration precisely because it has not been absent enough to attract notice.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.26** Considering the acorn's sustaining relations distinguishes spiritual from merely bodily feeding. (Edition p. 17.)
- **I.27** Consideration of the giver's love transforms the enjoyment of wine. (Edition p. 17.)
- **IV.81** The soul's powers are proposed as an object whose consideration reveals divine action. (Edition p. 250.)
- **IV.86** Inconsideration is a lid that interrupts the return of received love. (Edition p. 254.)

In this edition. Consideration is not confined to weighing an impending decision. It is often a continuing contemplative recognition of gifts already possessed.

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95 Primary text: I.26, I.27, IV.81, IV.86. The positive verbs in I.26–27 and the negative "inconsideration" in IV.86 establish the active-attention sense.

See also. Contemplation; Apprehension; Knowledge; Use.

Contemn

contemn; contemned; contemners[96]

The word. To contemn is to despise, disregard as unworthy, or refuse to value. Its object must be established from the sentence: it is not an unvarying command to reject created existence.

In Traherne. Traherne initially makes contempt and enjoyment appear incompatible, then distinguishes the world God made from the artificial world of vain valuations. One must leave the second to possess the first rightly. Later, contempt can mean declining the laborious acquisition of wealth even under the excuse of future charity. Yet wealth offered by God need not be contemned, because it may have a good use. The vocabulary therefore tests the reader's valuation and purpose rather than prescribing indiscriminate withdrawal.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.7** Two senses of world resolve the opposition between contemning and enjoying. (Edition p. 7.)
- **IV.33** Renouncing acquisition may be preferable to accumulating wealth for charitable distribution. (Edition p. 218.)
- **IV.89** Riches need not be contemned when a good use is available. (Edition p. 256.)

In this edition. The 2026 notes to I.7 and IV.33 clarify these different objects of contempt. Preserve the rare verb's connection with contempt, not condemnation alone.

See also. Thomas à Kempis; Use; Vanity; World.

96 Primary text: I.7, IV.33, IV.89; contextual glosses: 2026 edition notes to I.7 and IV.33.

Contemplation

contemplation; contemplate; contemplative happiness[97]

The word. Contemplation is sustained intellectual beholding of an object in its truth and value. It can include memory, inquiry, admiration, and love, rather than denoting a blank or objectless mental state.

In Traherne. The understanding can be present with distant ages and events because its sight is a mode of presence. Contemplation thus enlarges a locally situated life. The Cross provides its concentrated object, while the choice of common goods gives it an accessible starting point. The practice is neither unlimited wandering nor the passive receipt of impressions: the student needs a rule for selecting fruitful objects and a disciplined manner of examining them.

Traherne also resists a simple opposition of contemplation and action. The many philosophical accounts of happiness are reconciled through a life that both acts and beholds, and the Fourth Century expressly adds active principles that improve contemplation itself. Love toward people tests what has been seen. The soul's freedom to pass from infinity to wisdom, goodness, and other objects then exhibits its spiritual strength rather than its inability to stay anywhere. Right contemplation is expansive but answerable to the specific excellence before it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.55** Contemplating eternity establishes intellectual presence across biblical history. (Edition p. 33.)
- **II.99** Action and contemplation are included in a comprehensive account of felicity. (Edition p. 125.)
- **III.52** The student seeks a rule for choosing fruitful objects of contemplation. (Edition p. 164.)
- **IV.1** Active happiness is added as necessary to practice and beneficial to contemplation. (Edition p. 198.)
- **IV.98** The mind's freedom to pass among divine objects demonstrates spiritual strength. (Edition p. 262.)

97 Primary text: I.55, II.99, III.52, IV.1, IV.98. The selected places follow contemplation from historical presence through practical complementarity to the soul's range.

In this edition. "Contemplative" is not a synonym for inactive. The book's own introduction to the Fourth Century makes the two modes mutually helpful.

See also. Meditation; Beholding; Action and activity; Consideration; Presence.

Contentment

contentment; contentation; content; satisfied rest[98]

The word. Contentment is a settled satisfaction in what one rightly possesses. Traherne distinguishes it from resigned acceptance of having no adequate objects of happiness.

In Traherne. True contentment arises when the world is examined part by part and restored to its proper relations as a sufficient gift. It is grounded, not merely commanded. The discussion of philosophical happiness objects to advice that names contentment while withholding the goods that could make a person content. Desire must be guided to its objects, not confined in an inward grave. Nor does contentment require a little private enclave of riches. Dispersed treasures make the person at home everywhere and prevent the rest of the universe from becoming an empty wilderness. Its stillness is compatible with breadth, gratitude, and active love because it comes from discovered fullness.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.23** Examination of the world's composition produces a thoroughly grounded contentment. (Edition p. 16.)
- **II.77** Treasures dispersed everywhere secure satisfaction beyond narrow private bounds. (Edition p. 109.)
- **II.100** Contentment rests on the perception of infinite treasures rather than denial of objects. (Edition p. 126.)

In this edition. "Contentation" is a related historical form. The positive word should not disguise Traherne's criticism of a falsely objectless self-sufficiency.

See also. Complacency; Felicity; Desire; Repose; Treasure.

98 Primary text: I.23, II.77, II.100. II.100 explicitly distinguishes true contentment from the negative account it criticizes.

Conversation

conversation; converse; intercourse; manner of life[99]

The word. Conversation can mean social intercourse, an ongoing way of life, or familiar dealing with something. Its older range is wider than spoken talk.

In Traherne. The philosopher who orders his conversation orders his conduct by reason. Christians whose conversation is in Heaven live in relation to heavenly goods now rather than waiting for another life. Elsewhere conversation is the delight of giving and receiving among persons. It is important precisely because those persons are the greatest treasures, yet vulnerable because friendship can change. The principles of communication must therefore be joined to the firm foundation of communion with God. The account of David's conversation with invisible things carries the older sense still further: spiritual objects can be familiar companions. In each use, conversation names a sustained relation rather than an isolated exchange of sentences.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.95** David's spirit holds conversation with invisible and immaterial companions. (Edition p. 194.)
- **IV.8** The philosopher orders his conversation as a reasoned manner of life. (Edition p. 203.)
- **IV.9** Conversation in Heaven is urged as a present Christian condition. (Edition p. 204.)
- **IV.18** Conversation realizes the happiness of giving and receiving. (Edition p. 210.)
- **IV.19** Its delight is qualified by the instability of human friendship. (Edition p. 211.)

In this edition. Translate mentally according to context: conduct in IV.8, heavenly citizenship or life in IV.9, social fellowship in IV.18–19. Modern dialogue is too narrow as a uniform gloss.

See also. Society; Communication; Communion; Friendship; Virtue.

99 Primary text: III.95, IV.8, IV.9, IV.18, IV.19. The selected primary passages demonstrate several senses of the word rather than a single conversational technique.

Conversion

conversion; convert; turning; born again[100]

The word. Conversion is a turning toward a different spiritual orientation. It may describe a person's renewal, the soul's response to divine law, or the turning of nations toward Christ.

In Traherne. The poem reflecting on infancy marvels that God has at last converted the speaker after repeated refusals of His approaches. Renewal is understood as gracious action that makes earlier gifts visible again. The exposition of becoming a child supplies the practical content: acquired habits and false valuations must be put away. Scriptural commentary widens the field. The law converts the soul, and the foretold conversion of the Gentiles is a joy to the psalmist because it gathers others into praise. Conversion thus joins personal recovery to a larger fellowship. It is not only assent to a proposition or a change of social label; it alters the objects loved, the light in which they appear, and the community whose happiness one shares.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.4** The retrospective poem attributes the speaker's conversion to God's persistent love. (Edition p. 130.)
- **III.5** Renewed childhood is explained through purification of habits and apprehensions. (Edition p. 132.)
- **III.72** The psalmic law is described as converting the soul. (Edition p. 179.)
- **III.73** The anticipated conversion of the Gentiles expands shared praise and joy. (Edition p. 180.)

In this edition. The noun in III.73 concerns nations, while the personal verb in III.4 concerns the speaker. Neither alone fixes a single dated biographical conversion event.

See also. Repentance; Birth; Grace; Child and childhood.

100 Primary text: III.4, III.5, III.72, III.73. III.72–73 contain quoted Scripture and Traherne's interpretation; III.4 is a primary lyric of recollection.

Copula and Hymenaeus

Mundi Copula; Hymenaeus; golden link or tie[101]

The word. Copula is a bond or link. Hymenaeus names marriage or its god and song. Together these Latin and mythological terms figure humanity as a joining principle within the world.

In Traherne. The terms occur in Traherne's rendering of Pico's account of human dignity. Humanity mediates between lower and higher creatures through sensation, reason, and intelligence, and stands between time and eternity. Traherne strengthens the relational image with the golden link and the marriage of Creator and creatures. Yet these praises are a starting point that Pico's argument seeks to exceed: the subsequent account emphasizes humanity's power of self-formation. The reader should retain both the mediating role and the movement beyond a merely fixed middle position.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.74** Humanity is named the world's bond before the account moves toward freedom and self-formation. (Edition p. 243.)

In this edition. The 2026 note identifies the Latin senses and distinguishes Traherne's additions. Here "copula" does not principally name a grammatical linking verb.

See also. Man and mankind; Marriage; Pico della Mirandola; Relation.

Cordial

cordials; balms and cordials[102]

The word. A cordial is something that strengthens or revives the heart, especially a restorative medicine. The noun's older medical force is stronger than its familiar modern association with a sweet drink.

In Traherne. Traherne's opening promise compares loving instruction with medicine: tenderness administers balms and cordials rather than corrosives. The desired method should refresh the recipient as well as advance a serious purpose. Later, poisons themselves become

101 Primary text: IV.74; gloss and translation comparison: 2026 edition note to IV.74.
102 Primary text: I.4, IV.21; historical medical gloss: 2026 edition note to IV.21.

cordials in the royal chemist's art. A fallen world requires occasions of harm to be transformed into healing goods. Traherne does not deny that the poison is harmful; its conversion supplies the force of the image. The two passages link a gentle method with the more demanding work of extracting good from evil.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.4** Loving instruction is compared with the gentle administration of balms and cordials. (Edition p. 5.)
- **IV.21** The royal chemist's poisons become heart-restoring cordials. (Edition p. 212.)

In this edition. The medicinal gloss is supplied by the 2026 note to IV.21. Both attested uses are nouns; the unrelated modern description of polite or friendly manners is not the point.

See also. Alchemy and philosopher's stone; Gentleness; Heart; Love.

Corn

corn; wheat; standing grain; fields of corn[103]

The word. Corn in this English usage means cereal grain, not specifically maize. Traherne's most celebrated childhood occurrence immediately identifies it as wheat.

In Traherne. The remembered corn appears orient, immortal, neither sown nor destined to be reaped. This is the child's apprehension of enduring glory, not agricultural information endorsed as literal botany. Other passages recognize the sun's work in raising corn for food and the fields' service to human life. The contrast matters: mature gratitude can preserve the early sense of wonder while knowing production, use, and change. In the reflection on universal praise, fields covered with corn are beautiful, yet the prospect of nations returning thanks is sweeter. Corn is a real good whose fullest significance includes the living persons it sustains and the gratitude they offer.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.8** The sun's many services include raising corn for human nourishment. (Edition p. 70.)

103 Primary text: II.8, III.3, III.87. The three places distinguish provisioning, remembered appearance, and the return of praise.

- **III.3** Childhood vision receives standing wheat as orient and immortal. (Edition p. 129.)
- **III.87** Corn-filled fields are compared with the still greater delight of nations praising God. (Edition p. 189.)

In this edition. "Orient" here suggests glowing preciousness; the word does not turn the field into an eastern geographical setting. "Corn" should not be illustrated or paraphrased automatically as maize.

See also. Bread; Sun; Child and childhood; Fruit.

Corruption

corruption; corrupted; corrupt; depravation; rust[104]

The word. Corruption is a spoiling of an originally good thing or a disordering of its powers and relations. It may describe inherited social practice as well as an inward moral condition.

In Traherne. The most damaging corruption is not always immediately visible wickedness. Mistaken riches produce rivalry, invented wants, and violence by reorganizing desire around inadequate objects. The child learns that distorted scale through education and example. III.8 gives striking weight to outward bondage while explicitly retaining the derivation of corruption from Adam. Elsewhere corruption is rust upon a principle that remains pure gold when the rust is removed. The power to please others can become a snare without ceasing to have been well designed. Traherne's restorative approach accordingly asks what good capacity has been misdirected. Recovery requires more than excusing vice as natural or condemning the entire nature that has become vulnerable to it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.33** Corrupt valuations generate contentious and violent social relations. (Edition p. 20.)
- **III.8** Outward custom corrupts teachable nature, within a history still traced to Adam. (Edition p. 134.)
- **IV.45** Corruption is figured as rust upon the good natural principle of giving delight. (Edition p. 224.)

104 Primary text: I.33, III.8, IV.45, IV.51. The wording of III.8 and the rust metaphor of IV.45 both require keeping original goodness and actual disorder in view.

- **IV.51** Goodness becomes a snare through error, though in innocence it channels joy. (Edition p. 229.)

In this edition. "Corruption" here generally means moral and perceptual disorder rather than bodily decomposition. Its relation to nature is qualified, not simply either total identity or complete separation.

See also. Fall; Original sin; Custom; Error; Nature.

Counsel

counsel; counsels; deliberation; advice[105]

The word. Counsel is advice or deliberative judgment; in the plural it can name settled purposes or designs. Divine counsels and human counsel belong to different orders even when the same word connects them.

In Traherne. God is to be loved in His counsels as well as His works, because the intentions behind gifts reveal the giver. The story of Pyrrhus and Cineas supplies a human counterexample: wise advice exposes the needless circuit by which conquest seeks a peace already available, but the prince refuses it. IV.42 then speaks of a creature left in the hand of his own counsel, able to direct himself freely. Good counsel cannot substitute for the recipient's willing use of it. The term thus joins intention, judgment, and freedom: plans are valuable according to the ends they serve, and advice becomes fruitful only through response.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.20** Love of God extends to His counsels and the works in which He appears. (Edition p. 13.)
- **I.22** Cineas's advice discloses the needless detour of Pyrrhus's ambition. (Edition p. 14.)
- **IV.42** A free agent is left in the hand of his own counsel for greater dignity. (Edition p. 222.)

In this edition. Distinguish "counsel," advice or purpose, from "council," an assembly. The presence of both vocabularies elsewhere should not lead to automatic normalization.

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105 Primary text: I.20, I.22, IV.42. The historical anecdote in I.22 is Traherne's example; this article does not independently certify every detail of its transmission.

See also. Wisdom; Choice; Providence; End and means.

Country

country; countries; foreign country; rural retirement[106]

The word. Country may mean a foreign land or the countryside outside urban life. Traherne uses both senses, and their different implications matter to the history of his search for felicity.

In Traherne. News from a distant country awakens hope that unknown happiness is elsewhere. The Gospel gives the expectation a real object, yet the accompanying poem corrects the thought that treasure must be absent: the world already around the child and the soul receiving it are richer than he understands. Coming into the country later supplies leisure for study but does not answer which objects should be studied. A rule is still necessary. Distance and retirement can prompt discovery, but neither geographical remoteness nor rural location guarantees happiness. The decisive movement is a change in the understanding of what is available.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.25** Foreign news awakens expectation, and the Gospel supplies a first assurance of distant good. (Edition p. 146.)
- **III.26** The poem corrects the infant's search elsewhere by revealing treasures already present. (Edition p. 146.)
- **III.52** Rural leisure creates the practical question of which contemplative objects to choose. (Edition p. 164.)

In this edition. "Jury" in III.25 is the supplied historical form for Judaea, not a legal panel. "The country" in III.52 is the setting of retirement, not an unnamed foreign nation.

See also. City; Expectation; Hope; Study; Place.

106 Primary text: III.25, III.26, III.52. The poetry at III.26 provides its own retrospective correction of the distant-treasure expectation.

Courage

courage; courageous; courageously[107]

The word. Courage is firmness of soul in the face of threats, temptations, loss, or other people's wrongdoing. Traherne usually makes it the active companion of charity and faith. Military bravery supplies possible imagery but does not exhaust the virtue.

In Traherne. In I.98 courage arises from the Spirit's disclosure of divine love and enduring treasure. Knowledge of being beloved gives the speaker a ground of steadiness that reproach, poverty, sickness, and death cannot finally remove. The prayer does not merely request a stronger will in isolation; it asks for the apprehension of goods capable of sustaining that will.

I.84 makes the conduct of courage concrete. One should expect human infirmity, forgive without lazy indifference, correct meekly, and continue doing good despite treachery or mistreatment. Christ's persistence in benefiting those who abused him provides the pattern. Courage here refuses both retaliation and the abandonment of charitable action.

The late practical meditations connect the same virtue to differing conditions of life. IV.89 values patience, faith, and courage above the ornament of wealth, while allowing that riches can have good uses. IV.91 imagines divine favour making a person courageous as an angel, even amid calamity. Its severe devotional rhetoric expresses confidence in a good greater than suffering; it does not require readers to confuse suffering itself with the whole substance of happiness.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.84** Christlike courage continues beneficence while forgiving and meekly correcting wrongdoing. (Edition p. 53.)
- **I.98** The Spirit strengthens against assaults and temptations by making divine love and treasure known. (Edition p. 63.)
- **IV.89** Courage joins patience and faith as an ornament worth more than wealth. (Edition p. 256.)

107 Primary text: I.84, I.98, IV.89, IV.91. The article draws its distinctions from the primary passages rather than supplementary historical identification.

- **IV.91** The assurance of being beloved supports courage amid distress. (Edition p. 258.)

In this edition. The word's active setting matters: courage maintains charity and fidelity rather than celebrating aggression. Read the intense claims about affliction as devotional arguments about sustaining goods, not as denials that bodily pain and danger occur.

See also. Fear; Temptation; Zeal; Patience; Affliction.

Covenant

covenant; new covenant; Mediator; sacraments or seals[108]

The word. A covenant is an ordered relation established by promise and obligation. In the cited theological outline the new covenant defines the estate of grace and its means of participation.

In Traherne. Traherne places the covenant within humanity's fourfold history of innocence, misery, grace, and glory. Studying it includes its tenor, the manner of its exhibition in Old and New Testament dispensations, its mediator, conditions of faith and repentance, and sacramental seals. The list explains why divinity can comprehend so many apparently separate subjects: they belong to the intelligible history of human restoration and enjoyment. The meditation offers a programme of study rather than a detailed doctrinal settlement of every listed question. Its final movement is personal, returning these subjects to the speaker's redeemed inheritance.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.43** The estate of grace is organized through the new covenant, its mediator, conditions, signs, and historical exhibition. (Edition p. 158.)

In this edition. "Tenour" means the purport or governing terms of the covenant. "Seals" are confirming signs in the outline, not literal wax seals attached to a manuscript in this scene.

See also. Grace; Faith; Repentance; Scripture; Redemption.

108 Primary text: III.43. III.43 is the explicit covenant occurrence and is a syllabus-like outline, not a complete exposition of covenant theology.

Cozenage

cousenage[109]

The word. Cozenage means cheating, fraud, or dishonest dealing. The supplied text spells it "cousenage"; its likeness to cousin is misleading for a reader meeting the word without its context.

In Traherne. The term belongs to Traherne's densely accumulated catalogue of social disorders created around scarce and artificial treasures. Fraud is not an isolated failure of manners but one consequence of teaching people to pursue what is difficult to acquire while ignoring the abundant goods already given them. The rush of nouns makes those disorders seem to drown the original peace and beauty of nature. Reading cozenage accurately restores a particular practice of deception within that larger indictment, alongside theft, envy, contention, and pride.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.33** Cousenage appears among the social miseries that overwhelm natural peace after false treasures are invented. (Edition p. 20.)

In this edition. Use Cozenage as the normalized finding word while retaining "cousenage" in forms and quotation. The passage concerns cheating, not kinship or an obscure social rank.

See also. Avarice and covetousness; Falsehood; Rapine; Society.

Creation

creation; created; made; works of God[110]

The word. Creation names both God's making of beings and the resulting order of created things. In Traherne these cannot be separated from the purpose for which the things are made and given.

In Traherne. The created world is fitted to enjoyment. Adam's initial solitude makes visible the relation between the whole gift and a single recipient; the multiplication of recipients then increases the world's riches by adding companions capable of love. Creation is not best

109 Primary text: I.33.

110 Primary text: I.7, I.14, I.68, V.5, V.8. The interpretation of temporality follows V.8's express distinction between beginning and ending things and their retained presence in eternity.

understood as a collection of objects existing before any meaningful relation to persons. Its services, interdependencies, and capacity to disclose goodness belong to its excellence.

The account also distinguishes creation from the false world made by human valuation. It is possible to contemn the latter precisely in order to receive the former. What must be relinquished is not the earth but the scale of scarcity, vanity, and competitive possession that conceals its worth. Human making need not be condemned in every form: it can serve the created order when its goods are correctly esteemed.

In the Fifth Century, creation becomes a painting whose infinite field is filled by divine wisdom, goodness, beauty, power, and Word. The image insists on both variety and fullness. But the argument about eternity preserves the temporal beginning and ending of particular things. Their eternal presence before God is not the claim that each creature has always existed in ordinary time. To know creation rightly is to see a finite event and object within a divine intention that does not lapse when its moment passes.

The recipient belongs to the gift

Creation includes the senses and the soul through which creation is received. This prevents a simple division between an external world supplied by God and an independent spectator who happens to find it useful. The enjoyer's powers are fitted to the objects, and other enjoyers are among the most valuable objects. A soul capable of knowledge and love is itself a created good, offered to others while receiving them. The circular relation is not a defect in the argument: it is how the gift becomes a society of giving rather than a heap of possessions.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.7** Divine creation is distinguished from the Babel of invented values. (Edition p. 7.)
- **I.14** Adam's relation to the world establishes its purpose as an undivided gift. (Edition p. 10.)
- **I.68** Other creatures increase the generosity of the gift by supplying loved companions. (Edition p. 42.)
- **V.5** Creation is pictured as an infinite work of divine painting. (Edition p. 268.)

- **V.8** Created things begin and end, while their moments remain present before God. (Edition p. 270.)

In this edition. "World" sometimes names the false human order rather than creation, and "eternal" can describe a creature's presence to God rather than its temporal duration. These distinctions are necessary to avoid making the book contradict itself.

See also. God; Creature; World; Gift; Eternity; Nature.

Creature

creature; creatures; created being; living or made thing[111]

The word. A creature is something created. The word is much wider than a nonhuman animal: it includes human beings, angels, and other dependent things, according to the context.

In Traherne. Creaturely status joins dependence to extraordinary dignity. The soul is God's image and a treasure to its creator and companions; its created origin does not make it negligible. Other creatures serve its enjoyment, while it in turn is made to give delight and praise. Human freedom deepens this dignity because good actions can be voluntarily performed rather than merely mechanically produced. The book can consequently speak of creatures in terms that sound almost divine while continuing to distinguish maker from made. IV.98 marks the dependence explicitly: a creature's possibility rests upon what its creator can make it capable of doing. The expansiveness of the claim derives from divine generosity, not from independence of God.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.67** The created divine image is presented as an incomparable dignity. (Edition p. 41.)
- **I.68** Further creatures add witnesses, companions, and shared riches. (Edition p. 42.)
- **IV.42** Free agency gives creatures the dignity and risk of voluntary action. (Edition p. 222.)
- **IV.98** Creaturely capacity is related explicitly to the creator's enabling power. (Edition p. 262.)

111 Primary text: I.67, I.68, IV.42, IV.98. IV.98 supplies the explicit creator–creature relation needed to qualify the book's expansive descriptions of the soul.

In this edition. Do not substitute "animal" for "creature" without checking the sentence. Claims of infinite capacity are made about dependent spiritual powers, not self-existent rival deities.

See also. Creation; Man and mankind; Angels; Image; Capacity.

Cross

Cross; cross of Christ; crucified person; tree; centre of desires[112]

The word. The Cross is the instrument of Christ's execution and, by transfer, His suffering and redemptive self-offering. Traherne makes it the concentrated object through which the relations of God, persons, history, and the world become intelligible.

In Traherne. The sequence in the First Century moves from the soul's ability to visit all ages toward a single centre of eternity. The Cross gathers those ages without abolishing their differences: patriarchs, prophets, nations, worshippers, and the present reader all stand in relation to it. Its centrality is spiritual attraction rather than physical location. The soul travels there through thought and affection.

The short catalogue at I.58 refuses any single emotional definition. The Cross is a place of sorrows and a theatre of joys, a school of virtues and a throne of love. I.59 explains why these descriptions coexist. It makes human sin visible together with human value, divine mercy together with anger, and misery together with hope. A reading that removes either side loses the purpose of the conjunction. Love does not render the injury unreal; the actual suffering reveals the depth of the gift.

The practical outcome is imitation. The Cross teaches patience, courage, self-denial, charity, penitence, and thanksgiving. Its spectator is therefore called into action, not merely affective fascination with pain. The prayers then test that response: can the beholder leave the wounded beloved and seek amusement elsewhere? Faithful compassion remains with the suffering person, recognizing a delight deeper than diversion. Traherne's joyous language reaches its hardest and most specifically Christian form here.

112 Primary text: I.55, I.58, I.59, I.61, I.89. Additional primary interpretation at I.64 warns that wounds alone do not disclose Christ's full love without knowledge of His person and ways.

Seeing the world from the Cross

The sequence does not leave the rest of creation behind. It provides the light in which the world's gifts and its persons can be received after sin. To understand why the Saviour loves people is to acquire a reason to love them oneself. Thus the Cross makes universal enjoyment accountable to costly charity. A person's value cannot be measured merely by present usefulness or attractiveness when Christ's love has disclosed a deeper dignity. Nor can the reader's claim to the world remain possessive in an ordinary competitive sense: the gift is restored through a love that gives itself away.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.55** The Cross is named the centre of eternity and tree of life within the soul's historical contemplation. (Edition p. 33.)
- **I.58** A concentrated list unites sorrow, joy, wisdom, virtue, and love. (Edition p. 36.)
- **I.59** The Cross gathers nations and discloses sin, value, mercy, anger, misery, and happiness together. (Edition p. 36.)
- **I.61** Its contemplation teaches virtues and active imitation. (Edition p. 37.)
- **I.89** The speaker confronts the bodily desolation and refuses to abandon the suffering beloved. (Edition p. 56.)

In this edition. "Cross" can elsewhere name an adverse experience, but these selected occurrences concern Christ's Passion. The apparent paradox of joy in suffering should be preserved rather than simplified into either cheerful consolation or pain alone.

See also. Christ; Redemption; Blood; Sacrifice; Compassion; Centre and circumference.

Crown

crown; crowned; crown of thorns; crown as coin[113]

The word. A crown may be a royal headpiece, a mark of honour, the completion of an excellence, or an English coin. Traherne uses these senses in importantly different contexts.

In Traherne. The person clothed with the heavens is crowned with stars, receiving a sovereignty of enjoyment rather than legal rule over the sky. Love is the crown of rewards because material goods cannot complete happiness without living fellowship. The crown of thorns then brings royal language into the humiliation of Christ, present in every beholder's inward vision. A monetary crown has a quite different function in the imagined test of charity: the last coin can preserve a brother's life. The senses meet thematically in the question of real honour, but should not be conflated lexically. What crowns a person most truly may be the love expressed in relinquishing the money ordinarily counted as wealth.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.29** Stars crown the person who receives the world as an intimate inheritance. (Edition p. 18.)
- **I.86** The crown of thorns is present in the eyes and affections of Christ's beholders. (Edition p. 54.)
- **II.62** Love is the crown of rewards and the indispensable completion of created riches. (Edition p. 101.)
- **IV.58** A crown is a coin in the hypothetical case of costly aid to a brother. (Edition p. 233.)

In this edition. The coin at IV.58 requires a monetary gloss; the crowns in the other selected passages do not. The metaphor of completion should also be distinguished from an actual object worn on the head.

See also. Honour; King and kingdom; Love; Coin and money; Cross.

113 Primary text: I.29, I.86, II.62, IV.58. The four passages are selected to distinguish royal, Passion, consummating, and monetary senses.

Curious

curious; curiousness; curiously[114]

The word. Curious may mean finely or exquisitely made, ingenious, choice, or delicate; it can also describe an eager investigator. The modern senses of inquisitive and strange do not cover every occurrence.

In Traherne. A curious picture possesses artful contrasts of light and shade, and curious expression is elaborately fashioned language. The word becomes critical in the childhood narrative when adults teach the child to call a ribbon or feather curious although he cannot perceive its alleged fineness. That use exposes acquired valuations rather than condemning workmanship itself. Elsewhere the curious are people drawn to a miracle. Traherne's movement among object, craftsmanship, and perceiver makes local grammar essential to the gloss.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.41** Pictures are made curious through light and shade. (Edition p. 25.)
- **III.9** The child cannot see the curiousness adults attribute to ornamental gifts. (Edition p. 135.)
- **IV.94** More curious expression would not alter the fruitful substance of principles. (Edition p. 260.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to I.41 explains exquisite workmanship. Do not replace every occurrence with "odd," or assume that all curiosity is morally suspect.

See also. Art and artifice; Custom; Ornament; Value.

Custom

custom; customs; manners; established ways[115]

The word. Custom is an acquired way of thinking or acting, maintained by repetition and social agreement. It can make what has merely become familiar seem natural, necessary, or true. Traherne often couples the word with opinion, conceit, and habit.

114 Primary text: I.41, I.57, III.9, IV.94; historical gloss: 2026 edition note to I.41.
115 Primary text: I.8; III.7; III.8; IV.44.

In Traherne. The chief danger of custom is its power to educate perception before a person can judge the education. The child reverences adults, imitates their valuations, and gradually forgets goods that their conversation never mentions. A whole society can therefore agree in an error without correcting it. Recovery requires more than exchanging one opinion for another: the soul must become strange to the conventions that have coloured its sight. Traherne nevertheless explains this susceptibility through the originally good desire to please others. Custom corrupts a social power that properly belongs to love.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.8** The difficulty of thinking well is assigned to acquired habit and custom rather than to nature. (Edition p. 7.)
- **III.7** Adult examples and an education inattentive to felicity eclipse the child's first apprehensions. (Edition p. 134.)
- **III.8** Outward opinion and custom receive a startlingly greater share of blame than inward corruption. (Edition p. 134.)
- **IV.44** The natural wish to give pleasure becomes conformity to mistaken communal valuations. (Edition p. 224.)

In this edition. "Custom" here ordinarily means social usage, not a commercial payment. The attack on custom is not a rejection of every learned practice: sustained good thinking itself requires cultivation.

See also. Habit; Education; Child and childhood; Conceit; Corruption.

Daemon

Daemon; great Daemon of the world[116]

The word. Daemon here is a spirit with a mediating role, not a devil or an evil possessing force. The 2026 note relates the title to the account of Love in Plato's Symposium.

In Traherne. Traherne applies it to Love as the person's true self when potential becomes actuality. The surrounding titles move daringly between philosophical mediation, divine likeness, bridal union, and scriptural language. Their purpose is to magnify the soul's loving reach across times, places, and persons. The apparently startling word should

116 Primary text: IV.67; classical background: 2026 edition note to IV.67.

therefore be read inside an emphatic praise of holiness and justice. Its mediation also helps explain how the finite person can become present by affection to distant goods without acquiring physical omnipresence.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.67** Actualized Love is called the great Daemon, then shown loving persons and virtues across history. (Edition p. 239.)

In this edition. The Platonic identification is the 2026 editor's explanation. Traherne signals the boldness of his larger claims with qualifications; the entry should not erase those qualifications.

See also. Love; Plato; Self; Union.

Darius and Zopyrus

Darius; Zopyrus; Zopyruses; Tot Zopyrorum[117]

The word. Darius is the Persian king and Zopyrus the loyal servant of the classical exemplum retold here. Traherne uses the story to distinguish the value of an acquired kingdom from the greater value of the person whose costly service obtained it.

In Traherne. In II.95 Zopyrus mutilates himself, wins the Babylonians' trust by appearing to be the king's injured enemy, and delivers their city to Darius. The king nevertheless declares that he would prefer Zopyrus unharmed to ten Babylons. Asked what he would wish to possess in the number of a pomegranate's seeds, he answers with Zopyruses.

The story illustrates an ascending movement of gratitude. The greater the inheritance restored by Christ, the more intensely the redeemed person should love the redeemer. The gift's magnificence does not eclipse its giver; it teaches the recipient to value him more highly. Traherne concludes that one saviour exceeds innumerable worlds. His analogy concentrates on costly fidelity and the beneficiary's answering love, rather than proposing military deception or self-injury for imitation.

II.96 then carries both figures into the pomegranate image. Zopyrus exemplifies fidelity, Darius the love that recognizes it, and the enjoyed world becomes fertile with comparable virtues. The historical anecdote

117 Primary text: II.95–96. Supplied 2026 editorial notes 158–159 identify the ancient narrative, variant numbers, and pomegranate traditions.

thus performs two connected tasks: it measures gratitude for redemption and generates an account of the virtues that conscious enjoyment can awaken.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.95** Retells the conquest story and the pomegranate answer, making the faithful benefactor more precious than the acquired dominion. (Edition p. 122.)
- **II.96** Names both figures within the world's seeds of virtue. (Edition p. 123.)

In this edition. The supplied 2026 notes compare differing ancient versions. Traherne says ten Babylons; other reported numbers should not silently replace his text. His Latin phrase means as many Zopyruses, and the anecdote's transmission is not evidence of direct consultation of any one ancient work.

See also. Pomegranate; Fidelity; Redemption; Gratitude; Plutarch.

Darkness

darkness; dark; obscure; Prince of Darkness[118]

The word. Darkness can be the absence of visible light, the concealment of something from understanding, or a moral condition opposed to divine illumination. These meanings overlap without becoming interchangeable.

In Traherne. The striking phrase "riches of darkness" names socially invented objects of rivalry. Darkness therefore need not feel empty or look poor: it can be crowded with possessions and strenuous activity. What is missing is a true understanding of value. Traherne connects this obscurity with ingratitude, because gifts lose their visibility when familiarity makes them contemptible. Yet hiddenness is not always wickedness. God's thoughts are initially secret and become accessible through works and attributes; the movement out of darkness may be a disclosure rather than an escape from an evil substance.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.13** Hidden divine thoughts become intelligible through God's works and attributes. (Edition p. 9.)

118 Primary text: I.13; I.32; I.33; II.9.

- **I.32** Neglect of genuine treasures leads through moral darkness toward the image of eternal darkness. (Edition p. 19.)
- **I.33** The "riches of darkness" produce contention through a mistaken choice of goods. (Edition p. 20.)
- **II.9** Literal darkness on the earth's other side figures in the defence of alternating day and night. (Edition p. 70.)

In this edition. Check whether the passage concerns physical night, ignorance, sin, or punishment. A night that gives repose is not morally equivalent to the "works of darkness."

See also. Light; Ignorance; Blindness; Error; Hell.

David

David; the psalmist; royal singer[119]

The word. David is the biblical king and the exemplary voice Traherne hears in the Psalms. He appears as ruler, poet, contemplative, and lover of God's works, rather than simply as an item of sacred biography.

In Traherne. Reading David changes the narrator's understanding of his own discoveries. What first seemed private and unprecedented becomes participation in a recognisable scriptural life. The Psalms confirm that common objects can be matters of heavenly joy; their singer delights in the same creation that awakened the child. David's kingship also joins inward enjoyment to the vocabulary of dominion and possession. Traherne reads him expansively and christologically: the marriage song becomes a celebration of Christ, the Church, and the world as their palace.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.66** Recognition of his own thoughts in the Psalms opens a new reading of the whole Bible. (Edition p. 173.)
- **III.70** David's delight in natural objects confirms a shared guidance by the Spirit. (Edition p. 178.)
- **III.77** The royal marriage psalm is interpreted through Christ and the Church. (Edition p. 182.)

119 Primary text: III.66; III.70; III.77.

In this edition. "David" often identifies Traherne's received understanding of the psalmist. The lexicon follows that devotional attribution without treating it as a modern historical judgement on the authorship of every psalm.

See also. Scripture; Praise; King and kingdom; Contemplation; Christ.

Day

day; daylight; diurnal; day and night[120]

The word. Day names the illuminated portion of ordinary time, a complete daily circuit, or a figurative duration. "Diurnal" means occurring in the course of a day; its immediate setting here is the sun's apparent motion.

In Traherne. A day is both a practical benefit and a revelation of ordered variety. The changing light permits work, refreshment, and repose; permanent noon would destroy other kinds of delight. In the childhood account, daylight makes eternity manifest, not because the child has measured an endless duration but because everything appears abiding and inexhaustibly significant. The Psalms then teach the adult to recognise day and night together as divine possessions given for human joy. Temporal succession and the apprehension of eternity thus meet in one familiar experience.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.8** The sun's daily movement gathers numerous useful effects into a single providential order. (Edition p. 70.)
- **II.9** Morning, evening, and repose would disappear under perpetual daylight. (Edition p. 70.)
- **III.3** Eternity appears to the child in the light of day. (Edition p. 129.)
- **III.88** Day and night are counted among God's treasures and the reader's. (Edition p. 190.)

In this edition. Traherne's language of the sun moving around the universe belongs to this passage's cosmological description. Its devotional force should not be mistaken for a claim grounded in present-day astronomy.

120 Primary text: II.8; II.9; III.3; III.88.

See also. Sun; Light; Time; Eternity; Repose.

Death

death; dying; dead; after death[121]

The word. Death includes bodily dissolution, the privation associated with sin, and above all Christ's dying on the cross. Traherne also speaks of death as a boundary across which love continues.

In Traherne. The meditations refuse to let the saving death remain merely past. Christ's wounded person is present in memory, affection, and understanding, so that the event can unite souls separated by place and age. Human death has a different but related place in the trial of love: the present life exposes affection to need and danger, while the life to come fulfils it. These claims do not erase bodily vulnerability. They explain why love exercised under disadvantage can display a glory unavailable to untroubled ease. The phoenix image compresses that confidence into a figure of renewal from ashes.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.86** Christ's death lives in the memories and affections of the saints. (Edition p. 54.)
- **II.99** Death is included among the powers overcome in the comprehensive account of happiness. (Edition p. 125.)
- **IV.60** The present life is the testing of love and the life after death its reward. (Edition p. 234.)
- **IV.61** Love appears as a phoenix able to inherit death and remain fragrant in the grave. (Edition p. 235.)

In this edition. "Dead" can mean spiritually unresponsive or simply lifeless. Do not read every contrast between living and dead things as a statement about bodily resurrection.

See also. Cross; Resurrection; Love; Life; Redemption.

121 Primary text: I.86; II.99; IV.60; IV.61.

Delight

delight; delightful; delight in; delight others[122]

The word. Delight is pleasurable satisfaction in an object; transitively, to delight is to give such pleasure to someone else. This double direction is important: the soul receives delight and becomes a source of it.

In Traherne. Traherne does not confine delight to inward feeling. It is a way of responding fittingly to real excellence, and the choice of one's ends alters what can give it. Two students may know the same material while only one discovers communion with God in it. Delight also has a temporal texture: mornings, evenings, and rest offer goods that uninterrupted brightness would abolish. In friendship, one becomes delightful through virtues that allow others to enjoy one's company. Pleasure is therefore drawn into judgement, knowledge, and mutual responsibility rather than abandoned as a merely lower appetite.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.9** Changing conditions, rather than perpetual noon, provide the delights of a day. (Edition p. 70.)
- **III.41** The end sought in study determines the quality and extent of the student's delight. (Edition p. 156.)
- **I.80** Devotional and social virtues make a person delightful to other souls. (Edition p. 50.)

In this edition. Distinguish "delight in" from "delight" used with a person as its object. The latter concerns giving joy and is central to the book's reciprocity of love.

See also. Pleasure; Joy; Enjoyment; Love; Virtue.

Deordination

Deordination[123]

The word. Deordination is a rare theological word for departure from right order or a state of disorder. Its difficulty here lies as much in the sentence as in the vocabulary.

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122 Primary text: II.9; III.41; I.80.

123 Primary text: IV.21, IV.24, IV.25. Supplied 2026 editorial note 283 at IV.25 provides the rare-word gloss and explicitly tentative interpretation.

In Traherne. Traherne praises the soul that maintains order and charity amid surrounding vice. Resistance makes its goodness more conspicuous, as darkness sets off a star. God, who originally designed the world's happiness, cares especially for such a soul. The closing reference to likeness to God in deordination is compressed. The supplied note tentatively understands it as likeness maintained amid the world's disorder, rather than likeness in a shared moral defect. Nearby meditations support that reading: charity counteracts social devastation, and divine wisdom teaches the extraction of good from evil.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.25** The rare word closes the praise of charity surviving amid hostile conditions. (Edition p. 215.)
- **IV.21** Divine wisdom rules amid storms and teaches the restoration of order. (Edition p. 212.)
- **IV.24** Vice disorders the world; universal charity would remove its devastation. (Edition p. 214.)

In this edition. Keep the interpretation tentative: the obscure phrase does not straightforwardly attribute moral disorder to God.

See also. Order; Charity; Corruption; Evil.

Desert and merit

desert; deserve; merit; merits; worth deserving a response[124]

The word. Desert is what someone or something deserves; merit can name excellence calling for due acknowledgement. In a different theological construction, Christ's merits are the saving worth of his person and work.

In Traherne. Traherne repeatedly asks for a response proportioned to its object: a creature's goodness deserves pleasure, divine love deserves answering love, and the services of the world deserve gratitude. This language is not primarily a calculation of what the recipient has earned. Creation is freely given before any such achievement. In the prayer to Christ, however, "merits" belongs to justification and is not merely a synonym for the attractiveness of natural objects. Keeping the two uses

124 Primary text: I.23; I.71; II.2; I.93.

distinct prevents both the gift from becoming wages and the prayer from becoming an aesthetic appreciation.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.23** Rejoicing is to answer the merit of the goodness discovered in creation. (Edition p. 16.)
- **I.71** God is to be loved according to his desert. (Edition p. 45.)
- **II.2** The world's services call for gratitude proportionate to their merit. (Edition p. 66.)
- **I.93** The speaker asks Christ's merits to justify him. (Edition p. 59.)

In this edition. "Desert" here means deserving, not an arid place. Neither desert nor merit has one uniform doctrinal function throughout the book.

See also. Worth; Value; Gratitude; Gift; Righteousness.

Desire

desire; long for; covet; thirst after[125]

The word. Desire is an inclination toward a good not yet possessed or fully apprehended. It may be a particular wish, a persistent appetite, or the soul's expansive movement toward felicity.

In Traherne. Desire begins before clear knowledge: the opening argument finds an attraction to an unnamed greatness already working within the reader. Its uncertainty is educable, not proof of its worthlessness. Childhood and later experience gradually disclose that dead magnificence cannot satisfy a need for persons and affection. Traherne also attributes desire to God, where it expresses living generosity and the wish for a creature's wise response. Human desire consequently needs direction rather than extinction. Its danger lies in mistaken objects and self-defeating refusal, while its breadth is one sign of the ends for which the soul was made.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.2** An obscure attraction to some great thing challenges the claim that the unknown cannot be loved. (Edition p. 4.)

125 Primary text: I.2; I.23; III.22; IV.48.

- **I.23** The thirst for riches and dominion becomes virtuous when rightly guided. (Edition p. 16.)
- **III.22** The lifeless dining room and its later company distinguish magnificence from satisfying affection. (Edition p. 144.)
- **IV.48** God desires a free and grateful response to his gifts. (Edition p. 227.)

In this edition. The word is not automatically blameworthy. Even "covet" and "insatiable" may describe the rightly directed amplitude of desire; the object and manner of pursuit decide the sense.

See also. Appetite; Want; Expectation; Love; Felicity.

Devil

devil; devils; infernal opponent[126]

The word. A devil is an evil spiritual being, contrasted with an angel and associated with opposition to divine love. The word has few appearances but sharp argumentative uses.

In Traherne. Traherne does not build an elaborate demonic geography. The devil demonstrates that changing location cannot make a badly ordered spirit happy: misery follows evil principles. Conversely, the list of hostile powers at the end of the Second Century emphasises the security of participation in divine love. Devils are real adversaries within the argument, but they do not supply its chief explanation of ordinary blindness, which more often rests on custom and mistaken valuation.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.37** An angel would be happy anywhere and a devil miserable because their principles differ. (Edition p. 220.)
- **II.99** The opposition of men and devils cannot sever the enjoyment grounded in Christ's love. (Edition p. 125.)

In this edition. Do not turn the brief contrast of angel and devil into a claim that moral evil is merely a place or atmosphere. The point concerns the active principles of a spirit.

See also. Angels; Evil; Hell; Principle; Sin.

126 Primary text: IV.37; II.99.

Devotion

devotion; devout attachment; religious attentiveness[127]

The word. Devotion names a dedicated religious disposition and its expression in worship. Here the noun occurs among virtues through which a person becomes fit for spiritual friendship.

In Traherne. Its setting joins private adoration, congregational praise, sociability, and retirement. A devout person is not imagined as permanently withdrawn: solitude should make a return to others wiser and more precious. Devotion belongs with cheerfulness, gratitude, modesty, and charity, helping a soul become an enjoyment for its neighbours. The surrounding meditation makes love of Christ the direction of this whole life.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.80** Devotion appears in the list of virtues connecting worship, retirement, and gracious company. (Edition p. 50.)

In this edition. This is a rare noun in the primary text, despite the book's devotional character. Do not make its single occurrence carry a formal distinction between "devotion" and theology that Traherne does not state.

See also. Adoration; Prayer; Praise; Solitude; Charity.

Dignity

dignity; dignities; high worth; exalted office[128]

The word. Dignity can mean intrinsic excellence, honourable standing, or an elevated office. Traherne uses it for both the worth of the human soul and the exceptional office of Christ.

In Traherne. Human dignity is measured first by likeness to divine love, not by social precedence. The soul's ability to love and be loved makes it suitable for communion with God. Redemption gives this claim a further intensity: the one for whom the Son suffers is shown to possess astonishing worth. Knowledge of that dignity matters practically, because a merely implicit belief cannot give the assured enjoyment

127 Primary text: I.80.

128 Primary text: I.67; II.33; IV.6.

available through understanding. Yet creaturely exaltation and Christ's unique priesthood remain distinguishable; the shared vocabulary should not make their offices identical.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.67** The divine image gives the soul an unmeasurable dignity and fitness for friendship with God. (Edition p. 41.)
- **II.33** Christ's priestly office and the worth of those redeemed are interpreted together. (Edition p. 86.)
- **IV.6** Understanding the soul's true dignity contributes to full assurance and enjoyment. (Edition p. 201.)

In this edition. "Dignities" may denote honours or high stations; "dignity" may name worth without any worldly rank. Follow the argument rather than assuming a fixed social hierarchy.

See also. Image; Man and mankind; Christ; Honour; Greatness.

Diligence

diligence; diligent; faithfully sustained attention[129]

The word. Diligence is careful, persistent exertion. It stresses continuance and fidelity rather than the difficulty or novelty of an isolated achievement.

In Traherne. A thought of the whole world can arise easily and disappear just as easily. Keeping it alive for God's sake requires a care compared to the continual preservation of creation. The intellectual act becomes an enduring act of love. In the imagined discovery of a heavenly book, daily reading would likewise be necessary even if the gift arrived miraculously. Traherne thus qualifies his language of easy enjoyment: what is freely accessible is not automatically sustained.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.91** Maintaining the world in the soul is called a work of unspeakable diligence. (Edition p. 119.)
- **III.28** Even a miraculously delivered book would require daily study and attentive reading. (Edition p. 149.)

129 Primary text: II.91; III.28.

In this edition. Diligence is not a purchase price paid for grace. It describes the recipient's exercise and preservation of powers already given, especially attention and understanding.

See also. Consideration; Study; Labour; Thought; Love.

Discontent

discontent; discontentment; discontented; dissatisfaction[130]

The word. Discontent is the troubled sense that one's condition or possessions do not suffice. In the meditations it may arise from false wants or from faculties left without their proper exercise.

In Traherne. The analysis is diagnostic rather than a simple command to suppress dissatisfaction. A competitive society teaches people to desire scarce objects and makes their apparent riches a cause of grievance. Elsewhere the soul is forlorn because its knowing and loving powers are idle. The answer is not merely resignation to whatever one already thinks one possesses. It is a recovery of the real objects and activities through which the soul becomes alive. Traherne can therefore condemn discontent while defending an expansive, even insatiable, desire for genuine good.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.8** Trouble and discontent mark evil thinking, in contrast to the sweetness of rightly directed thought. (Edition p. 7.)
- **I.33** Invented scarce treasures generate discontentment, rivalry, and devised wants. (Edition p. 20.)
- **III.68** Faculties deprived of exercise remain idle, desolate, or discontented. (Edition p. 174.)

In this edition. Do not equate discontent with every unfulfilled desire. The passage may condemn the judgement producing dissatisfaction rather than the soul's capacity to desire more.

See also. Contentment; Desire; Want; Avarice and covetousness; Felicity.

130 Primary text: I.8; I.33; III.68.

Divaricated

divaricated feet[131]

The word. Divaricated means spread apart, branching out, or splayed. It describes the spider's extended feet in an image of awareness reaching throughout an articulated living structure.

In Traherne. The comparison explains the tenderness of a person transformed into Love. Its beams do not merely illuminate objects at a distance; feeling reaches to their furthest extension. The spider can sense at the extremities of its spread feet, and love is correspondingly present wherever its influence reaches. This is an embodied image for the soul's responsive range, combining expansiveness with exquisite sensitivity. Without the gloss, a reader may miss how carefully the physical detail supports the claim: extension need not mean dilution or numbness.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.80** The spider's divaricated feet illustrate love's ability to feel at its remotest reach. (Edition p. 249.)

In this edition. The 2026 note gives the gloss and parallels involving a spider's web. Traherne's wording here specifies feet; do not silently replace his anatomy with the parallel's web.

See also. Body; Love; Quick and quicken; Sensible and sensibles.

Divinity

divinity; divine learning; divine nature[132]

The word. Divinity commonly means theology: knowledge of God and matters belonging to God. In another construction it denotes godhead or divine nature. The two senses meet but should not be collapsed.

In Traherne. As a field of learning, divinity follows the study of humanity. Discovering the purposes of human faculties leads the investigator toward the wisdom and generosity that fitted objects to those powers. Its scope then becomes immense: God, creation, providence, covenant, the Church, resurrection, and eternal life. This is no narrow

131 Primary text: IV.80; historical gloss and image parallels: 2026 edition note to IV.80.
132 Primary text: III.42; III.43; III.44; IV.75.

professional specialism. The student learns how to enjoy what these doctrines disclose. Traherne can also expand natural philosophy until it includes both humanity and divinity, since all natures become objects of an inquiry governed by love and understanding.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.42** Investigation of human powers and ends leads into divinity. (Edition p. 157.)
- **III.43** The theological curriculum includes God and humanity's four estates. (Edition p. 158.)
- **III.44** An enlarged natural philosophy embraces humanity and divinity. (Edition p. 159.)
- **IV.75** Within the quotation from Pico, the world is a temple of divine nature. (Edition p. 246.)

In this edition. A "divine" may be a theologian; "His divinity" may mean God's nature. Neither necessarily means an exceptionally inspired individual in the modern loose sense.

See also. Man and mankind; God; Philosophy; Learning; Science.

Documents

heavenly documents[133]

The word. Documents here are lessons, teachings, or instructions. The word's older pedagogical sense is active even though modern readers are likelier to picture written records or files.

In Traherne. Traherne balances lessons taken from hell with teachings received from above. The earthly failure is not lack of information but the refusal to prize received blessings. The proper document changes the learner's valuation, gratitude, and conduct, enabling a heavenly life. This makes the word part of the book's practical educational project: true teaching must produce wisdom and holiness rather than a vain display. The surrounding phrase "deep instructions" supplies its nearest internal gloss, and the parallel structure prevents a mistaken contrast between spoken lessons and written heavenly papers.

133 Primary text: I.50; historical gloss: 2026 edition note to I.50.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.50** Heavenly documents teach the reader to prize gifts and please their giver. (Edition p. 30.)

In this edition. The 2026 note explains the teaching sense. Nothing in the passage requires an imagined celestial archive or a particular physical manuscript.

See also. Education; Gratitude; Learning; Value.

Dominion

dominion; rule; sovereignty; reigning[134]

The word. Dominion is authority or rule over a domain. Traherne transfers its political force to the soul's relation with the created world and to the breadth of love.

In Traherne. The reader does not become sovereign by seizing the goods of others. The world already serves the senses, and rightful mastery begins by recognising and valuing that service. In the mind, its parts can be examined and reunited in an intelligent delight in their whole arrangement. Love carries dominion farther still: one soul can receive the riches of other persons without reducing them to possessions under coercion. The royal language remains ambitious, but the acts constituting this empire are appreciation, fellowship, and communication.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.21** Esteeming the gifts already before the senses prepares the reader for further treasures and dominion. (Edition p. 14.)
- **I.23** True reigning consists in examining creation and rejoicing in its complete order. (Edition p. 16.)
- **II.70** The soul's love is called a dominion exceeding Adam's in Paradise. (Edition p. 105.)
- **IV.100** Divine kingship is glorified through the communion of infinitely capacious subjects. (Edition p. 263.)

134 Primary text: I.21; I.23; II.70; IV.100.

In this edition. Dominion does not consistently mean political jurisdiction or a legal property right. Its contemplative uses depend on a non-exclusive enjoyment that increases through other enjoyers.

See also. King and kingdom; Possession; Enjoyment; Love.

Dreadful

dreadful; How dreadful is this place[135]

The word. Dreadful can mean awe-inspiring, solemnly majestic, or fearfully great. It also retains the sense of terrifying; the positive older sense must not become a blanket substitute.

In Traherne. Jacob's recognition of the divine dwelling makes a place dreadful because its sacred significance overwhelms ordinary perception. Traherne similarly places dreadful beside amiable and blessed when describing the person exalted by divine love. These positive neighbours show that terror is not the whole meaning. By contrast, sin is a dreadful obstruction of enjoyment, where the alarming force is fully active. The range permits reverent wonder and moral fear to coexist without confusing the goodness of the object with the violence of its impression.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.31** Jacob's awakening reveals a dreadful house of God. (Edition p. 19.)
- **II.26** Dreadful belongs to the soul's exalted happiness. (Edition p. 83.)
- **III.51** Sin is a dreadful stumbling-block interrupting enjoyment. (Edition p. 164.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to I.31 gives "awe-inspiring." Check the object and neighbouring adjectives before choosing that gloss elsewhere.

See also. Admiration; Fear; Reverence; Wonder.

135 Primary text: I.31, II.26, III.51; historical gloss: 2026 edition note to I.31.

Dream

dream; dreamed; unreal or evanescent imagining[136]

The word. Dream may mean an imagined possibility or something fleeting, insubstantial, or falsely satisfying. Its figurative use lets Traherne test what people ordinarily call substantial life.

In Traherne. The childhood narrative reverses expected valuations: things purchased and admired by adults can become dreams, while the neglected creation is enduring wealth. Play passes and leaves no lasting enjoyment; a lazy intellectual complacency is likewise a dream sheltering sloth. Yet the word need not always condemn imagination. An imagined miraculous book is called a dream only by comparison with the richer, communal provision actually made by God. The governing contrast is often one of adequacy and permanence, rather than waking perception against every form of inward vision.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.14** Forgotten sport is a dream within a life reduced to shadows and vanities. (Edition p. 138.)
- **III.28** The imagined heavenly book proves dreamlike beside the actual community of those enjoying felicity. (Edition p. 149.)
- **IV.7** The belief that little knowledge suffices is exposed as a lazy dream. (Edition p. 202.)

In this edition. At III.14 and IV.6 some dream-language is visibly struck through in this edition. Distinguish retained wording from displayed cancellations; the surviving "a dream" in III.14 remains usable evidence.

See also. Imagination; Shadow; Vanity; Knowledge; Child and childhood.

136 Primary text: III.14; III.28; IV.7.

Dust

dust; dust of the streets[137]

The word. Dust names the ordinary, low-valued material of the street. Its very commonness makes it an exacting test of whether the world is truly being enjoyed.

In Traherne. Traherne remembers dust appearing as precious as gold to his infant eyes. The adult claim goes further: reason now finds it more precious. Childhood is therefore an opening perception that mature understanding can recover and strengthen. In the fuller childhood scene, dust and stones share the glory of trees, people, and the light of day. Their value belongs to a world received as treasure before restrictive habits of ownership take hold. The comparison does not make money the final measure of worth; it overturns the preference for a king's treasury over the rough and common gifts in which God is present.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.25** Adult reason esteems street dust more highly than the infant comparison with gold. (Edition p. 17.)
- **III.3** Dust and stones participate in the childhood vision of the whole world's splendour. (Edition p. 129.)

In this edition. The comparison concerns perceived worth, not a claim that dust is materially transformed into gold.

See also. Gold and silver; Child and childhood; Common things; Reason; Sand.

Duty

duty; office; obligation; what is due[138]

The word. Duty is an act or disposition owed in a relationship. Traherne repeatedly derives it from the nature and worth of a gift rather than presenting obligation as an arbitrary burden.

In Traherne. The first defining duty is to prize things according to their value. This binds righteousness directly to enjoyment: failure to appreciate is a failure to render what is due. Later, happiness itself

137 Primary text: I.25, III.3.
138 Primary text: I.12; IV.20; IV.27.

becomes a duty in a damaged world. The person must learn an active charity capable of living among injuries, not wait for society to become innocent. Meeting any one person also calls forth an obligation to mankind, because the individual can be treated as its representative. Duty thereby joins accurate valuation, resistance to resentment, and an enlarged social imagination.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.12** Giving created things their due esteem is named the reader's office and duty. (Edition p. 9.)
- **IV.20** Happiness among injurious people requires the healing dispositions of pity and love. (Edition p. 211.)
- **IV.27** Each person is to receive the love due to mankind represented in him. (Edition p. 215.)

In this edition. The imperative to be happy is not a claim that every painful feeling is sinful. Its immediate subject is the formation and practice of principles under difficult moral conditions.

See also. Obligation; Righteousness; Esteem; Happiness; Person.

Earth

earth; Earth; ground; the inhabited world[139]

The word. Earth can mean the ground that produces living things, the terrestrial region beneath the heavens, or the inhabited world offered to human enjoyment. Its force shifts with the scale of the passage.

In Traherne. The claim that earth is better than gold replaces scarcity with fertility as a measure of worth. Earth bears fruits and flowers, supports persons, and belongs to a larger order of services. It is therefore a gift whose ordinary usefulness is inseparable from beauty. Traherne also treats embodied life as the place where love meets resistance and can become heroic. Earth is neither a disposable stage before heaven nor an unfallen paradise without qualification. Its created goodness and its present moral injuries have to be held together.

139 Primary text: I.14; III.8; II.8; IV.60.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.14** The productive earth outranks gold and is given to each enjoyer in the example of Adam. (Edition p. 10.)
- **III.8** Right education would teach that earth and water are living treasures. (Edition p. 134.)
- **II.8** Solar operations refresh and repair the earth while serving many ends. (Edition p. 70.)
- **IV.60** Earthly need and danger make the exercise of love a testing of unusual glory. (Edition p. 234.)

In this edition. Do not silently replace every "earth" with "planet." In some places it is soil; in others it names terrestrial life or the visible creation in a heaven-and-earth pairing.

See also. World; Gold and silver; Creation; Flowers; Heaven.

Eden

Eden; Adam in Eden; first paradise[140]

The word. Eden is the garden of the first human life in Genesis. Traherne uses it as a remembered scriptural place, a measure of original happiness, and a way of describing a present relation to the world.

In Traherne. Eden can stand beside the reader's own life because the sun, earth, and human powers have not ceased to be gifts. A person stripped of what society can confer is still not necessarily poorer than naked Adam. The contrast between Eden and prison therefore sometimes concerns two ways of inhabiting the same creation. Yet redemption prevents this from becoming a simple restoration of an untouched past. The fallen creature knows the added treasure of Christ and the love disclosed in recovery, so that the original goodness is now encountered under further obligations.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.36** The same world can be Eden to one person and a prison to another. (Edition p. 22.)
- **III.3** The child's city appears to stand in Eden. (Edition p. 129.)

140 Primary text: I.36; III.3; IV.36; IV.53.

- **IV.36** Adam's nakedness challenges the supposed necessity of socially bestowed riches. (Edition p. 219.)
- **IV.53** Redemption adds Christ and new obligations to the recovered principles of innocence. (Edition p. 230.)

In this edition. Eden is not only a decorative synonym for a pleasant landscape. Ask whether the passage invokes original human conditions, present perception, or the comparison between innocence and redemption.

See also. Adam; Paradise; Innocence; Nakedness; Redemption.

Education

education; teaching; formation; nurture[141]

The word. Education is the shaping of a person's powers and valuations through teaching, example, conversation, and habitual surroundings. Traherne includes what is learned before formal study begins.

In Traherne. Bad education does not simply fail to provide information: it can eclipse an existing apprehension of good. The child learns what adults praise and loses what they never discuss. The university supplies another kind of formation, introducing arts and sciences that later become intelligible as resources of felicity. Traherne carefully distinguishes seeing those subjects then from understanding their full relevance afterwards. His ideal education would join the child's openness to mature inquiry, teaching the worth and use of knowledge rather than making scholarship an end in itself.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.7** The first light of infancy is overwhelmed by an education governed by wrong desires. (Edition p. 134.)
- **III.8** The narrator imagines how easily a child could have been taught the true riches of nature. (Edition p. 134.)
- **III.36** University learning supplies a second education whose relation to felicity is understood retrospectively. (Edition p. 154.)

141 Primary text: III.7; III.8; III.36.

In this edition. "Education" here is broader than attendance at school or university. The passage's teachers may be parents, companions, conventional talk, or the objects that a community prizes.

See also. Custom; Example; School; Learning; Child and childhood.

Effusion

effusions; outpourings; overflowings[142]

The word. An effusion is a pouring forth. The plural gives divine goodness an image of expansive communication, requiring room in which its gifts may be received.

In Traherne. The word occurs in the Fifth Century's argument about infinity. Without unlimited capacity, bounty would be confined and power would lack an adequate theatre. Effusions belong to the relation between source, gift, and receptacle: goodness is displayed by giving, and its inexhaustibility requires a corresponding amplitude of reception. The hydraulic figure helps make an abstract relation imaginable.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **V.4** Infinite goodness requires a receptacle for its effusions; limited room would constrain bounty. (Edition p. 267.)

In this edition. The outpouring is figurative. It does not by itself describe God as a material fluid or imply that the divine source loses substance through giving.

See also. Fountain; Bounty; Communication; Capacity; Infinity.

Element

element; elements; constituent powers of the natural world[143]

The word. An element is a basic constituent of the bodily world within the inherited vocabulary of natural philosophy. It belongs here to a field of inquiry rather than a developed physical theory.

In Traherne. The elements appear among the subjects opened to the narrator at university. Their significance lies in becoming parts of a world

142 Primary text: V.4.
143 Primary text: III.36; III.44.

whose hidden structure can be understood and enjoyed. The subsequent description of natural philosophy names earth, air, water, and fire alongside other corporeal things and makes inquiry into them serve a higher end: preparing the enjoyer's sight. The book values knowledge of material causes without treating that knowledge alone as the completion of wisdom.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.36** The elements enter the account of a university education later related to felicity. (Edition p. 154.)
- **III.44** Natural philosophy investigates corporeal things and prepares the eyes of the enjoyer. (Edition p. 159.)

In this edition. Do not automatically give "elements" its modern chemical sense. Traherne is using a historical philosophical vocabulary and does not present a periodic classification of substances.

See also. Air; Earth; Water; Fire; Philosophy.

Emergencies

emergencies in this world[144]

The word. Emergencies are events as they emerge or occur. The older sense is wider than the modern restriction to urgent crises, although a particular occurrence can certainly involve distress.

In Traherne. In his survey of David's psalms, Traherne describes the conversion of ordinary and extraordinary happenings into celestial joys. The emphasis lies on discerning present mercies and providence in what happens, rather than reserving divine significance for exceptional disasters. The surrounding account includes creation, history, travellers, sick people, and seamen. This breadth is important: life in heaven is practised through meditation on earthly works and ways. A crisis-only reading narrows the field of attention and can make the passage sound as though it counsels joy only during calamity.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.92** The survey of Psalm 103 describes present mercies turning emergencies into celestial joys. (Edition p. 191.)

144 Primary text: III.92; historical gloss: 2026 edition note to III.92.

In this edition. The 2026 note explicitly gives the wider sense of arising events. It does not claim that all such events are pleasant in themselves.

See also. David; Joy; Providence; Time.

Eminence

by way of eminence[145]

The word. By way of eminence means in a higher, more excellent manner. In theological use a perfection found in creatures can be attributed to God without making Him one instance of their limited kind.

In Traherne. Traherne first uses the phrase of God's comprehensive enjoyment of the world. He then applies it to the soul's loving riches: stellar influences, sunlight, precious materials, living sensation, and angelic life are gathered in it in an elevated form. The soul does not literally turn into a heap of these things. It knows, enjoys, and communicates their excellencies. The phrase helps a reader understand how a spiritual subject can contain bodily and cosmic goods without being spatially compounded from them.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.74** God possesses and enjoys all things comprehensively and by way of eminence. (Edition p. 181.)
- **IV.82** Love contains the excellencies of created things in a heightened spiritual manner. (Edition p. 251.)

In this edition. The scholastic explanation belongs to the 2026 note to III.74. Here eminence is not social celebrity, official rank, or physical elevation.

See also. God; Perfection; Soul; Whole.

145 Primary text: III.74, IV.82; theological gloss: 2026 edition note to III.74.

Emptiness

emptiness; empty; unfilled capacity[146]

The word. Emptiness is the absence of contents or of a satisfying relation to them. A room, the universe, or the powers of a soul may appear empty for different reasons.

In Traherne. The decisive distinction is between having objects and loving them. Life without objects is empty, but objects without love are themselves a deception. The lonely child in the field experiences the world's width as terrifying vacancy because other people and providential care have slipped from attention. Recollection can restore them to understanding without bringing them bodily into sight. Emptiness therefore discloses the inadequacy of mere extent: a capacious soul requires meaningful activity and companionship.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.65** Life without objects and objects without love are each presented as failures of enjoyment. (Edition p. 103.)
- **III.23** A desolate field becomes bearable through understanding the friends, cities, and care beyond immediate sight. (Edition p. 144.)
- **II.84** Creation fills and beautifies a soul otherwise extended through empty space. (Edition p. 114.)

In this edition. The more extreme sentence after "sensible emptiness" at II.65 is cancelled in this edition. Use the retained contrast without silently reinstating the deleted comparison with death and nothingness.

See also. Capacity; Nothing; Object; Love; Solitude.

Emulation

emulation; rivalry; desire awakened by example[147]

The word. Emulation is the impulse to match or surpass another. It can describe jealous competition, but it can also mean an ambition quickened by an admirable example.

146 Primary text: II.65; III.23; II.84.
147 Primary text: I.33; III.42.

In Traherne. Traherne preserves both possibilities. In the account of false riches, emulation belongs to the crowded list of passions through which people disturb one another. In the account of human faculties, it is a gift enabling examples to animate a person toward excellence. The opposition is not between social influence and isolated self-sufficiency. It is between copying mistaken valuations and receiving another's goodness as encouragement. Education must redirect the impulse rather than assume its mere existence is corrupt.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.33** Emulation accompanies false interests, murmuring, and the competitive pursuit of invented riches. (Edition p. 20.)
- **III.42** An implanted capacity for emulation allows examples to quicken the soul. (Edition p. 157.)

In this edition. "Emulation" is not always equivalent to envy. Its favourable occurrence matters: another person's excellence can enlarge one's aspiration without becoming a grievance.

See also. Envy; Example; Ambition; Education; Virtue.

End and means

end; ends; means; purpose; way to an end[148]

The word. An end is the purpose for which something exists or an activity is pursued; means are what bring that purpose about. "End" therefore need not signify cessation or a last moment.

In Traherne. The world's intelligibility depends on its being made for enjoyment. A soul that understands and loves creation fulfils its purpose instead of merely occupying a place within it. Yet Traherne's account is not a simple ladder in which everything is discarded once a higher goal is reached. In divine love, producer, means, and end belong internally together: love gives, receives, and attains itself. The world likewise becomes more glorious through a free answering activity that God's giving alone does not perform on the creature's behalf. Purpose thus joins created order to personal response.

148 Primary text: I.10; I.12; II.46; IV.46. For intention and execution, see IV.79.

Intention and execution

IV.79 distinguishes priority in a purpose from order in carrying it out. A human being may appear last in the creation narrative while being first in its intention: what comes after other creatures can be the end for which they were prepared. Traherne explicitly calls the preceding story a little fable. Its sequence teaches human excellence rather than suggesting that God finished the world before thinking of its enjoyer.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.10** Enjoyment accomplishes the end of God's desire in creating the world. (Edition p. 8.)
- **I.12** Esteem is both a duty fulfilling creation's end and a means of enjoyment. (Edition p. 9.)
- **II.46** Producer, means, and end are interpreted through the triune life of love. (Edition p. 93.)
- **IV.46** Creaturely liberty makes possible the praise and imitation for which creation is useful. (Edition p. 225.)
- **IV.79** Humanity is first in intention although last in execution; the preceding creation story is called a fable. (Edition p. 249.)

In this edition. In II.46 "Means" is part of a specific Trinitarian exposition. Do not detach the term from that context or reduce the Son to an external instrument.

See also. Cause; Use; Love; Trinity; Enjoyment.

Enemy

enemy; enemies; enmity; hostile or estranged relation[149]

The word. An enemy is one who stands against another; enmity is the relation of hostility. Traherne also examines the suffering caused by believing someone to be an enemy, especially God.

In Traherne. Misapprehension has practical power: to think God hostile destroys the happiness that a true apprehension would allow. Adam's postlapsarian bondage is described through precisely this fear of permanent divine hatred, answered by redeeming love. Human enemies remain more than mistakes of perception; the injured person needs

149 Primary text: IV.15; IV.53; IV.20; V.10; IV.7.

principles strong enough for an actually hostile society. Accordingly, charity is pictured as medicine rather than mere acquiescence. The contrast with heavenly security shows how fully love would enjoy itself if no hostile interruption remained.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.15** Apprehending God as one's enemy prevents the right use and enjoyment of his gifts. (Edition p. 209.)
- **IV.53** Adam's imagined permanent enmity with God is overcome through redemption. (Edition p. 230.)
- **IV.20** Living among injuries requires pity and love conceived as healing powers. (Edition p. 211.)
- **V.10** Divine care is imagined as preventing danger throughout the extent of God's dominion. (Edition p. 272.)
- **IV.7** The conceit that little knowledge suffices can conceal sloth or enmity against God. (Edition p. 202.)

In this edition. The word can identify real hostility or a mistaken interpretation of a relationship. "Enmity against God" in IV.7 also names resistance concealed beneath intellectual laziness.

See also. Hatred; Love; Forgiveness; Fear; Redemption.

Enjoyment

enjoy; enjoyment; enjoyer; possession actively appreciated[150]

The word. To enjoy is to possess or have the use of a good with conscious delight. The word retains a stronger relation to possession and participation than a modern phrase such as "having fun" usually conveys. In Traherne, it often names the activity through which an already-given world becomes truly one's own.

In Traherne. The great sequence beginning "Your enjoyment … is never right" makes the term a standard by which ordinary life is judged. The world is not properly enjoyed merely because its materials are available or its pleasures occasionally agreeable. The reader must apprehend a divine gift, recognise its worth, and respond with a breadth proportionate to it. Even the common dust can be a greater treasure than

150 Primary text: I.25; I.29; I.30; II.78; IV.48.

accumulated money once reason sees what infancy once apprehended without calculation.

This possession is strikingly non-exclusive. The reader is to perceive himself as sole heir, while discovering that everyone else is also a sole heir. Other persons therefore increase rather than diminish the inheritance. Their happiness must be desired with a zeal answering one's own; otherwise the claim to enjoy the whole world remains false. The language of inwardly containing seas, skies, ages, and kingdoms is an enlargement of concern, not a warrant for taking away another person's goods.

Enjoyment also changes the enjoyer. In knowing objects the soul discovers and exercises its own powers; its apparent emptiness is filled with meaningful forms and relations. The world does not merely stand outside as entertainment. It becomes present within understanding and affection, and the soul becomes beautiful through what it rightly receives. This explains why mere possession, bare information, and sensation without love cannot suffice.

Finally, enjoyment is a task of liberty. Gifts may be objectively present and still be refused or neglected. No abundance can compel a creature to prize it. The book's insistence on gratitude, study, recollection, and love therefore follows from its account of enjoyment rather than interrupting it. To receive well is already an important action, and the mature enjoyer in turn becomes an object of enjoyment to God and other souls.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.25** Right enjoyment gives common created things a value beyond a royal treasury. (Edition p. 17.)
- **I.29** Each sole heir's inheritance is enlarged by the presence of other sole heirs. (Edition p. 18.)
- **I.30** Enjoyment requires a concern for others' happiness equal to one's own. (Edition p. 18.)
- **II.78** Objects reveal, exercise, and transform the powers of the soul. (Edition p. 110.)
- **IV.48** The recipient's free love and esteem determine whether divine gifts are actually enjoyed. (Edition p. 227.)

In this edition. Do not reduce the word either to legal ownership or to a passing pleasant sensation. It often gathers knowledge, love, use, gratitude, and delighted possession into one activity. "Fruition" overlaps

with it, but individual contexts may stress realised participation more strongly.

See also. Fruition; Possession; Esteem; Love; Felicity; Heir and inheritance.

Enlargement

enlarge; enlarging; expand; magnify; dilate[151]

The word. To enlarge is to make more spacious or extensive. Applied to the soul, it describes an increase in the range and vitality of understanding, affection, and participation.

In Traherne. Love enlarges because another person brings a world of concerns and treasures into the lover's life. The same principle extends across history: attending to worshippers in many ages makes their joys and adorations present, freeing the reader from confinement to a single time. Objects likewise give the mind a scale corresponding to what it apprehends. This is not bodily expansion but an account of intellectual and affective presence. Its measure is the scope of genuine relations, not the intensity of self-importance.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.73** Loving expands the soul and brings the treasures of beloved persons into its enjoyment. (Edition p. 46.)
- **I.85** Participation in the saints' adorations enlarges the soul across kingdoms and ages. (Edition p. 54.)
- **IV.73** The apprehended object gives the soul an answering amplitude, from a grain of sand to the heavens. (Edition p. 243.)

In this edition. The heading gathers attested verbs rather than an authorial technical noun. "Enlarge" does not imply that the body occupies more space; the relevant powers are thought, love, and presence to objects.

See also. Capacity; Love; Presence; Infinity; Understanding.

151 Primary text: I.73; I.85; IV.73.

Entertainment

entertain; entertained; entertainments[152]

The word. To entertain can mean to receive, accommodate, occupy, or delight someone; entertainment includes the provision offered to a guest or to the mind. Amusement is only part of the range.

In Traherne. The natural world entertains the person with prospects, while friendship entertains with divine discourse and heavenly affection. The Cross, too, becomes an entertainment, a deliberately startling description of suffering contemplated as love. Traherne's hospitality language binds receiving to sustained attention: the soul is welcomed by gifts and in turn makes room for their meaning. Reading the word only as diversion makes its devotional force appear frivolous. Its expansiveness instead allows beauty, conversation, knowledge, and even sorrow understood through love to become nourishment for a receptive person.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.8** The sun illuminates the world and provides prospects that entertain its recipient. (Edition p. 70.)
- **I.83** Heavenly friends entertain with discourse and affection. (Edition p. 53.)
- **I.89** The speaker asks how Christ's sufferings can become an entertainment. (Edition p. 56.)

In this edition. The meaning must follow the object offered and the recipient's response; no claim about modern leisure culture is implied by the repeated word.

See also. Friendship; Communion; Pleasure; Prospect.

Envy

envy; envious rivalry; pain at another's good[153]

The word. Envy is a hostile response to a good possessed or enjoyed by someone else. It differs from a generous desire to imitate excellence because it treats another's advantage as one's own deprivation.

152 Primary text: II.8, I.83, I.89.

153 Primary text: I.33; IV.17; IV.12; IV.24.

In Traherne. The common world should free people from envy, since its most valuable goods need not be divided into competing shares. False estimates reverse this order, and even a small residue of envy can spoil an immense field of enjoyment. Traherne's comparison with grit in the eye makes the damage disproportionate: the defect is small, but it obstructs a vast prospect. He also recognises the prudential problem of displaying happiness among corrupted spectators. Quiet enjoyment may protect both the enjoyer and those liable to misunderstand or resent it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.33** Envy belongs to the social disorders produced by mistaken and exclusive riches. (Edition p. 20.)
- **IV.17** A little envy can destroy a world of joys, as grit obstructs the sight of heaven. (Edition p. 210.)
- **IV.12** The crow fable warns against needless display of one's satisfaction. (Edition p. 207.)
- **IV.24** Universal charity is imagined as dispersing envy and the other causes of social desolation. (Edition p. 214.)

In this edition. The text's caution about boasting happiness is situated in a damaged society. It does not cancel the positive good of being seen and loved in happiness under better conditions.

See also. Emulation; Malice; Common things; Charity; Happiness.

Epithalamium

Epithalamium[154]

The word. An epithalamium is a wedding song. Here the genre identifies a psalm's royal marriage imagery and guides its interpretation as the union of Christ and the Church.

In Traherne. Traherne first quotes the bride's summons, splendour, procession, and promised children, then explains what these images offer the Christian reader. Forsaking the father's house means leaving worldly customs and vanities for the Saviour's service. The palace becomes the whole world, enjoyed through the marriage. David possesses the bride, bridegroom, and palace by rejoicing in them. The image also multiplies

154 Primary text: III.77. Supplied 2026 editorial note 233 provides the genre gloss and the identification and extent of the Psalm 45 quotation.

relationships: children become princes or brides, while each soul joined to Christ regards the saints as its own children. The wedding song thus expands into an account of common joy and spiritual kinship.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.77** Psalm 45 is read as Christ's wedding song, with the world as palace and the saints as family. (Edition p. 182.)

In this edition. The supplied note identifies Psalm 45:10–16, with verse 12 omitted. Epithalamium names the kind of song, not a separate named author.

See also. Marriage; Bride and bridegroom; David; Church.

Equality

equal; equally; answering measure; undiminished communication[155]

The word. Equality means correspondence in measure, standing, or degree. Traherne's uses range from the relation of divine persons to the strength and distribution of love.

In Traherne. The ethical demand is exacting: one must desire other people's happiness with a thirst equal to the zeal felt for one's own. Elsewhere equality describes love's communication without diminution. Love at its source and love reaching its object are the same love, while perfected love can be equally vigorous wherever it extends. These are related affirmations of plenitude and reciprocity, but they are not one explicit political doctrine. A reader should preserve the particular comparison each passage makes.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.30** Equal concern for others' happiness is made a condition of enjoying the world. (Edition p. 18.)
- **II.41** Love in fountain and stream is equal in time and glory because it is the same communicated love. (Edition p. 91.)
- **IV.66** Perfect love is imagined as equally vigorous and wholly present throughout its extent. (Edition p. 238.)

In this edition. "Equality" is an editorial gathering of the attested adjective and adverb. Do not import a complete programme of legal or

155 Primary text: I.30; II.41; IV.66.

economic equality into comparisons about charity or divine communication.

See also. Love; Communication; Trinity; Person; Balance and proportion.

Error

error; err; mistake; misapprehension[156]

The word. Error is a departure from truth in judgement or understanding. It may govern conduct without being recognised, particularly when a whole community shares it.

In Traherne. Traherne's errors are often errors of use: people cannot enjoy what they have misunderstood. The wrong conception of a tool makes it unusable; a wrong conception of the world or soul has correspondingly greater consequences. Monetary valuations learned in childhood illustrate how something artificial can acquire the appearance of nature. Recovery requires more than exposing a false proposition. The newly understood principle must be practised until knowledge, esteem, gratitude, and joy regain their proper sequence.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.9** Training in the value of money and ornaments confuses invented riches with natural goods. (Edition p. 135.)
- **IV.15** Misunderstanding a saw or knife illustrates the far greater danger of misapprehending the world. (Edition p. 209.)
- **IV.54** Simple principles of thankful enjoyment have been submerged in errors and customs. (Edition p. 230.)

In this edition. "Error" need not imply a deliberate lie. The book is especially concerned with inherited and sincerely maintained mistakes whose practical effects resemble those of conscious vice.

See also. Mistake; Falsehood; Custom; Understanding; Use.

156 Primary text: III.9; IV.15; IV.54.

Essence

essence; being; substance in its defining nature[157]

The word. Essence means what a thing is in its fundamental being. It can be distinguished from a manner of subsistence, an operation, or a particular effect without becoming something separable from them.

In Traherne. In the Trinitarian meditation, one essence belongs to love in its begetting, communicated, and proceeding relations. In the account of divine knowledge, God's essence is described through the perfect sight of things, and the Fifth Century presents it as living knowledge, goodness, and providence in act. These formulations resist the picture of God as an inactive substance behind his relations. The striking language of infinity as the essence of Deity belongs to this wider attempt to connect limitless presence with active care and delight.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.40** Love is one in essence while subsisting in three manners. (Edition p. 91.)
- **II.84** Divine essence is characterised through eternal knowledge and the sight of things. (Edition p. 114.)
- **V.3** Infinite extent is called the eternal and incomprehensible essence of Deity. (Edition p. 266.)
- **V.10** God's essence is expressed as a pure and simple act present in its operations. (Edition p. 272.)

In this edition. Do not flatten every occurrence into "material stuff." Equally, do not isolate the spatial language of V.3 from passages that describe divine being as knowledge, love, and action.

See also. Being; Accident and substance; God; Trinity; Action and activity.

157 Primary text: II.40; II.84; V.3; V.10.

Estate and fourfold estate

estate; state; fourfold estate; private estate[158]

The word. Estate can mean a state or condition of life, as well as the property and resources belonging to someone. Traherne uses both senses. His fourfold estate is a theological account of humanity's condition, not a division of landed property.

In Traherne. III.43 arranges the study of humanity within divinity into innocency, misery, grace, and glory. Each condition opens a distinct body of questions. Innocency concerns original happiness, the laws governing it, paradise, and the unblemished powers of the soul. Misery concerns the Fall, sin in its original and actual forms, and the sufferings and mortality associated with the fallen condition. Grace concerns the new covenant, its mediator and conditions, and the scriptural, sacramental, and ecclesial means by which its life is exhibited. Glory concerns the soul beyond death, resurrection, judgment, everlasting life, heavenly communion, and fellowship with angels.

The sequence provides an explicit theological architecture within a book often remembered chiefly for its childhood vision or celebration of creation. It prevents innocence from swallowing the whole account. Traherne's language of pristine apprehension coexists with a named doctrine of original and actual sin, redemption by grace, and future glory. The categories are also more than a detached syllabus: at the meditation's close he identifies himself as born to these goods, redeemed for their fruition, and destined to live in their enjoyment.

The earlier autobiographical description of entering an estate of innocence is qualified by the child's seeming to occupy that condition. It draws an analogy between the child's untroubled apprehension and Eden. The fourfold scheme gives that language a theological reference without requiring the reader to mistake remembered childhood ignorance for a complete claim about sinlessness.

Elsewhere the property sense remains important. In I.30 the reader is asked to feel the world more intimately than a private estate. This expands appreciation beyond an enclosed holding; it does not turn estate in III.43 into a synonym for possessions. Attention to the local sense

158 Primary text: III.43, III.2, I.30. Supplied 2026 editorial note 207 to III.43 identifies the traditional theological scheme.

keeps together two central concerns of the book: the condition in which a person lives and the goods that person learns to enjoy.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.43** Sets out the four conditions and the topics belonging to each, ending with their personal fruition. (Edition p. 158.)
- **III.2** The child seems to have entered the estate of innocence. (Edition p. 128.)
- **I.30** Private estate means the familiar, individually held possessions against which enjoyment of the world is measured. (Edition p. 18.)

In this edition. The 2026 note identifies a traditional Protestant framework. Its reference to a later book using the fourfold scheme is a parallel in reception, not a source for Traherne. The primary text explicitly includes sin, original and actual, within misery.

See also. Original sin; Innocence; Grace; Glory; Possession.

Esteem

esteem; prize; account valuable; due regard[159]

The word. Esteem is an assessment of worth that includes a fitting regard for what is assessed. To prize something is to hold it precious; the act is stronger than merely noticing its existence.

In Traherne. Esteem turns a given good into an enjoyed treasure. Its correctness matters because a person may possess the whole world while valuing only a fashionable fragment. The acorn passage shows how judgement becomes richer as it comprehends relations: sun, sea, nourishment, purpose, and creature meet within a small object. The mature eye of reason can therefore recover childhood's sense of preciousness with greater understanding. Repeated gifts deserve increased esteem, not depreciation through familiarity; gratitude and joy follow from this trained valuation.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.12** Rendering things their due esteem is a form of righteousness. (Edition p. 9.)

159 Primary text: I.12; I.25; I.26; IV.54.

- **I.25** Reason finds common dust more precious than the infant eye had found it. (Edition p. 17.)
- **I.26** The acorn's relations and ends become food for spiritual understanding. (Edition p. 17.)
- **IV.54** Knowledge, prizing, thankfulness, and joy are set out as connected principles. (Edition p. 230.)

In this edition. Esteem here frequently concerns things, relations, and benefits, not only a person's social reputation. "Prizing" is valuation and appreciation, not the fixing of a market price.

See also. Value; Worth; Enjoyment; Gratitude; Consideration.

Eternity

eternity; eternal; everlasting; all ages present to understanding[160]

The word. Eternity names divine life and an extent not bounded by the succession of ordinary time. Traherne also uses eternal language for the lasting significance of objects and for the soul's capacity to be present to ages beyond its own. These applications are connected, but they do not all assert the same kind of timeless existence.

In Traherne. A central movement of the book is from confinement within a local moment toward participation in the whole history of divine love. The cross is physically and historically distant, yet understanding can receive it with undiminished force. In I.92, increasing its supposed distance by millions of ages would not remove it from apprehension. This is a claim about the powers of memory, knowledge, and love, not a claim that the body travels backward through time. The event becomes inwardly near with its historical distance still understood.

The childhood account gives a different entry into the subject. Corn, streets, and persons appear abiding, and eternity is manifest in daylight. The narrator explicitly reports the child's ignorance of sowing, birth, and death. A reader should therefore distinguish the child's literal assumptions from the adult's continuing judgement that this vision disclosed something valuable. The mature task is not to deny temporal change but to recover an apprehension of inexhaustible worth through fuller knowledge.

160 Primary text: I.42; III.3; I.92; II.84; V.1.

At the divine level, eternity belongs to a life whose power is always in act. God does not wait to become attentive or loving. This makes possible Traherne's difficult language of needs eternally satisfied: the desire to communicate and the fullness of communication are not separated by a period of frustrated waiting. Eternity is consequently crowded with relations, treasures, and activity, rather than pictured as inert duration.

The theme also sets a demanding practical horizon. The soul must make room for objects, persons, and acts of worship beyond its own day. Contemplation of other ages is meant to strengthen fellowship and enlarge affection now. Eternal concern does not excuse neglect of ordinary created things, because time and eternity are both among the goods enjoyed in God. The final century's opening gathers them together instead of asking the reader to discard one for the other.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.42** Divine wants are described as eternally and perfectly satisfied. (Edition p. 26.)
- **III.3** The child perceives eternity in daylight while not yet understanding birth and death. (Edition p. 129.)
- **I.92** The cross remains immediately apprehensible despite an imagined increase in temporal distance. (Edition p. 58.)
- **II.84** God is described as one eternal act of knowledge and wisdom. (Edition p. 114.)
- **V.1** Time and eternity are alike included among the objects enjoyed in God. (Edition p. 265.)

In this edition. "Eternal" may characterise God, a value, an object as present to God, or the range of human apprehension. Do not infer that a created body is literally uncreated or changeless from every use. Spatial imagery such as habitation and temple helps express presence without supplying a single technical definition.

See also. Time; Presence; Infinity; Cross; Memory; God.

Eusebius Pamphilus

Eusebius Pamphilus; first in the intention; last in the execution[161]

The word. Eusebius Pamphilus is Eusebius of Caesarea, the early Church historian, called Pamphilus after his teacher. The supplied edition dates him approximately 260–339 and records his participation at Nicaea in 325. Traherne invokes him for a distinction between intended purpose and completed production.

In Traherne. IV.79 qualifies the story of human creation taken from Pico della Mirandola. God did not fill the world before thinking of humanity. The story is a fable exhibiting human excellence, and its sequence must not turn humanity into a divine afterthought. A work's end can govern the making from the outset while being realized last. Traherne attributes this principle to Eusebius at the Nicene Council.

The maxim supports a further discrimination. Humanity's dignity cannot depend merely on being a spectator, a free agent, or conveniently situated: angels share those advantages. The distinct claim is that the human being comprehensively joins the visible and invisible orders, contains a variety of created kinds, and is the end to which creatures minister. The meditation then defends human changeability and choice as fitting means to union with God.

Eusebius thus supplies an attributed authority for the relation between purpose and sequence, not the whole argument about human superiority. The passage is most useful when read beside Traherne's interpretation of Pico's figurative language. Its philosophical distinction remains intelligible even though the historical attribution is uncertain.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.78** Interprets Pico's imaginative language through the soul's inward condition. (Edition p. 248.)
- **IV.79** Attributes the intention–execution distinction to Eusebius and applies it to humanity's place in creation. (Edition p. 249.)

In this edition. The supplied note states that the saying has not been found in Eusebius's writings. It identifies the principle as a scholastic

161 Primary text: IV.78, IV.79. Supplied 2026 editorial note 328 provides the biographical identification, records the unlocated attribution, and identifies the scholastic parallel in Aquinas, Summa theologiae I–II, question 1, article 1.

maxim and cites Aquinas. The Nicene setting is therefore Traherne's attribution, not a verified conciliar quotation.

See also. End and means; Man and mankind; Pico della Mirandola; Choice; Angels.

Evil

evil; evil things; moral disorder; harmful deprivation[162]

The word. Evil can name wrongdoing, the corruption of a good power, or a harm suffered through the loss of something valuable. Traherne frequently explains it through damaged relationships and misdirected love.

In Traherne. A remarkable argument makes an excessive wish to please the fountain of evil: goodness becomes compliance when the people one hopes to gratify prize the wrong things. Elsewhere the loss of another soul's love is itself an evil beyond imagining, because it frustrates an end for which creation exists. Yet grace enables love to address persons who are undeserving or presently evil. Loving a sinner is not the same act as approving the wrong; it manifests a generosity no longer dependent on finding an already attractive object.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.44** The desire to delight others becomes the source of conformity to mistaken values. (Edition p. 224.)
- **IV.86** Withheld love is a devastating loss of a good for which the world was made. (Edition p. 254.)
- **IV.87** Grace enables a soul to love sinners and those who deserve nothing from it. (Edition p. 255.)
- **IV.24** Social miseries are traced to vices rather than to a loss of created beauty. (Edition p. 214.)

In this edition. When "evil" qualifies an object of love, it may describe a sinful person. Do not turn the exhortation to love that person into an endorsement of harmful conduct.

See also. Sin; Corruption; Hatred; Grace; Love.

162 Primary text: IV.44; IV.86; IV.87; IV.24.

Example

example; examples; pattern offered by another life[163]

The word. An example is a case or model that teaches, illustrates, or invites imitation. In moral education it can operate before the learner possesses an independent judgement of its value.

In Traherne. Adults first become authorities through their lives, not only through explicit lessons. Their preferences lead the child to abandon unfamiliar goods and to seek approval in the conventional ones. The same susceptibility can become a means of growth: emulation was implanted so that good examples might animate and quicken the soul. Scripture's persons and acts also populate the reader's world with models of enjoyment. Traherne's account thus makes example a powerful medium whose moral quality depends on what it displays and on the use made of it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.7** The child's weakness, reverence, and ambition make adult example especially persuasive. (Edition p. 134.)
- **III.8** Parents' lives are said to enthral children more than their bodily descent does. (Edition p. 134.)
- **III.42** Good examples activate the natural power of emulation. (Edition p. 157.)
- **III.34** Scriptural history supplies living examples and holy souls for the reader's enjoyment. (Edition p. 153.)

In this edition. "Example" does not always mean a consciously chosen role model. An unnoticed pattern of talk, preference, or conduct may educate more effectively than formal instruction.

See also. Education; Emulation; Custom; Image; Scripture.

163 Primary text: III.7; III.8; III.42; III.34.

Excellency

excellency; excellencies; excellence; outstanding worth[164]

The word. Excellency is the quality by which something is especially good, admirable, or fit for its purpose. The plural often names particular perfections rather than titled persons.

In Traherne. Traherne discovers excellence through relations and capacities. Christ's dignity makes his condescension more, not less, astonishing; the lowliness of the act does not erase the worth of the person performing it. Human excellence lies partly in the soul's comprehensiveness and ability to use objects far beyond bodily scale. Such claims require exercise and discernment, not an assumption that every human action is excellent. The soul can fail to live according to its own gifts, which makes its capacity a summons as well as a privilege.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.37** The excellence of Christ's person magnifies the worth of his voluntary condescension. (Edition p. 89.)
- **IV.79** Human excellence is explained through comprehensive nature and a freely chosen relation to God. (Edition p. 249.)
- **IV.97** Experience reveals the soul's peculiar excellence in apprehending immense objects. (Edition p. 261.)

In this edition. "Excellency" normally carries an evaluative sense, not the modern form of address "Your Excellency." Ask which particular capacity, perfection, or relation makes the object excellent.

See also. Dignity; Perfection; Worth; Capacity; Man and mankind.

Exercise and practice

practice; exercise; exercised; operation[165]

The word. Exercise is the active use of a power; practice is its repeated enactment. In these meditations the terms cover thinking, meditating, tasting, seeing, and enjoying. They are not confined to bodily exertion or to a preliminary drill before real spiritual life begins.

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164 Primary text: II.37; IV.79; IV.97.

165 Primary text: IV.95–98. The interpretation is based on the primary sequence; no historical parallel from the editorial notes is required.

In Traherne. IV.95 insists that the richest gifts remain ineffectual for a soul that will not employ itself. A person may be surrounded by beauty and treasure yet remain inwardly desolate. The contrast is between available good and good actually apprehended and enjoyed. Idleness resembles rust because a faculty loses its living usefulness when it is left inactive.

The following meditations explain what exercise accomplishes. Frequent meditation makes celestial things familiar: what appeared distant or uncertain becomes present and evident, while supposedly irrelevant goods disclose their relation to the thinker. Trial also reveals a capacity that could not be certified in advance merely by inspecting oneself. The soul discovers that it can attend to immense matters, including divine eternity and goodness, without the bodily strain required to move a great weight.

Traherne's confidence is expansive, but the point is practical rather than magical. Exercise does not turn contemplation into physical command over the world. It makes the soul's spiritual strength available for understanding and delight. The sequence also gives the reader a reason to continue after an initially unpromising attempt: the power to manage a subject can emerge in using it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.95** States that gifts must be actively enjoyed and describes idleness as the soul's rust. (Edition p. 260.)
- **IV.96** Repeated meditation transforms remoteness into familiarity and apparent irrelevance into belonging. (Edition p. 261.)
- **IV.97** The soul's secret sufficiency is discovered through trial and exercise. (Edition p. 261.)

In this edition. The primary sequence supplies both the principle and its application. IV.98 continues the account of spiritual strength; its bold claims should be read as claims about contemplation, rather than bodily mastery.

See also. Action and activity; Habit; Diligence; Principle; Meditation.

Expatiate

expatiate; range freely; move at large[166]

The word. To expatiate is to range freely over a spacious field. The field may be intellectual or spiritual, while the verb preserves an image of unconfined movement.

In Traherne. Scripture gives the narrator room to move among ages, persons, and works of love. Its historical abundance proves better than an isolated miraculous revelation delivered only to him. Divine infinity supplies a second and still larger field in which thought can range without restraint. In both occurrences, liberty depends on rich objects and relations; it is not merely aimless wandering or prolonged talk.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.34** The revealed history of Scripture lets the reader expatiate among divine works and holy persons. (Edition p. 153.)
- **V.2** God's infinity is the field in which thoughts expatiate without limit. (Edition p. 265.)

In this edition. The modern sense "speak at length" is too narrow for these passages. "Range freely" preserves the spatial and participatory force of the attested verb; "expatiation" is a useful related search form.

See also. Room; Space; Liberty; Scripture; Infinity.

Expectation

expectation; expect; anticipatory desire[167]

The word. Expectation is an attentive anticipation of something not yet disclosed or possessed. It may blend hope, curiosity, and desire without amounting to a settled prediction.

In Traherne. The unknown good already draws the soul before it has a name. New objects and news can awaken the thought that happiness lies within them; the narrator tests and sometimes exhausts those promises. This anticipation makes him vulnerable to disappointment but also prepares recognition. Even the terrifying openness of the evening field contains hope at its borders. The eventual judgement on Scripture

166 Primary text: III.34; V.2.

167 Primary text: I.2; III.23; III.25; III.32.

turns disappointment about its manner of arrival into appreciation of a provision exceeding what he had expected.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.2** The reader is asked to recognise an expectation of some unnamed great thing. (Edition p. 4.)
- **III.23** Fear in the empty field is accompanied by expectation from its distant borders. (Edition p. 144.)
- **III.25** News and curious discoveries are searched for the happiness they might conceal. (Edition p. 146.)
- **III.32** Scripture's matter exceeds expectation while inquiry corrects dissatisfaction with its manner. (Edition p. 151.)

In this edition. Expectation in these passages is not a promise that every novelty will satisfy. Its proper education includes finding the limits of an object and revising the imagined form of fulfilment.

See also. Desire; Hope; Wonder; Experience; Revelation.

Experience

experience; trial; exercise; knowledge proved in living[168]

The word. Experience is knowledge acquired or confirmed through actual apprehension and exercise. Traherne can oppose it to what a book alone can give without rejecting books as sources of wisdom.

In Traherne. The remembered apprehensions of infancy offer an experiential teaching that cannot simply be transferred as information. Later, principles are tested by what happens when the heart's judgement is restored or allowed to stray. Even the soul's extraordinary capacity remains hidden until exercised: an immense object may seem unmanageable before the mind discovers its power to apprehend it. Experience therefore concerns the active trial of faculties, not merely the accumulation of impressions or the authority of age.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.1** Infant apprehensions are to be taught through experience rather than obtained from books alone. (Edition p. 128.)

168 Primary text: III.1; IV.41; IV.46; IV.97.

- **IV.41** The connection between a rightly ordered heart and enjoyment is confirmed in lived practice. (Edition p. 221.)
- **IV.46** Experience is invoked to make the value of creaturely liberty intelligible. (Edition p. 225.)
- **IV.97** The soul's secret sufficiency is disclosed only by trial and exercise. (Edition p. 261.)

In this edition. Do not turn the appeal to experience into a rejection of reasoning or revelation. Its role here is often to verify a principle by enacting and discovering its consequences.

See also. Action and activity; Knowledge; Reason; Child and childhood; Principle.

Eye

eye; eyes; eye of the mind; spiritual sight[169]

The word. The eye is a bodily organ of sight and a recurrent figure for attentive understanding. An open, clear, or sharpened eye may therefore name a moral and intellectual readiness as well as a physical condition.

In Traherne. The world's riches require open eyes, but visibility alone cannot reveal their full worth. The senses receive appearances; understanding discovers services, relations, and inward excellencies. At the cross, fleshly eyes see wounds while understanding must meet the understanding of Christ. The later image of souls as mirrors with lids adds freedom to the account: a person can interrupt the reception and return of love through ignorance or inattention. Seeing rightly is thus receptive, interpretative, and responsible.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.37** Open eyes are enough to begin apprehending the world's neglected magnificence. (Edition p. 22.)
- **I.66** The bodily eyes themselves are living treasures surpassing jewels. (Edition p. 41.)
- **I.88** Bodily sight of Christ's flesh is distinguished from understanding his inward life. (Edition p. 55.)

169 Primary text: I.37; I.66; I.88; IV.86.

- **IV.86** The soul is a mirror with lids, able to admit or interrupt the light of love. (Edition p. 254.)

In this edition. An "eye" in these meditations is not invariably metaphorical. Preserve the progression from bodily organ to faculty and from faculty to the deliberate exercise of attention.

See also. Sight; Body; Understanding; Consideration; Mirror.

Face

face; countenance; visible presence; face of Heaven[170]

The word. Face means the visible front or countenance of a person, and by extension an appearance through which something becomes present. In biblical language the face of God can name direct divine presence.

In Traherne. The term carries several degrees of disclosure. The ruddy faces of people belong to the child's first vision of communal treasure; Christ's damaged face confronts the beholder with a love whose depth cannot be read from wounds alone. The divine face is presently seen as in a glass, while unclouded sight would make the attraction of blessedness unmistakeable. Traherne therefore uses facial imagery to explore both intimacy and the limits of surface perception.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.3** Human faces and sparkling eyes form part of the child's undivided inheritance. (Edition p. 129.)
- **I.64** Christ's bleeding face requires an understanding of the person and his works. (Edition p. 39.)
- **II.97** Present knowledge of God's face is contrasted with the clear sight of glory. (Edition p. 124.)

In this edition. "Face" may be literal, figurative, or scriptural. The claim to see God's face in a mirror is not a description of a visible divine body.

See also. Eye; Beauty; Image; Christ; Presence.

170 Primary text: III.3; I.64; II.97.

Fain

fain; would fain; was fain[171]

The word. Fain can mean gladly or eagerly; with forms of be and an infinitive it can mean obliged or constrained. As an adjective it can mean glad, as in the singing lips of the Psalter.

In Traherne. These senses pull differently within the book. The speaker was fain to relearn the childhood knowledge that social custom obscured: necessity dominates that construction. Christians who would fain enjoy heaven now express eagerness rather than compulsion. The psalmic lips that shall be fain are joyful. Holding the range together prevents a reader from making every instance either reluctant duty or willing pleasure. Traherne's argument repeatedly joins desire with the work needed for its fulfilment, but the small word records the particular balance in each sentence.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.7** The lost childhood light makes relearning necessary. (Edition p. 134.)
- **IV.9** Would fain expresses desire for present enjoyment. (Edition p. 204.)
- **IV.92** Singing lips are fain, or glad. (Edition p. 259.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to IV.92 identifies the Prayer Book wording and glosses glad. The different constructions at III.7 and IV.9 require their own contextual senses.

See also. Delight; Desire; Learning; Praise.

Faith

faith; believe; implicit faith; assurance[172]

The word. Faith is trusting belief in divine truth and promise. It can precede detailed understanding, sustain action amid incomplete vision, and grow toward assurance through knowledge.

In Traherne. Traherne gives faith an exploratory role. Trust in infinite goodness directs the investigator toward the hypothesis that the

171 Primary text: III.7, IV.9, IV.92; Psalter wording and glad: 2026 edition note to IV.92.
172 Primary text: III.53; I.100; IV.6; II.97.

best gifts should be common; observation and comparison then disclose their value. Faith is also a way Christ dwells within the heart, since the believed object becomes actively present in thought, love, and esteem. The text does not oppose faith and inquiry as mutually exclusive. It does, however, distinguish weak implicit belief from a richer assurance able to enjoy what it confesses, and the present life's mediated vision from the full clarity of glory.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.53** Implicit faith in goodness guides the search for value among common things. (Edition p. 165.)
- **I.100** Christ's indwelling by faith is explained through the presence of an object within a knowing soul. (Edition p. 64.)
- **IV.6** Understanding can turn implicit belief into the full assurance needed for enjoyment. (Edition p. 201.)
- **II.97** Faith belongs to a condition in which divine beauty is still seen through a mirror. (Edition p. 124.)

In this edition. "Implicit faith" is not used only as an insult. Its provisional role can be fruitful; the criticism falls on remaining satisfied with little understanding when fuller knowledge is possible.

See also. Belief; Knowledge; Understanding; Revelation; Christ.

Fall

fall; fallen; Adam's sin; loss of original blessedness[173]

The word. The Fall is humanity's departure from its original relation to God through sin. The verb also describes particular lapses and the loss of a good that was previously enjoyed.

In Traherne. The greatness of the Fall cannot be understood without first knowing the worth of what was given. Traherne therefore treats creation's goodness as necessary to the recognition of sin, rather than as a diversion from it. His childhood narrative then gives social transmission a conspicuous role: he falls through others' examples and acquired valuations. This does not remove Adam from the account, for the same passage traces those examples back to his sin. Restoration recovers the exercise of good principles while adding the revelation of redeeming love.

173 Primary text: II.3; II.4; III.8; IV.53.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.3** Knowledge of the world as gift makes the greatness of sin and the Fall intelligible. (Edition p. 67.)
- **II.4** The loss of blessedness is measured by the love and purpose from which humanity falls. (Edition p. 67.)
- **III.8** The child's corruption through others is linked to Adam without being reduced to bodily descent. (Edition p. 134.)
- **IV.53** Redemption restores principles of innocent life under added obligations. (Edition p. 230.)

In this edition. Distinguish the theological Fall from ordinary uses of "fall" and "fallen." The emphasis on custom in III.8 is a stated qualification within the doctrine, not a warrant to omit its explicit reference to Adam.

See also. Adam; Original sin; Corruption; Innocence; Redemption.

Falsehood

falsehood; forgery; counterfeit claim[174]

The word. Falsehood is untruth, and in the relevant passage it carries the further sense of fraudulent pretence. What is claimed to have been acquired is not borne out by its use.

In Traherne. Traherne compares the scholar who studies happiness without enjoying it to an alchemist who claims the philosopher's stone but produces none of its benefits. The absence of practical fruit exposes the claim: either the possession is counterfeit or its value has not really been understood. The test is pointedly inward as well as polemical. One must devote time to possessing happiness after spending time in search of it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.11** The supposed alchemist's unused stone illustrates the falsehood of claiming happiness without enjoying it. (Edition p. 206.)

In this edition. The noun occurs within an analogy about fraudulent possession, not as a general theory of lying. Its force comes from the difference between verbal profession and enacted enjoyment.

174 Primary text: IV.11.

See also. Error; Truth; Use; Happiness; Hypocrisy.

Fame

fame; report; renown; public reputation[175]

The word. Fame can mean what is reported about a person or thing, as well as an established reputation for distinction. It need not carry the modern association with mass celebrity.

In Traherne. Reputation can help concealed goodness find companionship. A person's visible virtue may attract other holy souls and reveal them in return. Public report also guides the narrator toward doctrines and sacred histories whose intrinsic value he has not yet demonstrated. That guidance is preliminary: he resolves to study what the world celebrates. In the account of omnipresence, fame expands into a hope that worthy actions are known across the divine field of life. Recognition becomes a relation between virtue, spectators, and shared joy, rather than mere notoriety.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.82** The fame of virtue is a means of discovering otherwise hidden companions. (Edition p. 52.)
- **III.54** The public fame of sacred things prompts inquiry into their unknown value. (Edition p. 166.)
- **V.9** Divine omnipresence makes an immense field for the knowledge and praise of virtuous actions. (Edition p. 271.)

In this edition. "Fame" in III.54 means received report as much as personal renown. Do not assume that public circulation itself supplies the final evidence of truth or worth.

See also. Honour; Glory; Witness; Society; Virtue.

175 Primary text: I.82; III.54; V.9.

Fancy

fancy; imaginative invention; poetic elaboration[176]

The word. Fancy names the inventive imagination, especially when it gives freedom and ornament to language. It can wander beyond literal statement without necessarily becoming worthless.

In Traherne. Traherne uses the word while judging Pico's account of human changeability. He acknowledges the luxuriance of the poetic presentation, then distinguishes its serious inward meaning from an impossible bodily transformation. Becoming plant, beast, or angel refers to the governing condition of the soul. The passage offers a compact rule for reading elevated figures: identify what the language performs before demanding literal assent to every image.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.78** Pico's wandering fancy is admitted, but the transformation story is interpreted through inward qualities rather than bodily shape. (Edition p. 248.)

In this edition. The occurrence is part of Traherne's commentary on an explicitly attributed passage. Do not quote Pico's whole fable as an unqualified literal assertion by Traherne.

See also. Imagination; Allegory and parable; Image; Man and mankind.

Fatal

fatal; inevitably fatal[177]

The word. Fatal can mean appointed by fate or inescapable, without implying death. Elsewhere it can retain a destructive or deadly force; context decides which sense is active.

In Traherne. The Fifth Century calls every creature's situation within divine infinity inevitably fatal. This is an unavoidable condition of existence, presented as a treasury and dwelling place, rather than a threat of annihilation. Moving anywhere cannot move a being outside that infinite presence. By contrast, the poem against sin calls it fatal woe amid

176 Primary text: IV.78.

177 Primary text: V.2, III.49; gloss and textual caution: 2026 edition note to V.2.

grief, defilement, and lost joy. The contrast is useful because importing the deadly meaning into the account of infinity reverses its emotional and theological direction.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **V.2** No creature can escape being within the infinite, wherever it moves. (Edition p. 265.)
- **III.49** Sin's fatal woe names its destructive effect on joy and the soul. (Edition p. 162.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to V.2 glosses fatal as fated and records a supplied word in the surrounding sentence. Its textual difficulty should not be disguised as complete syntactic certainty.

See also. Infinity; Omnipresence; Sin; Space.

Father

Father; father; heavenly Father; source of filial relation[178]

The word. Father may denote a human parent, God as the giver of creaturely and filial life, or specifically the first person of the Trinity. Context determines which relation is in view.

In Traherne. The world becomes a house intelligible through its giver, and the recipient becomes heir, child, and companion. Divine fatherhood therefore carries an invitation to resemblance: the child must share the Father's generosity and delight in others. In the Trinitarian exposition, Father and Son are not interchangeable labels for a benevolent deity. Their relation is one of begetting within a shared eternal life, while the Spirit's indwelling makes divine love active in the soul. Human fatherhood also provides a smaller-scale image of self-giving affection, though it cannot exhaust the divine relation.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.16** God is Father, friend, and benefactor to the reader who receives the world. (Edition p. 11.)
- **I.39** Sonship requires a great soul like the Father's, loving others as he does. (Edition p. 23.)

178 Primary text: I.16; I.39; II.44; IV.56.

- **II.44** The Son is distinguished from the Father by begetting within shared eternal glory. (Edition p. 92.)
- **IV.56** A father's movement into danger exemplifies love that prefers the beloved's welfare. (Edition p. 232.)

In this edition. Capitalisation assists but does not settle interpretation. Read "Father" with its immediate relation to Son, child, creature, or human family; these are not identical uses.

See also. Heir and inheritance; Parents; Trinity; Gift; Love.

Fear

fear; fears; dread; reverent regard[179]

The word. Fear may be an expectation of harm or a reverent response to divine authority. The biblical phrase "fear of the Lord" must be distinguished from a child's anxiety or suspicion of hostility.

In Traherne. The evening field gives fear an instructive setting. Once the child forgets the presence of other people, the world's openness becomes a source of imagined invasion and danger. Recollection of providential care and human habitation answers that desolation. Scriptural fear has another function: it belongs with the purity and endurance of divine law, which Traherne presents as a treasure. Fear can thus indicate a deficient apprehension requiring correction or an appropriate religious disposition sustained by knowledge.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.23** Forgotten companionship makes the wide world terrifying, until its larger supports are understood. (Edition p. 144.)
- **III.72** The psalm's clean and enduring fear of the Lord belongs to the delights of divine law. (Edition p. 179.)
- **I.59** The cross gathers human fear and hope into a single revealing spectacle. (Edition p. 36.)

In this edition. Do not translate every fear into terror. Conversely, the account of childhood dread should not be softened into reverence: its weakness, loneliness, and anticipated danger are explicit.

See also. Hope; Trust; Reverence; Enemy; Providence.

179 Primary text: III.23; III.72; I.59.

Felicity

felicity; perfect happiness; blessed enjoyment[180]

The word. Felicity names the full happiness or blessedness for which human life is made. It is a governing term of the book, often interchangeable with happiness, but its repeated use concentrates attention on completeness: the soul's good, its objects, its manner of enjoying, and its active life must answer one another.

In Traherne. The account of university learning opens onto many arts and sciences, yet no tutor explicitly teaches felicity, the mistress of them all. This is not a dismissal of learning. The studies provide seeds and awaken powers; what is lacking is the governing end that would allow knowledge to be possessed as enjoyment. Felicity orders the sciences by asking what they disclose about the world's worth and the human powers able to receive it.

That ordering requires extensive knowledge because goods exist in relations. The sun matters through its services to seas, fields, eyes, and other creatures; even gold takes its value from a network of human uses. An isolated fragment cannot disclose the whole good to which it belongs. This explains a recurrent difficulty: the reader needs knowledge to perceive felicity's attractiveness, but must already be attracted enough to undertake the labour of learning. Natural desire helps bridge the interval. The intensity of an initially obscure longing can move inquiry before understanding is complete.

Traherne then distinguishes two indispensable perfections: the objects enjoyed and the manner of enjoying them. He gives special emphasis to the latter, since even perfect gifts can be received inadequately. The manner itself becomes another object of joy. One can delight not only in creation but in the wisdom, liberty, and love through which it is enjoyed. Felicity consequently cannot be reduced to the possession of desirable circumstances.

Its practical character is made explicit through the account of powers and objects. Faculties become actual in being exercised: knowing, living, and loving extend the person to what lies beyond the self. Traherne recognises this in the definition of felicity that he attributes to Aristotle,

180 Primary text: III.37; III.55; III.56; III.57; III.68. For negative definitions of felicity, see II.100.

but develops it through a life embracing all objects in knowledge and love. Felicity is therefore an activity of a fully awakened creature, not inert security or a fortunate sensation. The perfection language describes the scope of the good being sought; the book's education trains the reader toward it through increasingly faithful acts of enjoyment.

Against a merely negative felicity

At II.100 Traherne objects to defining happiness chiefly by what it excludes. A prohibition of riches, honours or pleasures leaves the desirous person asking what is positively to be enjoyed. His answer is not to discard virtue, contentment or the government of passion. These require their grounds and objects: true riches must be distinguished from false ones, and clear pleasures from muddy ones. Passions are rightly governed when freed from impediments and directed toward their proper good. Contentment arises from perceiving treasures fully, rather than from making the soul barren of anything to receive. The polemic belongs to Traherne's account of these philosophers; it is not a neutral summary of every ancient account of happiness.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.37** Felicity should govern the sciences, whose knowledge otherwise remains alien to the student. (Edition p. 154.)
- **III.55** The good of each object must be understood through its place and relations. (Edition p. 166.)
- **III.56** Desire for unknown felicity supplies an initial impetus where understanding is incomplete. (Edition p. 167.)
- **III.57** Perfect objects and a perfect manner of enjoyment are distinguished. (Edition p. 168.)
- **III.68** Knowing, loving, and the exercise of virtue bring the soul's powers into act. (Edition p. 174.)
- **II.100** The criticism of negative definitions culminates in objects, powers and rules of enjoyment. (Edition p. 126.)

In this edition. Do not impose a rigid distinction between "felicity" and "happiness" that the text does not maintain. Nor should "perfect" be weakened into merely pleasant: the demand for completeness gives the argument its force, even when the reader's present exercise falls short.

See also. Happiness; Enjoyment; Desire; Knowledge; Virtue; End and means.

Fellowship

fellowship; shared participation; spiritual society[181]

The word. Fellowship is participation in something held in common and, by extension, company among those who share it. The biblical phrase "fellowship of the mystery" gives the word a strongly theological setting.

In Traherne. The mystery is not exhausted by contemplating redemption. It includes the end for which redemption was accomplished: communion with God in glory. Fellowship can therefore unite persons who have never met bodily, including angels and believers whose hidden lives the child did not know existed. Discovering these others corrects the fantasy that an isolated revelation to oneself would be the highest gift. Shared enjoyment supplies support and confirms that the good exceeds a private intellectual possession.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.3** The world's inheritance is introduced through the fellowship of a previously hidden mystery. (Edition p. 5.)
- **I.5** That fellowship includes participation in the glory for which Christ redeemed humanity. (Edition p. 6.)
- **II.25** Human understanding permits admission into the fellowship and order of angels. (Edition p. 82.)
- **III.28** Previously unseen contemplatives prove companions and a help in the pursuit of felicity. (Edition p. 149.)

In this edition. Fellowship means more than friendly feeling. In these passages it names a real participation in objects, life, and glory, while bodily proximity is not always required.

See also. Communion; Society; Angels; Friendship; Glory.

181 Primary text: I.3; I.5; II.25; III.28.

Fidelity

fidelity; unfaithful[182]

The word. Fidelity is steadfast faithfulness: love or allegiance maintained in conduct. Here its emphasis falls on loyal performance and endurance, rather than solely on accepting a proposition as true.

In Traherne. In the prayer following contemplation of Christ's death, fidelity must become visible in care and suffering. The speaker asks to love others through divine assistance and to find life in the pattern of Christ's self-giving. Faithfulness is paired with efficacy: love must be both constant and effective. Later, awareness of divine goodness and communion supplies courage for duty, producing zeal, fidelity, and praise. Ignorance has the opposite practical effects, leaving the person fearful, barren, indifferent, and unfaithful. Knowing and loving are therefore joined by what they enable the believer to do and sustain.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.90** The prayer asks that care and suffering display love's fidelity and efficacy. (Edition p. 57.)
- **III.99** Knowledge of communion with God strengthens joyful duty, courage, zeal, and fidelity. (Edition p. 196.)

In this edition. Faithfulness here is active and relational. Traherne's claim concerns the practical fruit of understanding, not bare verbal profession.

See also. Faith; Friendship; Service; Darius and Zopyrus; Love.

Fire

fire; flame; enflame; burning love[183]

The word. Fire can be literal heat and danger, but it is also a figure of ardour, illumination, purification, and an affection that continually communicates itself.

In Traherne. The cross is a tree burning with invisible love, whose flame makes the world intelligible. Prayer asks that an answering fire remain on the altar of the heart without intermission. The body can serve

182 Primary text: I.90, III.99.

183 Primary text: I.60; I.91; II.51; IV.56; IV.94.

as a lantern for this inward light, but love reaches farther than bodily powers. Elsewhere ordinary fire tests the same principle through a parent's willingness to enter danger for a child. The imagery is therefore both contemplative and practical: it describes an inward intensity that issues in sustained attention and self-giving acts.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.60** The cross becomes a tree lit by the invisible flame of Christ's love. (Edition p. 37.)
- **I.91** The speaker asks for love as a perpetual fire upon the heart's altar. (Edition p. 58.)
- **II.51** The body is a lantern for love, and the soul is urged toward baptismal fire. (Edition p. 96.)
- **IV.56** A father entering literal fire exemplifies love's preference for another's safety. (Edition p. 232.)
- **IV.94** Practised principles are fires at which the reader must warm himself daily. (Edition p. 260.)

In this edition. Trace what each flame illuminates or consumes. Devotional burning, household fire, and punishment are different uses of the image, even when they lend intensity to one another.

See also. Love; Light; Altar; Heart; Zeal.

Firmament

firmament; firmament of Heaven; the visible celestial expanse[184]

The word. Firmament names the sky or celestial expanse, especially in scriptural descriptions of the ordered heavens. It gathers the field in which stars are seen.

In Traherne. Traherne uses the sun's presence among the stars as an analogy for the soul's wider power of presence. The scriptural occurrence has a complementary role: the heavens display workmanship and communicate glory without ordinary speech. In each setting the visible expanse prompts an account of relation and intelligibility, rather than remaining a remote background to earthly affairs.

184 Primary text: II.71; III.72.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.71** The sun's shining through the firmament prepares an argument about the soul's greater capacity. (Edition p. 106.)
- **III.72** Psalm 19 makes the firmament a declaration of divine workmanship. (Edition p. 179.)

In this edition. The word carries an inherited biblical and cosmological register. These passages do not by themselves require the reader to infer a separately argued theory of a solid celestial shell.

See also. Heaven; Stars; Sun; Glory; Scripture.

Flesh

flesh; fleshly eyes; embodied mortal life[185]

The word. Flesh names bodily substance or embodied human life. It can also mark the limited reach of bodily faculties when contrasted with the soul's understanding and love.

In Traherne. At the cross, flesh is the visible place of suffering and a veil before the inward greatness of Christ. Yet simply removing the veil would not reveal a spiritual object to bodily sight. Understanding must answer understanding, and love must read love. In the comparison of body and soul, flesh can seem heavy and narrowly capable, but its senses still serve the life of love. The argument places embodiment within a hierarchy of powers; it does not make every bodily function an evil.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.62** Christ's bleeding flesh is contemplated as the expression of a saving love. (Edition p. 38.)
- **I.88** Fleshly sight must be accompanied by an understanding of Christ's inward life. (Edition p. 55.)
- **II.51** The body's limited powers serve as a lantern and instrument for more expansive love. (Edition p. 96.)

In this edition. Do not assume that "flesh" always means sin. In these passages it can mean Christ's suffering body or ordinary embodiment, while its restrictive connotations arise from particular comparisons.

See also. Body; Incarnation; Cross; Sense; Spirit.

185 Primary text: I.62; I.88; II.51.

Flowers

flower; flowers; flowering beauty[186]

The word. Flowers are the living ornaments and products of the earth. Their beauty is ordinary and abundant rather than precious through scarcity.

In Traherne. Their presence helps explain why productive earth is better than gold. They also belong to a web of dependence: without sun and sea there would be no flowers, gardens, food, or embodied life. Thus a pleasant detail opens into a larger apprehension of service and relation. Figuratively, turning weeds into flowers becomes an image of the moral skill required after sin, when injuries must be answered with acts that draw good from evil. Natural beauty supplies the vocabulary for that demanding transformation.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.14** Fruit and flowers make the earth more valuable than gold. (Edition p. 10.)
- **I.46** The imagined loss of sun and sea reveals the conditions sustaining flowers and gardens. (Edition p. 28.)
- **III.55** The sun's relation to fields includes clothing them with fruits and flowers. (Edition p. 166.)
- **IV.21** Weeds changed into flowers illustrate the art of extracting good from evil. (Edition p. 212.)

In this edition. The literal flowers are not merely symbols. Their actual beauty and dependence matter before they furnish a figure for moral transformation.

See also. Earth; Beauty; Fruit; Garden; Relation.

Folly

folly; foolish misvaluation; unreasonable conduct[187]

The word. Folly is a failure of sound judgement expressed in conduct. It may coexist with cleverness, industry, or conventional approval, and is not simply a lack of information.

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186 Primary text: I.14; I.46; III.55; IV.21.

187 Primary text: I.32; IV.11; IV.20.

In Traherne. To despise benefits because they are already possessed is irrational even if society admires the substitute treasures. Folly therefore names an inversion of value that defeats the agent's own happiness. The philosopher's-stone comparison adds a practical test: supposedly possessing the highest good while refusing to use it exposes an absurdity. The cure requires both clearer apprehension and an altered life. Calling the world a place of madmen is accordingly joined to the responsibility to heal through pity and love.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.32** Inventing new treasures while neglecting present benefits is condemned as folly. (Edition p. 19.)
- **IV.11** Claimed possession without use becomes an absurd pretence in the alchemist comparison. (Edition p. 206.)
- **IV.20** Folly in an injured society calls for the wise person's healing charity. (Edition p. 211.)

In this edition. Folly is evaluative, not a diagnosis of intellectual disability. The medical metaphors elsewhere in the argument describe damaged judgement and conduct within Traherne's moral rhetoric.

See also. Wisdom; Error; Vanity; Use; Misery.

Food

food; viands; nourishment; Angels' food[188]

The word. Food sustains embodied life and supplies a natural figure for what sustains the soul. "Viands" means provisions or dishes of food.

In Traherne. Corn raised by the sun shows creation meeting an actual bodily need. The image then passes into contemplation: divine works and reasons for love become the food of angels. This higher nourishment does not abolish bodily care, but it alters the scale of value. The exemplary person cares little for personal delicacies while spending more attention on the good of others. Eating and enjoyment furnish the terms of an ethic of generous use.

188 Primary text: II.8; III.70; IV.29.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.8** Corn for food belongs to the sun's manifold services. (Edition p. 70.)
- **III.70** Contemplation discovers the viands that feed the soul with Angels' food. (Edition p. 178.)
- **IV.29** Indifference to personal delicacies accompanies a life active in benefiting others. (Edition p. 216.)

In this edition. "Angels' food" is spiritual nourishment in this context, not a claim about ordinary angelic digestion. The surrounding literal food remains a genuine divine benefit.

See also. Bread; Corn; Table; Taste; Body.

Force

force; powerful impetus; strength of desire[189]

The word. Force is the strength with which something acts or moves another. In the relevant passages it is chiefly an inward impetus, not violence imposed by an external ruler.

In Traherne. The poem on news asks what hidden force moved the child's desire toward distant happiness. The later argument answers at the level of human nature: desire can be so vehement that it supplies an initial motive where understanding is incomplete. This does not make desire a substitute for all knowledge. Its strength starts a search whose objects and means must subsequently be examined.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.26** The poem asks about the secret force drawing childhood desire toward unknown good. (Edition p. 146.)
- **III.56** The force of the desire for felicity temporarily supplies the place of understanding. (Edition p. 167.)

In this edition. Read "force" here as impetus rather than physical coercion. Traherne's account of love elsewhere explicitly resists constraint as contrary to its nature.

See also. Desire; Attraction and loadstone; Will; Liberty; Felicity.

189 Primary text: III.26; III.56.

Forgiveness

forgive; pardon; forbear; restoration after offence[190]

The word. Forgiveness is the remission of an offence or injury without a vindictive response. Traherne distinguishes it from simple inattention and from approval of the wrong itself.

In Traherne. The friend must expect human infirmities, rebuke meekly where needed, and continue to confer benefits. Forgiveness is thus an active generosity rather than a refusal to notice harm. The theological account makes a related distinction: God cannot be reconciled to sin as sin, but can be reconciled to a person capable of restoration. The sinner's possible beauty matters. Finally, enjoyment gives another ground for pardoning injury, since an abundant inward possession weakens the power of enemies to define the sufferer's condition.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.84** Forgiveness requires meek correction and unwearied beneficence rather than lazy neglect. (Edition p. 53.)
- **II.30** The possibility of restoring the person is distinguished from reconciliation to sin itself. (Edition p. 85.)
- **II.98** Secure enjoyment is said to make the possessor meek in pardoning injuries. (Edition p. 124.)

In this edition. The heading gathers the verbs "forgive" and "pardon"; the abstract noun is not needed for the argument. Do not erase the stated place of correction when summarising the counsel.

See also. Mercy; Repentance; Enemy; Charity; Redemption.

Fortune

fortune; worldly circumstances; portion of outward means[191]

The word. Fortune here means a person's material circumstances or outward lot. It does not name a goddess or establish a theory of random events.

190 Primary text: I.84; II.30; II.98.
191 Primary text: III.16.

In Traherne. The child reasons that a good God should provide great riches, then finds an apparent contradiction in his father's poor house and his own narrow fortune. The contradiction depends on an incomplete inventory: soul, body, earth, rivers, and stars have not been counted. Recognising these does not retrospectively make the household affluent; it changes what can be understood as the child's endowment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.16** The child's scanty fortune appears to contradict divine goodness until wider gifts are recognised. (Edition p. 139.)

In this edition. Keep the economic and circumstantial sense in view. "Fortune" in this occurrence is not synonymous with providence, fate, or successful luck.

See also. Poverty; Riches; Gift; Child and childhood.

Fountain

fountain; source; well-spring; flowing origin[192]

The word. A fountain is a spring or source from which something flows. Figuratively it names an origin that remains present and active in what it communicates.

In Traherne. The image serves both nature and theology. The sun is a fountain of pleasures because its light sustains a network of benefits; love is a fountain because it seeks and creates the happiness of its object. In the Trinitarian argument, fountain and stream are not alien substances but the same love in communication. The soul can itself be a real fountain of answering love, even while the mirror image shows its dependence on divine beams. Fountain-language thus holds together derivation, continuity, and genuine creaturely activity.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.7** The sun is called the light and fountain of bodily and visible pleasures. (Edition p. 69.)
- **II.25** Love appears as a fountain of benefits whose delight is to magnify its object. (Edition p. 82.)

192 Primary text: II.7; II.25; II.41; IV.84.

- **II.41** Love in the fountain and in the stream remains one communicated love. (Edition p. 91.)
- **IV.84** The soul is a real fountain of love, compared with a mirror returning received sunlight. (Edition p. 252.)

In this edition. A fountain does not imply a finite reservoir drained by its outflow. Nor should the soul's dependence on a source erase the passage's insistence that its loving activity is real.

See also. Effusion; Communication; Love; God; Mirror.

Freedom

freedom; free agency; free giving; privileged access[193]

The word. Freedom includes release from restriction, the power of voluntary choice, and the unbought character of a gift. These senses share openness but name different relations.

In Traherne. The freedom of divine bounty can hide its worth: what arrives before any effort or payment is taken for granted. The freedom of God's house belongs to filial privilege, but sonship requires more than access and protection; it requires likeness in understanding and love. Creaturely freedom is still more demanding. God entrusts a power capable of offending him so that fidelity and friendship can be genuinely offered. The ease of agreeing with this principle contrasts with the difficulty of practising it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.66** The unpurchased freedom of bounty helps explain neglect of bodily gifts. (Edition p. 41.)
- **III.97** The freedom of the Father's house is distinguished from the fuller likeness required by sonship. (Edition p. 195.)
- **IV.52** Freedom includes the risk of sin and the responsibility to act as a faithful friend. (Edition p. 229.)
- **IV.82** Love's beams flow freely from a mind desiring obedience and goodness. (Edition p. 251.)

193 Primary text: I.66; III.97; IV.52; IV.82.

In this edition. "Free" may mean gratuitous rather than unconstrained. Do not read the freedom of bounty as if it were a direct assertion about the recipient's power of choice.

See also. Liberty; Choice; Gift; Heir and inheritance; Will.

Friendship

friendship; friend; mutual love; faithful companionship[194]

The word. Friendship is a relation of benevolent attachment in which persons seek and share one another's good. Traherne extends its familiar human language to the soul's relation with God.

In Traherne. The book itself enacts friendship by offering knowledge intended to make another a possessor of the world. Divine friendship is abundant rather than exclusive: other creatures are added so that the beloved has companions and witnesses of happiness. Human society can likewise become an exchange of whole lives and joys, each friend receiving the good of the other. Traherne does not ignore its vulnerability. Mortal friendships change, so God must remain the sovereign friend. Repentance also belongs within friendship, where an offending person's contrition can renew a damaged relation.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.3** The promised explanation of universal inheritance is offered as an act of friendship. (Edition p. 5.)
- **I.68** Divine friendship multiplies companions instead of isolating the beloved. (Edition p. 42.)
- **IV.19** Mutual self-giving enriches society, while the instability of human friendships requires a firmer ground. (Edition p. 211.)
- **III.83** Contrition and praise are understood as expressions and renewals of friendship. (Edition p. 187.)

In this edition. The language can be intimate without identifying a biographical correspondent. "Friend" within a meditation should not be assigned a historical name unless the text supplies one.

See also. Love; Fellowship; Communion; Trust; God.

194 Primary text: I.3; I.68; IV.19; III.83.

Fruit

fruit; fruits; yield; produced effects[195]

The word. Fruit is a living product and, figuratively, the outcome of an action, disposition, or power. The figure keeps together growth, usefulness, and the pleasure of receiving a yield.

In Traherne. Desire satisfied is a tree whose fruit is joy; in the divine case this fruit is never absent. Human goodness likewise becomes productive in actions whose results the agent can enjoy. Freedom gives this productivity moral consequence: the seeds one chooses bear a corresponding kind of life. At the same time, an injured world bears bitter clusters of vice. Fruit is therefore not inherently favourable as a metaphor; its character depends on the source and cultivation that produce it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.43** Satisfied desire is figured as a tree continually bearing the fruit of joy. (Edition p. 26.)
- **IV.39** Faith and repentance bear fruits within the world as a theatre of virtues. (Edition p. 221.)
- **IV.51** A good person is made to rejoice in the fruits of his own actions. (Edition p. 229.)
- **IV.77** In the quotation from Pico, chosen seeds produce corresponding forms of life. (Edition p. 247.)

In this edition. "Fruits" can mean effects rather than edible produce. IV.77 belongs to the quoted Pico passage and is interpreted and qualified in the following meditations.

See also. Tree; Nature; Action and activity; Virtue; Fruition.

Fruition

fruition; fruitions; realised enjoyment; possession in use[196]

The word. Fruition means enjoyment or the having of a good in realised possession. Although related in appearance to fruit, it does not

195 Primary text: I.43; IV.39; IV.51; IV.77.
196 Primary text: I.5; II.29; II.52; III.51.

ordinarily mean a project's eventual completion in the modern phrase "come to fruition."

In Traherne. The word can name the end of redemption, the lived enjoyment of blessedness, or a good already possessed rather than merely hoped for. Obedience is itself made a fruition, joining duty with satisfaction instead of placing them on opposite sides of life. The Fall destroys both expectation and present enjoyment, while a particular sin can interrupt joy like a long parenthesis. Traherne thus gives fruition an active and vulnerable character: it is a real participation that must be exercised, not an inert title to future reward.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.5** Fruition of divine glory is the end for which Christ suffered. (Edition p. 6.)
- **II.29** Obedience is described as the fruition of blessedness. (Edition p. 84.)
- **II.52** Adam loses what he had in hope and what he had in fruition. (Edition p. 96.)
- **III.51** Sin inserts a long parenthesis into the fruition of joys. (Edition p. 164.)

In this edition. "Fruition" and "enjoyment" overlap extensively. Keep any local contrast with hope or mere possession, but do not manufacture a rigid hierarchy between two near-synonyms.

See also. Enjoyment; Possession; Happiness; Obedience; Hope.

Garden

gardens; cultivated places of fruit and pleasure[197]

The word. A garden is a cultivated space combining useful growth with beauty and pleasure. The ordinary plural appears within an account of the conditions that sustain earthly life.

In Traherne. Traherne asks the reader to imagine sun extinguished and sea dried up. Pleasant gardens disappear with fruits, flowers, food, warmth, and prospects. Their appeal therefore becomes evidence of a larger dependence usually hidden by familiarity. The garden is not

197 Primary text: I.46.

isolated from nature's processes; its cultivated order belongs within the services of light and water. Remembering this dependence should turn habitual possession into gratitude.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.46** Pleasant gardens form part of the imagined loss that reveals the value of sun and sea. (Edition p. 28.)

In this edition. The garden in this passage is ordinary and plural. Do not automatically identify it with Eden or treat every cultivated space as an explicit allegory of the soul.

See also. Eden; Flowers; Fruit; Sun; Water.

Generosity

generous; liberal; noble-hearted; ample in affection[198]

The word. Generous describes a noble or large-hearted disposition, not simply the giving of money. It can include magnanimity, breadth of concern, and a readiness to recognise another's good intention.

In Traherne. The generous heart can enjoy across distance and delight in the felicity of others. Its amplitude answers the greatness of the world it receives. A later generous principle refuses to measure a benefactor solely by visible success: a sincerely intended benefit deserves gratitude even when something prevents its arrival. Applied to God, this distinguishes the goodness of the giver from the losses caused by corruption or refusal. Generosity is therefore also a quality of receiving and judging.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.38** A great and generous heart is fitted to enjoy distant goods and other people's felicity. (Edition p. 23.)
- **IV.88** The generous mind recognises the obligation created by a benefactor's sincere intention. (Edition p. 255.)

In this edition. The abstract heading gathers the attested adjective "generous." Its older breadth includes nobility of mind; reducing it to charitable expenditure would miss both passages' emphasis.

See also. Bounty; Charity; Gratitude; Greatness; Will.

198 Primary text: I.38; IV.88.

Gentleness

gentle; meek; peaceable and considerate in manner[199]

The word. Gentleness is a considerate, unviolent manner of acting toward another. Its nearest practical companion here is meekness, especially where correction must be joined to continued goodwill.

In Traherne. The opening promise offers advancement through peace and love instead of war and dispossession. Friendship chooses a manner suited to the happiness it intends; loving medicine prefers balm to corrosive treatment. This method is not simple indulgence. Later counsel requires meek rebuke as well as vigorous beneficence. The gentle way aims at the other person's real good, even when attention to a fault is necessary.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.4** The writer promises a gentle education through peace, love, and familiar paths. (Edition p. 5.)
- **I.84** Forgiveness can include meek correction joined to sustained acts of kindness. (Edition p. 53.)

In this edition. "Gentleness" is a gathering heading, while "gentle" and "meekly" supply the textual forms. The image of balm expresses the chosen method of love, not a prohibition of every difficult correction.

See also. Meekness; Forgiveness; Friendship; Peace; Education.

Gift

gift; gifts; give; freely bestowed benefit[200]

The word. A gift is something bestowed by a giver upon a recipient. Traherne extends the category beyond movable objects to the world, bodily and intellectual powers, other persons, liberty, and the giver's own self. The relation carried by the gift is as important as its external magnitude.

In Traherne. The opening account of love distinguishes great gifts from great benefits. Giving a world would not satisfy love if the recipient could make no worthy use of it. The book's promised gift is therefore

199 Primary text: I.4; I.84.

200 Primary text: I.6; II.2; I.66; II.86; IV.52.

also an education in receiving: what is given must become intelligible and enjoyable. This is why an object's abundance does not alone guarantee its success as a present. The receiver needs powers, light, and a fitting response.

Creation is given before it can be earned. The world is the beginning of gifts, conferred upon every infant by birth, and bodily capacities arrive before conscious gratitude. That priority explains both the generosity and its concealment. Eyes, ears, limbs, and speech are so near and familiar that their preciousness disappears. The recipient falsely treats what came freely as though it had little worth. Prayer and reflection recover the gift-character of what was already possessed.

A gift also joins the recipient to the giver's intention. It is a token of love and an occasion for return, but the return need not duplicate its material form. One answers divine giving by esteem, thanksgiving, obedience, and a life able to give pleasure. The person becomes the greatest gift that love can offer to God. Knowledge is therefore a kind of preparation for self-offering: to appear richly before God is to become more lucid, spacious, and attentive to the things he has made.

Liberty brings this reciprocity to its most demanding point. The gift of freedom makes fidelity possible, but also places the power of sin in creaturely hands. Traherne treats this risk as a mark of the dignity God intends for the recipient. A compelled return would not be the friendship sought. The complete movement of gift is consequently not possession followed by automatic repayment, but free bounty received by an answering freedom. The ethical work of the meditations lies largely in making that answer increasingly truthful and ample.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.6** Love intends useful benefits as well as the magnitude of a gift. (Edition p. 6.)
- **II.2** The world is the first gift bestowed on every infant by birth. (Edition p. 66.)
- **I.66** The bodily faculties are overlooked because bounty has freely anticipated recognition. (Edition p. 41.)
- **II.86** The person, adorned with knowledge and light, is the greatest gift offered to God. (Edition p. 116.)
- **IV.52** Freedom entrusts the possibility of sin so that the recipient may act as a faithful friend. (Edition p. 229.)

In this edition. "Gift" should not be narrowed to a transferable possession. Some gifts are powers or relations, and the world's being given does not entail its removal from anyone else. The freedom of the gift concerns its gratuity; the freedom of the recipient concerns the manner of answering it.

See also. Bounty; Benefit; Gratitude; Freedom; Enjoyment; God.

Glory

glory; glorious; splendour; manifested excellence; honour[201]

The word. Glory combines visible splendour, outstanding worth, the honour attending it, and participation in divine blessedness. Traherne moves among these senses to show how beauty, recognition, and active love belong together. The same word can name what an object has, what it manifests, and what a person enters.

In Traherne. The visible world's glory exceeds an inventory of impressive surfaces. Its beauty and serviceableness disclose the giver, so that admiration can move from the gift to the love expressed in it. The world is unknown until its value and glory are seen; physical exposure to it does not complete that seeing. Glory is therefore something revealed through right understanding as well as through brightness.

Its highest examples overturn merely social measures. The promised advancement is reached through gentle love rather than conquest, and Christ's wounded body can disclose a greatness hidden from bodily sight. To recognise such glory is to understand the person's love, wisdom, and actions. Apparent abasement and true worth can coexist. The word does not simply decorate successful power or visible magnificence.

Glory also belongs to the soul's becoming good and delightful. The person who is only surrounded by splendid objects can still be miserable if he is ungrateful or injurious. To become a blessing to others is a higher fulfilment, because the enjoyer now contributes to the good that the whole creation was meant to serve. In this sense the throne of glory is a condition of loving usefulness, and divine likeness is an enacted relation.

Finally, glory involves being known. God's omnipresence opens a field in which actions can be seen, valued, and delighted in beyond the limits

201 Primary text: I.18; I.4; I.64; IV.47; V.9.

of a local audience. This gives honour a greater setting than unstable worldly reputation, while preserving the relational good of being recognised by those who love. The term's radiance is consequently neither only optical nor only subjective: it belongs to excellence becoming manifest and entering shared enjoyment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.18** The world's glory is disclosed through the value, beauty, and serviceableness of its parts. (Edition p. 12.)
- **I.4** Glorious advancement is promised through peace and love rather than violent conquest. (Edition p. 5.)
- **I.64** Christ's visible wounds require an apprehension of the glory of his soul and Godhead. (Edition p. 39.)
- **IV.47** The throne of glory is associated with becoming a blessing and delight to others. (Edition p. 226.)
- **V.9** Divine omnipresence supplies an immense field for the recognition and praise of worthy actions. (Edition p. 271.)

In this edition. Capitalisation alone does not fix a technical sense. "Glory" can mean radiance, moral excellence, honour, or the blessed state to come; attend to its companions and verbs. Do not assume that "glorious" always describes something visually dazzling or socially triumphant.

See also. Beauty; Honour; Light; Love; Greatness; God.

God

God; Deity; Godhead; divine being; divine persons[202]

The word. God is the living source, giver, and end of all things. "Deity" and "Godhead" name divine being or nature, while Father, Son, and Holy Ghost articulate its personal relations. The meditations seek knowledge of God through his works and through participation in the life they disclose.

In Traherne. Traherne's God cannot be understood as sheer magnitude or irresistible power. The governing recognition is goodness: power and wisdom make love effective in magnifying its object. Divine

202 Primary text: II.19; I.42; II.46; II.84; V.1.

invisibility also has a positive meaning. A body excludes other bodies from its place, whereas God's invisible presence gives things room to be, includes them, and brings them into life. To imagine an infinite bodily bulk would therefore mistake both divine nature and its relation to creatures.

The language of divine want is among the book's most daring attempts to explain this generosity. God desires the communication of his being, companions, and treasures; yet these needs are eternally satisfied. They are called perfective, not impoverishing. The argument is not that a previously lonely deity waited for time to produce company. It joins divine fullness to an inexhaustibly active delight in giving and receiving. The paradox must be read with its qualification always in view.

The Trinitarian meditations describe that activity through producer, means, and end. Love loves, is communicated, and rests in its beloved; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are understood within that one life. These relations also explain why redemption and the Spirit's indwelling belong to the same account as creation. The God who gives the world is known in Christ and makes the soul capable of an answering likeness.

Knowledge of God becomes transformative because its object is living activity rather than an inert definition. God is described as an eternal act of knowledge and wisdom, and the creature is called to turn its own capacities into act. This does not mean becoming the uncreated source of oneself. It means receiving, understanding, loving, and communicating in a way fitted to the divine image. In the final century, God is accordingly both the sovereign object of felicity and the way of enjoying it: the gifts are received in him, and his life provides the form of their enjoyment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.19** Divine invisibility is defended through the contrast between excluding bulk and life-giving presence. (Edition p. 75.)
- **I.42** God's wants are qualified as perfective and eternally satisfied. (Edition p. 26.)
- **II.46** Producer, means, and end are interpreted through the triune life of love. (Edition p. 93.)
- **II.84** God is an eternal act of knowledge and wisdom whose image the soul is to become. (Edition p. 114.)

- **V.1** God is both the sovereign object of felicity and the way in which it is enjoyed. (Edition p. 265.)

In this edition. "Deity" is usually the divine being or nature, not a different god alongside the biblical God. Keep Traherne's analogies together with their qualifications: wanting without privation, presence without bodily exclusion, and likeness without erasing the difference between Creator and creature.

See also. Love; Goodness; Trinity; Infinity; Creation; Felicity.

Gold and silver

gold; silver; precious metals; monetary wealth[203]

The word. Gold and silver are valuable metals and familiar measures of worldly wealth. Their names can signify coin, ornament, treasure, splendour, or an especially precious quality.

In Traherne. Traherne repeatedly lowers them beneath common goods whose real services are greater. The child has to be taught the hidden social conventions by which a purse of gold becomes desirable; water, light, and a living body require no such artificial elevation. Yet the argument is not that metals can never have value. Gold gains a legitimate worth through its relations to food, clothing, exchange, and an owner's needs. Gold also remains a measure of preciousness in the childhood vision, where ordinary dust and stones are valued as highly as gold. The target is disordered comparison and exclusive accumulation.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.14** Fertile earth is said to be better than gold. (Edition p. 10.)
- **III.9** The child struggles to learn the socially mediated value of money and ornament. (Edition p. 135.)
- **III.53** Scarce precious things are compared with the serviceableness of common gifts. (Edition p. 165.)
- **III.55** Gold is granted relational value through the uses and exchanges it makes possible. (Edition p. 166.)
- **III.3** Gold supplies a comparison for the child's valuation of ordinary dust and stones. (Edition p. 129.)

203 Primary text: I.14; III.9; III.53; III.55; III.3.

In this edition. Do not turn every favourable gold-image into approval of avarice, or every criticism of money into denial of all exchange-value. The passage may concern natural usefulness, social convention, or poetic lustre.

See also. Coin and money; Riches; Avarice and covetousness; Common things; Value.

Golgotha

Golgotha; place of a skull[204]

The word. Golgotha is the place of Christ's crucifixion, glossed within Traherne's prayer as the place of a skull. It can also figure a world experienced as a place of death and confinement.

In Traherne. In the early contrast between Paradise and prison, the same created world is Golgotha to those enslaved by false valuations and Eden to those who understand its gifts. Later the name returns to the actual scene of the Passion. The speaker seeks to perceive love through wounds, stripes, groans, bitterness, and the apparent desolation of death. The two uses should not be collapsed: one describes the condition of mistaken living, the other a saving love apprehended in Christ's suffering. Together they show how strongly the world's experienced character depends on the soul's seeing.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.36** Golgotha and prison contrast with Eden as different experiences of the world. (Edition p. 22.)
- **I.63** The prayer seeks Christ's love even in Golgotha, amid the sensory signs of suffering. (Edition p. 39.)

In this edition. The biblical identification is supplied by the 2026 note to I.36 and by Traherne's own gloss at I.63. The metaphor is not a claim about another geographical site.

See also. Cross; Eden; Paradise; Sense.

204 Primary text: I.36, I.63; biblical identification: 2026 edition note to I.36.

Goodness

goodness; good; benevolent and beneficial excellence[205]

The word. Goodness means both the excellence of a being and its readiness to confer good upon others. In Traherne these are intimately related: divine goodness is known in giving, while a creature's goodness becomes active through understanding, love, and beneficial action.

In Traherne. To know God is to know goodness. Power feared in isolation gives a distorted religious idea, whereas wisdom and power understood as servants of generous love produce delight. Goodness therefore governs the reading of the other attributes. It explains why they matter to the creature and why their exercise is a reason for gratitude. The world is not merely evidence that a powerful maker exists; it is evidence of the kind of relation that maker intends.

This conviction also guides inquiry. If goodness is infinite, the best gifts should be widely available rather than reserved for the fortunate few. The narrator consequently examines air, light, water, earth, and persons, testing their value through service and imagined absence. His trust is not a refusal to compare evidence; it gives comparison an initial direction. Commonness, usually a reason for contempt, becomes a possible sign of liberality.

Goodness must nevertheless be understood through fitting relations, not through the largest imaginable quantity. An infinite material sun would consume the room needed by other beings; the bounded sun is better because it serves a complete order. Thus limits in a creature may display wisdom rather than failure. The useful relation between parts matters more than the indefinite enlargement of one part alone.

The recipient's response carries the argument beyond benefit received. Gratitude can make the lover delight in divine goodness as belonging to God, not only as advantageous to himself. One comes to rejoice in the giver's own blessedness. The later distinction between intention and successful delivery further protects this recognition: a benefactor's sincere goodness is not measured solely by an outcome that corruption or refusal may obstruct. Traherne does not thereby call every experienced event pleasant. He seeks an account of good intention, free response, and grateful love able to survive the interruption of a particular benefit.

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205 Primary text: I.17; III.53; II.11; IV.49; IV.88.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.17** Knowledge of God is centred on goodness rather than isolated fear of power. (Edition p. 11.)
- **III.53** Trust in goodness guides inquiry into the worth of common things. (Edition p. 165.)
- **II.11** A finite sun is better than an all-consuming infinite flame. (Edition p. 71.)
- **IV.49** Gratitude makes divine attributes delightful as God's own, beyond their benefit to the self. (Edition p. 227.)
- **IV.88** The good intention of a benefactor can oblige even when the intended benefit is obstructed. (Edition p. 255.)

In this edition. Goodness does not mean indiscriminate approval. The same book distinguishes love of a person from reconciliation to sin. Nor does "infinite goodness" require each material object to be spatially infinite; fitting finite relations can manifest the attribute.

See also. God; Love; Bounty; Gratitude; Value; Relation.

Gospel

Gospel; glad tidings; news of salvation[206]

The word. Gospel means the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ. Traherne connects this received religious meaning with the ordinary experience of eagerly awaiting news.

In Traherne. The narrator once searched every report and curiosity for the happiness he hoped it concealed. News from elsewhere seemed to promise access to a hidden treasure. The account then recognises a fulfilment of that expectation: the Gospel came from Jerusalem, and the death of Jesus in Judaea supplies the decisive instance of good arriving from a distant place. This discovery does not close the world; it encourages hope that other countries too contain causes of joy.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.25** The thirst for news is interpreted through the Gospel's arrival from Jerusalem. (Edition p. 146.)

206 Primary text: III.25.

In this edition. "Jury" in this passage is the old place-name form for Judaea, not a legal body. The word "Gospel" here names saving news rather than specifying one of the four Gospel books.

See also. Christ; Revelation; Salvation; Hope; Expectation.

Grace

grace; favour; gracious aid; the estate of grace[207]

The word. Grace can mean freely bestowed favour or divine assistance, and in theological classification it names humanity's restored condition through redemption. The plural "graces" may also denote admirable spiritual qualities.

In Traherne. The estate of grace has a definite place between misery and glory in the account of divinity. It includes covenant, faith, repentance, sacraments, Scripture, and the Church, not merely a private experience of relief. Grace also enables a new form of love: the soul can love a sinner who offers no prior claim of merit or attractiveness. The discussion of intention and the Spirit adds another dimension, identifying further divine assistance as new and superadded mercy. Human effort and grateful response are therefore placed within an already generous provision.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.43** Grace is one of four human estates and includes the means of restored life. (Edition p. 158.)
- **IV.87** The estate of grace enables freely given love toward undeserving persons. (Edition p. 255.)
- **IV.88** The giving of the Holy Spirit is described as further mercy beyond earlier gifts. (Edition p. 255.)
- **IV.35** Wisdom and grace are needed to enjoy treasures without abuse. (Edition p. 219.)

In this edition. Do not force every occurrence into a single technical formula. Distinguish favour, assistance, spiritual qualities, and the named historical-theological estate according to the passage.

See also. Redemption; Holy Spirit; Faith; Repentance; Gift.

207 Primary text: III.43; IV.87; IV.88; IV.35.

Gratitude

gratitude; grateful; thankfulness; returning benefits[208]

The word. Gratitude is the acknowledgement and answering appreciation of a benefit. It includes knowledge of the good received, regard for the giver, and an appropriate return in affection or action.

In Traherne. In Traherne, gratitude is generated by truthful valuation: the common works of God become recognisable gifts, and pleasure overflows into praise. This return does not enrich a materially needy deity. It gives love what love desires, namely to be understood, prized, and answered. The argument also carries self-love beyond itself. Satisfaction in benefits can awaken a stronger delight in the giver's own goodness and happiness. In that movement, gratitude becomes a means of union rather than a debt discharged and forgotten.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.35** Recognition of freely given works produces gratitude and mutual delight. (Edition p. 21.)
- **III.82** Praise returns benefits through knowledge, complacency, thanksgiving, and inward love. (Edition p. 186.)
- **IV.49** Grateful principles turn self-love toward delight in God's own felicity. (Edition p. 227.)
- **III.93** Gratitude is expressed through fidelity, public praise, mercy, and conduct. (Edition p. 193.)

In this edition. "Gratitude" is not only a spoken acknowledgement. The text tests it through enduring attention and acts of love; continued gifts call for renewed rather than diminishing appreciation.

See also. Thanksgiving; Praise; Gift; Love; Obligation.

Greatness

greatness; great; magnified; amplitude of being and concern[209]

The word. Greatness can refer to size, extent, power, dignity, or excellence. Traherne repeatedly moves from bodily magnitude toward the amplitude of knowledge and affection.

208 Primary text: I.35; III.82; IV.49; III.93.
209 Primary text: II.82; II.84; III.98; IV.90.

In Traherne. The soul is great because it can receive and enjoy objects far exceeding the body's scale. Divine greatness is likewise expressed through knowledge and presence to all things, rather than through occupying a larger bulk. The crucial practical question is whether such greatness is kept alive: the memory of one's relation to God should remain active even while attention is required by ordinary tasks. Walking, eating, travelling, and conversation can therefore take place within an inwardly enlarged life. Greatness is not reserved for moments of exceptional rapture.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.82** Infinite capacity in understanding is linked to divine generosity and creaturely greatness. (Edition p. 113.)
- **II.84** God's greatness is described as presence with all objects in knowledge. (Edition p. 114.)
- **III.98** Remembered greatness is to inform outward activity when it cannot be vividly felt. (Edition p. 195.)
- **IV.90** The consciousness of divine friendship and inheritance accompanies ordinary daily acts. (Edition p. 257.)

In this edition. Do not give every "great" a quantitative meaning. The scale may be moral, intellectual, relational, or spatial, and the passage often deliberately transfers language between these senses.

See also. Capacity; Dignity; Glory; Infinity; Mind.

Gregory Nazianzen

Nazianzen; his 38th Oration[210]

The word. Nazianzen is Gregory of Nazianzus, the theologian identified by the 2026 edition as the author of the cited oration. He is distinct from the St Gregory cited later in the Third Century.

In Traherne. Traherne appeals to him when explaining why divine goodness is eternally communicative. Goodness does not remain enclosed in self-contemplation but pours itself out so that others may receive its benefit. The first created recipients are angelic powers, described as second splendours serving the first. This borrowed account

210 Primary text: III.65; author identification, source, and quotation boundary: 2026 edition note to III.65.

strengthens Traherne's connection between love, activity, and the gift of existence. It also lets him move toward his own claim that all motions and created histories are present in God eternally. The reader needs to notice the transition from cited authority to Traherne's extension of the argument. The entire meditation should not be assigned indiscriminately to Gregory.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.65** A rendering of Oration 38 introduces angelic creation as the diffusion of goodness. (Edition p. 172.)

In this edition. The 2026 note identifies Oration 38.9 and places the end of Gregory's words at "the first splendour." The subsequent account of eternal presence is Traherne's continuation. "Virtues" within the quotation means angelic powers.

See also. Angels; Communication; Goodness; Gregory the Great.

Gregory the Great

St. Gregory; Supreme Spirit[211]

The word. The St Gregory cited on angelic service is identified by the 2026 edition as Gregory the Great. His account concerns how limited spirits can serve outwardly while remaining inwardly attentive to God.

In Traherne. Traherne's immediate problem is practical: how can the human reader preserve an inward apprehension of divine greatness while carrying out ordinary duties? Angels offer a model because their outward ministry does not interrupt the beatific vision. The explanation turns on God's unrestricted presence rather than on making the angel's own substance infinite. Knowledge expands through the divine object beheld. The passage therefore supports integrated contemplation and action, not escape from service. Its context also makes memory important when living apprehension cannot be sustained with equal force. What the reader should retain is the power of the vision within outward activity.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.98** The account of angels' uninterrupted contemplation follows advice to retain divine greatness in understanding and memory. (Edition p. 195.)

211 Primary text: III.98; author and source identifications: 2026 edition note to III.98.

In this edition. The 2026 note relates the passage to Homilies on the Gospels 34 and Moralia in Job II.3, calling Traherne's wording a free English version. Do not identify this Gregory with Nazianzen.

See also. Angels; Contemplation; Gregory Nazianzen; Omnipresence.

Grief

grieve; grieved; sorrow; troubled loss[212]

The word. Grief is sorrow at loss, frustration, injury, or offence. The verb's object matters: a person may grieve over an imagined emptiness, over real sin, or at love's refusal.

In Traherne. The young narrator grieves that the world seems empty, but this dissatisfaction keeps inquiry alive when no fashionable pleasure has wholly deluded him. In the childhood poem, God is figured as grieved because his offered joy is coldly rejected. Later, grief at sin accompanies the discovery of mercy and can coexist with renewed joy. The sequence prevents a simple opposition between felicity and all sorrow. Some grief exposes false valuation; some belongs to the truthful repair of a damaged relation.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.15** Grief at an apparently empty world prompts further inquiry into happiness. (Edition p. 139.)
- **III.4** The poem presents divine love as repeatedly sent away grieved by cold acceptance. (Edition p. 130.)
- **III.48** Sorrow over sin and humble repentance lead into the joy of mercy. (Edition p. 162.)

In this edition. The heading gathers the attested verb rather than a frequent abstract noun. It should not be read as a specialised discussion of bereavement, which these passages do not provide.

See also. Tears; Repentance; Misery; Joy; Love.

212 Primary text: III.15; III.4; III.48.

Habit

habit; habits; acquired disposition[213]

The word. Habit is a settled disposition formed or maintained by repeated thought and action. In the relevant uses it means an inward tendency, not a garment or religious costume.

In Traherne. Bad habits make the naturally sweet activity of good thinking seem difficult. They can also colour perception so thoroughly that the soul must be imaginatively unclothed to see clearly again. Traherne's medical and visual comparisons show the problem: a jaundiced or obstructed eye alters what it receives. The restoration of childhood does not call for the abandonment of every developed power, but for the removal of distortions that acquired practice has made familiar. Habit belongs among the objects a comprehensive philosophy should examine.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.8** Evil habit and custom explain the acquired difficulty of thinking well. (Edition p. 7.)
- **III.5** The soul must put off evil habits as it would false colours or obstructive clothing. (Edition p. 132.)
- **III.44** Habits appear among the natures and activities open to an enlarged philosophical inquiry. (Edition p. 159.)

In this edition. Distinguish a habit from nature even when repetition has made it feel spontaneous. The text's clothing imagery at III.5 is figurative; it does not turn the noun into a literal costume.

See also. Custom; Action and activity; Education; Purity; Conversion.

Happiness

happiness; happy; the good of a fulfilled life[214]

The word. Happiness names the desirable fulfilment of life, not merely an agreeable mood or favourable accident. Traherne uses it alongside felicity and blessedness. Its recurrent contexts emphasise the

213 Primary text: I.8; III.5; III.44.

214 Primary text: II.99; IV.9; IV.11; IV.12; IV.20.

practical question of how an actual person may live well in the world already given.

In Traherne. One reason happiness seems elusive is that competing accounts divide it into partial goods. Traherne's survey of philosophical opinions gathers riches, honour, pleasure, wisdom, contentment, action, contemplation, rest, and suffering into a single comprehensive life. This is an ambitious reconciliation, not a claim that every ordinary pursuit of those things is sound. They must be understood and enjoyed through rightly ordered knowledge and love. Their opposed forms then become moments within an account of active blessedness.

Happiness also has a present tense. The Christian who postpones every serious enjoyment until another life is challenged to explain why love and desire should accept that delay. The present world can already be enjoyed in communion with God, even while its fulfilment extends beyond the visible. The argument aims against spiritual indolence rather than against hope for a life to come. Hope should make present attention more energetic, not unnecessary.

The distinction between seeking and enjoying sharpens the challenge. Study that never passes into possession resembles an alchemist's claim to own a stone whose powers he never uses. Knowledge of happiness is incomplete if it produces no corresponding life. Conversely, happiness need not advertise itself. In a society liable to envy and ridicule, quiet enjoyment can be wiser than display; another person's adverse estimate does not decide whether a genuinely perceived good is real.

Finally, the account is tested among injurious people. Happiness is to become possible where charity encounters resentment, wrong, and folly. Traherne's image of the wise person as physician gives it an outward responsibility: the sufferer answers with pity and love directed toward healing. This is a demanding claim about the powers of a rightly governed life, not a report that all circumstances are painless. Read beside felicity's account of perfect objects and manner, happiness names the work of inhabiting those principles amid the conditions that might otherwise frustrate them.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.99** Numerous philosophical accounts are gathered into a comprehensive life of enjoyment. (Edition p. 125.)

- **IV.9** The postponement of all blessed enjoyment is challenged as contrary to present love and desire. (Edition p. 204.)
- **IV.11** The search for happiness must lead into its actual use and possession. (Edition p. 206.)
- **IV.12** Happiness need not depend on display or the approval of mistaken spectators. (Edition p. 207.)
- **IV.20** The duty of happiness is tested among injuries and answered through healing charity. (Edition p. 211.)

In this edition. There is no consistent technical boundary between "happiness" and "felicity." Neither term should be reduced to cheerfulness. The vigorous prescriptions are part of Traherne's spiritual and ethical argument, not a claim that every involuntary sorrow proves moral failure.

See also. Felicity; Enjoyment; Contentment; Virtue; Affliction; Knowledge.

Harmony

harmony; concordant delight; heavenly order[215]

The word. Harmony is an ordered agreement among different parts, with music as its immediate and familiar model. It can extend from audible consonance to a larger unity of goods.

In Traherne. In the meditation on the soul's communicative beams, the harmony and joys of heaven appear in love. The surrounding catalogue includes music, stars, trees, feasts, wine, virtue, and spiritual life. Love gathers their diverse excellencies rather than reducing them to a single undifferentiated pleasure. Harmony names the fitting coexistence of these delights within the end for which they were made.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.82** Heavenly harmony appears in love amid a catalogue of natural, artistic, bodily, and spiritual excellencies. (Edition p. 251.)

In this edition. This occurrence does not set out a mathematical theory of musical intervals or cosmic ratios. Its work is integrative: many forms of excellence are enjoyed together through love.

215 Primary text: IV.82.

See also. Music; Order; Love; Variety; Beauty.

Hatred

hatred; hate; hating and being hated[216]

The word. Hatred is an aversion opposed to love, whether directed toward a person, an evil, or a deformity of character. Its moral force depends on both object and relation.

In Traherne. To hate and be hated is described as the greatest misery, because it frustrates the fellowship for which the world serves its inhabitants. Redemption restores persons from both sides of that unhappy relation. Yet hatred of deformity can be the reverse of love for beauty, and the account of Christ's suffering presents an answering love that does not return hostility. The vocabulary is therefore not a simple prohibition of every aversion. The decisive concern is whether a person's relation to God and neighbours becomes loving, truthful, and capable of restoration.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.4** Love of beauty is paired with hatred of the deformity produced by sin. (Edition p. 67.)
- **II.36** Christ's voluntary love is set against the hostility and punishment he endures. (Edition p. 89.)
- **II.63** Redemption frees the soul from the misery of both hating and being hated. (Edition p. 102.)

In this edition. "Hatred" may name opposition to sin or a hostile personal relation. Preserve that distinction, especially where divine aversion to deformity is being discussed through the language of love.

See also. Enemy; Love; Evil; Forgiveness; Redemption.

Health

health; restored soundness; spiritual healing[217]

The word. Health is soundness or proper functioning. The occurrence here applies bodily language to the soul's restoration from sin.

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216 Primary text: II.4; II.36; II.63.

217 Primary text: II.31.

In Traherne. The meditation imagines sin as dross, incorporated filth, and leprosy, then asks how infinite wisdom can separate it from the person who has sinned. Restored health stands beside beauty and glory as the positive end of this work. The medical image is therefore part of an argument for redemption: love values its object and seeks a way to heal rather than simply abandon it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.31** The soul's primitive health, beauty, and glory are restored through the costly work of redemption. (Edition p. 85.)

In this edition. The passage is not offering a medical diagnosis or treatment. Its disease imagery describes sin and recovery; bodily illness should not be inferred to be proof of a person's moral fault.

See also. Physic; Redemption; Purity; Beauty; Mercy.

Heart

heart; inward centre; seat of affection and remembrance[218]

The word. Heart names the inward centre of a person's affection, intention, and responsive life. It can include understanding and memory, rather than standing in a fixed opposition to the mind.

In Traherne. The heart is an altar on which love should burn, but it can also harden into stone. Such images make inward responsiveness the practical condition of enjoyment. If the heart is out of frame, its judgement distorts the world; restoring justice and right ordering restores delight. Principles must therefore be deeply impressed, as though engraved on stone, and kept alive in remembrance during ordinary action. The heart is not a private chamber sealed off from others: it receives and returns the relations that make the world significant.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.91** The heart is an altar for the perpetual fire of love. (Edition p. 58.)
- **IV.41** Disorder in the heart is identified as the source of a loss of enjoyment. (Edition p. 221.)
- **IV.50** Principles of receiving and belonging to God are to be engraved indelibly within the heart. (Edition p. 228.)

218 Primary text: I.91; IV.41; IV.50; III.98.

- **III.98** Memory in the heart preserves greatness when it cannot be vividly present to sense. (Edition p. 195.)

In this edition. The bodily image often carries intellectual as well as emotional force. A "stony heart" describes resistance or unresponsiveness; it is not a separate faculty alongside a consistently defined "mind."

See also. Love; Memory; Mind; Affection; Prayer.

Heaven

Heaven; heavens; celestial life; the blessed state[219]

The word. Heaven may be the visible sky, the divine realm, the state of blessed life, or an earthly participation in that life. The plural often belongs to the visible cosmos, but context remains decisive.

In Traherne. The world can be the gate of heaven and the frontispiece of eternity because its gifts disclose the life into which the soul is invited. A person may awaken in the Father's palace without changing bodily location. Yet Traherne does not abolish the distinction between present and future life: earthly love operates amid need and trial, while heavenly love enjoys fuller satisfaction. Nor is everything already equally heavenly to every inhabitant. To possess gifts without prizing them leaves their intended joy unrealised. Heaven is therefore both a promised fulfilment and a pattern of present knowledge, love, and enjoyment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.20** The world appears as paradise, heaven's gate, and eternity's frontispiece. (Edition p. 13.)
- **I.28** Right enjoyment begins by waking in the Father's palace among celestial joys. (Edition p. 18.)
- **I.47** Possession joined with prizing is called being in heaven. (Edition p. 28.)
- **IV.60** Earthly trial and heavenly fulfilment are distinguished within one continuing life of love. (Edition p. 234.)

219 Primary text: I.20; I.28; I.47; IV.60.

In this edition. Do not assign a single geographical sense to every occurrence. Equally, do not reduce all heavenly language to metaphor: the future life and its fulfilment remain explicit commitments of the text.

See also. World; Eternity; Felicity; Paradise; Glory.

Heir and inheritance

heir; heiress; heirs; co-heirs; inheritance; inherit[220]

The word. An heir receives an estate or possession by a recognised relation to its giver or predecessor. Traherne uses that familiar legal and familial vocabulary to describe each person's relation to the whole created world, and the soul's participation in divine and human joys.

In Traherne. The claim that the reader is heir of the world is announced at the beginning as a truth both astonishing and already effective. It requires explanation because conventional property language suggests division: one heir receives what another cannot. Traherne changes the governing relation. The world serves each person through senses, understanding, and love, and another enjoyer can become an additional treasure. The estate is therefore not a diminishing stock parcelled out among rival claimants.

The paradox of many sole heirs expresses this non-exclusive plenitude. Each person may receive the world as wholly given, while every other person has a corresponding reception. The claim should enlarge regard for others rather than justify their dispossession. Their joys, perceptions, and acts of love disclose further ways of possessing what no single bodily viewpoint could exhaust. The phrase "sole heir" is thus completed, rather than contradicted, by the presence of other heirs.

Inheritance also depends on the capacity to enjoy within another. Love feels the beloved's good as its own, and in loving God the soul shares delight in all that pleases him. This gives the inheritance a relational depth beyond direct use of natural objects. One can inherit joy by rejoicing in the joy of another person, and the degree of that participation answers the degree of love. Co-heirship with Christ gathers this movement into the language of redemption.

220 Primary text: I.3; I.29; I.52; II.93; IV.57.

Finally, inheritance carries an ethical demand. To recognise another as redeemed, beloved, and an heir greater than the house he inhabits is to owe him honour. Universal inheritance is supposed to change society's estimate of persons, producing mutual peace, respect, and generosity. The reader therefore misreads the title if it magnifies only the self. The world is truly inherited through the very faculties and relationships that make other persons' dignity inseparable from one's own enjoyment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.3** The opening promise identifies the reader as heir of the world. (Edition p. 5.)
- **I.29** Every person is a sole heir, and the other heirs enlarge the gift. (Edition p. 18.)
- **I.52** Love enjoys in its beloved, so that participation in God's joy becomes inheritance. (Edition p. 30.)
- **II.93** Recognising another person as an heir demands honour and transforms the imagined social order. (Edition p. 120.)
- **IV.57** Love makes persons heirs of others' joys and co-heirs with Christ. (Edition p. 233.)

In this edition. The legal resonance is deliberate, but these passages do not issue a deed of exclusive ownership or a right to seize possessions. "Heir," "heiress," and "co-heirs" illuminate participation, relationship, and dignity. Read them alongside the insistence that things serve best in their proper places.

See also. Possession; Gift; Love; Enjoyment.

Hell

Hell; the divine prison; punishment and frustrated enjoyment[221]

The word. Hell names the state of punishment and separation from blessed enjoyment. Traherne also uses its language to expose analogous failures of valuation within earthly life.

In Traherne. The reversal is severe: those who refused to recognise their needs and treasures now see the goods they lack with painful clarity. Hell makes delayed appreciation an image of irreversible loss. The

221 Primary text: I.47; I.48; I.49; II.63.

deliberately unstable comparison in I.47 also distinguishes having without prizing from prizing without having, asking which deprivation is worse. These earthly analogies do not make the future prison disappear. Elsewhere hating and being hated supply its most intimate form of bondage. The purpose of contemplating hell is admonitory: present judgement may change before neglect becomes fixed deprivation.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.47** Possession without appreciation is compared with hell, then distinguished and reconsidered. (Edition p. 28.)
- **I.48** Punishment involves seeing and desiring treasures without possessing them. (Edition p. 29.)
- **I.49** The morally asleep are imagined awakening into awareness of their misery. (Edition p. 29.)
- **II.63** The necessity of hating God and persons is called the greatest bondage hell can impose. (Edition p. 102.)

In this edition. Do not make every use purely metaphorical: Traherne explicitly speaks of future punishment. Nor should the meditations' pedagogic contemplation of hell be confused with a complete account of its geography or chronology.

See also. Punishment; Misery; Want; Hatred; Heaven.

Help

help; aid; succour; readiness to benefit[222]

The word. Help is assistance toward another's need or good. The word can name an act, a resource ready to be offered, or a sustaining relation.

In Traherne. Being loved places help and safety in readiness even before a particular benefit is needed. The rhetoric of universal love then acquires a material test: could the lover refuse assistance to the person whom God loves? The imagined gift of one's last coin presses the cost of that question. Divine omnipresence, meanwhile, is an immediate refuge, joining help to abiding care rather than remoteness. Practical aid and inward consolation belong to one account of beneficence.

222 Primary text: II.59; IV.58; V.9.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.59** Help and safety are included in what a beloved person receives through another's affection. (Edition p. 100.)
- **IV.58** The imagined surrender of the last coin tests whether professed love will actually help. (Edition p. 233.)
- **V.9** Divine omnipresence is described as immediate help and refuge in trouble. (Edition p. 271.)

In this edition. "Succour" in the account of need means relief or assistance. The extreme hypothetical tests Traherne's principle of love; it is not a detailed rule for every distribution of limited resources.

See also. Charity; Benefit; Compassion; Providence; Love.

Hermes Trismegistus

Mercurius Trismegistus; Asclepi[223]

The word. Mercurius Trismegistus is the Latin form of Hermes Trismegistus, the sage to whom Hermetic writings were traditionally attributed. Traherne names him within his rendering of Pico's praise of humanity.

In Traherne. The claim that man is a great miracle provides a second witness beside Abdala's reply about the most admirable thing in the world. Yet it is a beginning rather than the full account of human dignity. The meditation proceeds through humanity's mediating powers toward the more surprising freedom developed in the following sections. Hermes thus belongs to a chain of received philosophical testimony that Traherne makes serve his own enquiry into created excellence. The name does not establish that every statement in the sequence derives directly from a Hermetic text independently read at that moment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.74** The saying about humanity's miraculous character is quoted through the discussion of Pico. (Edition p. 243.)

In this edition. The 2026 note identifies the saying with Asclepius 6 and explains "Asclepi" as an address to a pupil. It also records a corrected

223 Primary text: IV.74; Hermetic source, name, and textual explanation: 2026 edition note to IV.74.

reading. These source details are editorial identifications, not explanations made by Traherne in the passage.

See also. Copula and Hymenaeus; Man and mankind; Miracle; Pico della Mirandola.

Holiness

holy; holiness; godlike purity in action[224]

The word. Holiness names a life set in right relation to God and conformed to his goodness. In these meditations it is inseparable from accurate valuation, wisdom, and enacted love.

In Traherne. The opening account links holiness to thoughts that prize objects as God prizes them. The cross then supplies a comprehensive school of virtues, making holiness something learned through Christ's manner of loving. Later, its identification with happiness is explained through practice: knowing excellent things without doing them does not constitute wisdom. Holiness therefore resists reduction to religious appearance or private feeling. It is the soul's good powers brought into an ordered, fruitful life.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.13** Holiness requires desire, endeavour, and a valuation of objects corresponding to God's. (Edition p. 9.)
- **I.61** The cross teaches holiness within a wide constellation of practical virtues. (Edition p. 37.)
- **II.97** Fruition of the world is said naturally to produce holiness and righteousness. (Edition p. 124.)
- **IV.31** Holiness and wisdom meet in doing the excellent things that are known. (Edition p. 217.)

In this edition. The close association with happiness does not make holiness merely whatever feels agreeable. Its measure is a true and practised relation to good objects, divine law, and other persons.

See also. Righteousness; Virtue; Wisdom; Felicity; Christ.

224 Primary text: I.13; I.61; II.97; IV.31.

Holy Spirit

Holy Spirit; Holy Ghost; Spirit of God; Comforter[225]

The word. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, named also Holy Ghost and Comforter. The meditations emphasise indwelling, illumination, purification, and the enabling of an active likeness to God.

In Traherne. The prayer following the meditation on the cross asks for a personal participation in the life displayed at Pentecost: breath, fire, light, and praise gather the Spirit's effects. The difference between capacity and act is crucial. Creation gives powers of knowing and loving; the Holy Ghost makes sonship actual through their righteous exercise. This inward work is not merely private. To be filled with the Spirit is to live in Christ's love toward every person, treating each through the relation Christ has established. The larger theological account places this indwelling within the Spirit's eternal procession and the historical life of the Church.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.95** Pentecostal wind and fiery tongues frame a prayer for illumination and awakened powers. (Edition p. 61.)
- **I.99** The Holy Ghost brings sonship from capacity into act. (Edition p. 64.)
- **II.45** Divine love in the soul is described through the Spirit's purifying and strengthening presence. (Edition p. 92.)
- **IV.28** Being filled with the Spirit entails loving and treating each person in relation to Christ. (Edition p. 216.)
- **III.100** The Spirit's eternal procession and historical outpouring belong to communion with God. (Edition p. 197.)

In this edition. "Holy Ghost" is an older English name for Holy Spirit; it does not mean an apparition. Do not confuse a capitalised personal title with every generic use of "spirit" for a human faculty or disposition.

See also. Trinity; Heir and inheritance; Grace; Love; Christ.

225 Primary text: I.95; I.99; II.45; IV.28; III.100.

Honour

honour; honours; honourable; worthy recognition[226]

The word. Honour is the recognition or treatment appropriate to worth. It can also mean worldly distinction or public rank, which may or may not correspond to real excellence.

In Traherne. Traherne rejects the assumption that all honour must be renounced merely because conventional honours are deceptive. Creation crowns humanity with glory and honour; knowledge of another person's inheritance should produce genuine reverence. The philosopher must nevertheless be able to despise the honours society prizes when they obstruct the higher end. Honour is also reciprocal: one should publicly acknowledge God's goodness through speech and action, making it visible for others. Right honour therefore depends on truthful valuation and on the good of the person honoured, not on prestige alone.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.65** The scriptural crowning of humanity with glory and honour is read through creation's gift. (Edition p. 40.)
- **II.93** Recognition of each person's dignity requires mutual honour. (Edition p. 120.)
- **IV.8** The philosopher refuses conventional honours when governed by a superior end. (Edition p. 203.)
- **IV.93** Friendship with God calls for public acts that occasion others to honour him. (Edition p. 259.)

In this edition. "Honours" can mean social distinctions rather than moral worth. The text's criticism of those honours should be read beside its positive account of recognition that is true to its object.

See also. Glory; Fame; Dignity; Esteem; Praise.

226 Primary text: I.65; II.93; IV.8; IV.93.

Hope

hope; hopeful expectation; confidence in promised good[227]

The word. Hope is an anticipatory relation to good not yet fully possessed. It may begin obscurely, as a child's expectation, and mature through trust in a giver and his promises.

In Traherne. In the lonely field hope comes from the same distant borders that provoke fear, showing that an unknown world can promise as well as threaten. Knowledge of Christ gives hope a more definite object: restored friendship, enjoyment, and eternal glory. In difficulty, the foundation is divine love rather than an assumption that other people will always provide what charity requires. Hope also belongs to the special worth of present action, since one can act faithfully amid obscurity and danger in ways no longer possible under completed vision.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.23** Hope and fear meet at the borders of the child's apparently empty world. (Edition p. 144.)
- **I.76** Christ restores the hope of eternal glory alongside friendship and present enjoyment. (Edition p. 48.)
- **IV.23** Hope rests upon divine provision when human charity fails. (Edition p. 213.)
- **IV.93** Action by faith and hope gives the present life a distinctive place within eternity. (Edition p. 259.)

In this edition. Hope is neither a guarantee that each imagined prospect will occur nor mere passive waiting. Its mature form supports endeavour and faithful action before the good is fully seen.

See also. Faith; Expectation; Trust; Providence; Eternity.

Humanity

humanity; humane learning; study of man[228]

The word. Humanity here names a field of learning concerned with human nature, its faculties, desires, ends, and happiness. It does not

227 Primary text: III.23; I.76; IV.23; IV.93.

228 Primary text: III.41–42. Supplied 2026 editorial note 206 to III.41 identifies the disciplinary sense of humanity.

primarily mean kindness or simply the collective human race. Traherne gives the discipline its content by explaining what its inquiry does.

In Traherne. III.41–42 makes humanity one of the two most excellent kinds of learning, alongside divinity. The preceding survey of arts and sciences has distinguished knowing a subject for display, conversation, or passing advantage from knowing its value and one's real interest in it. Humanity supplies a way to understand that interest. It investigates the powers of the soul, the worth of human nature, its wants and inclinations, and the ends to which these are fitted.

The discipline is therefore explanatory and practical at once. It asks what a human being is in this world, what happiness such a being seeks, and what means can attain it. Wisdom is not a further collection of information added to this inquiry; it is knowledge exercised in discovering the way to happiness through an understanding of genuine wants and governing desires. Self-knowledge becomes knowledge of the divine goodness when the investigator sees why such capacities were implanted and what objects answer them.

Traherne's catalogue gives the approach an unexpectedly generous scope. Curiosity, ambition, emulation, concern for one's reputation, and the desire to possess things can each have a rightful object. The task is to understand their intended reach and use, rather than condemn their names without discrimination. Intellect is made to see widely; compassion and tenderness join one to other people; the power to admire and prize makes possible union with divine beauty. These claims explain why humanity leads into divinity instead of competing with it.

The passage offers more than a curriculum label. It supplies a method for reading the Centuries' repeated rehabilitation of desires commonly suspected of being vicious: examine a power's cause, fitness, object, and end. This does not mean that every actual indulgence of desire is good. It distinguishes the designed capacity from a narrowed or misdirected exercise. Humanity is consequently a study the reader practises upon the self, with felicity as its governing question.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.41** Ranks humanity and divinity above learning pursued merely for talk, display, or temporary use. (Edition p. 156.)
- **III.42** Defines humanity through the soul's faculties, wants, ends, and the means to happiness. (Edition p. 157.)

In this edition. The supplied 2026 note to III.41 glosses humanity as humane learning or the study of man. III.42 is the fullest primary definition; its particular account should not be reduced to the modern institutional category of the humanities.

See also. Man and mankind; Divinity; Learning; Science; Desire.

Humility

humility; humble; lowliness before God[229]

The word. Humility is freedom from self-exalting pride and a truthful acknowledgement of dependence or fault. Traherne can join it to extraordinary claims about the soul's dignity.

In Traherne. In the counsel on friendship, humility belongs with cheerfulness, charity, and devotion among the qualities that make a person delightful to others. It is neither social insignificance nor cultivated misery. In penitence, descent into humility opens upon a new torrent of joy, because mercy transforms acknowledged failure into restored relationship. The soul does not have to deny its gifts to confess its sins; rather, it learns to distinguish the greatness of what was bestowed from its own misuse of it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.80** Humility is included among the virtues fitting a soul for spiritual companionship. (Edition p. 50.)
- **III.48** The abasement of penitence becomes the occasion of renewed joy in mercy. (Edition p. 162.)

In this edition. The "abysses of humility" are a devotional figure for repentance. They should not be paraphrased as a belief that the created person has no value or no capacity for joy.

See also. Pride; Repentance; Mercy; Dignity.

229 Primary text: I.80; III.48.

Humour

humour; avaricious humour; communicative humour[230]

The word. A humour is a disposition or bent of mind. Though the word derives from older accounts of bodily temperament, Traherne's argument here does not expound a four-humour physiology. Neither comedy nor a momentary mood is the intended sense.

In Traherne. II.79 names two apparently contrary inclinations. The avaricious humour wishes to possess everything privately and to be the sole end of its benefits. The communicative humour wishes for companions, for people to whom joy can be told, and for the pleasure of becoming another person's delight. A merely exclusive model of possession seems to force a choice between them.

Traherne answers through the special character of spiritual enjoyment. A world wholly available to one enjoyer can also be wholly available to others. Their enjoyment need not subtract from his; their presence supplies the very companions whose happiness completes his own. God's gift of things to other people becomes, in this sense, a further gift to the first recipient.

The meditation therefore transforms acquisitiveness by placing it within a communicative relation. It does not defend every act of hoarding or declare ordinary rival claims to property unreal. The paradox concerns a mode of delight in which fellow enjoyers themselves belong among one's treasures. The two dispositions become mutually perfective because the fulfilled desire to enjoy all includes the fulfilled desire that others enjoy it too.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.79** Explicitly names and reconciles the avaricious and communicative humours through shared enjoyment. (Edition p. 111.)

In this edition. The 2026 note supplies the historical gloss and the word's humoral background. The primary meditation's actual psychological distinction is twofold; importing a complete medical system would obscure its argument.

230 Primary text: II.79. Supplied 2026 editorial note 142 explains humour as disposition and its inherited physiological vocabulary.

See also. Inclination; Propriety; Communication; Avarice and covetousness; Fellowship.

Hypocrisy

hypocrisies; socially rewarded pretence[231]

The word. Hypocrisy is a false appearance of goodness or conformity presented to secure approval. The plural in Traherne names one of several corrupt forms taken by the wish to please.

In Traherne. The underlying impulse is surprisingly generous: people want to delight others and become beloved. When their audience mistakes felicity, that good impulse turns them toward admired vanities and deceptive performances. Hypocrisy therefore arises within a social education of desire, not merely from an isolated decision to lie. The analysis locates a remedy in correcting both the object sought and the measure of excellence.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.44** Hypocrisies arise when the natural desire to please follows a community's mistaken valuations. (Edition p. 224.)

In this edition. The occurrence does not single out a named religious group or a particular hypocrite. Its target is a general mechanism of conformity through misdirected approval-seeking.

See also. Custom; Falsehood; Honour; Emulation; Goodness.

Hypostatic union

hypostatically united; hypostatic union[232]

The word. A hypostatic union is a union at the level of person. The familiar Christian application concerns Christ's divine and human natures; Traherne's unusual sentence provisionally asks whether an angel might have been personally united to human nature.

In Traherne. II.32 tests the usual reasons offered for requiring a divine redeemer. Traherne first grants that an innocent substitute must

231 Primary text: IV.44.

232 Primary text: II.31–33. Supplied 2026 editorial note 112 to II.32 supplies background on the conventional qualifications of the mediator.

undertake the office voluntarily. He then repeatedly entertains possibilities: an angel might consent, might suffer infinitely through losing the divine love it prizes, and might undertake more than its existing duty required. The proposal that an angel could be united to human nature belongs to the same hypothetical series.

His purpose is to challenge a too-quick inference from a mediator's necessary capacities to Christ's exclusive eligibility. Even sustaining infinite punishment does not, on this line of argument, settle the issue: almighty power could sustain a creature under the punishment almighty power inflicted. The two millstones make that disturbing possibility vivid. Traherne therefore asks the reader to search higher for the reason Christ is preferred.

The next meditation supplies that higher reason in the honour of the office and the Father's judgment that only the Son is worthy of it. The experiment in II.32 is thus a stage in a Christian argument for Christ's pre-eminence. It does not report angelic incarnations, teach that angels actually redeemed humanity, or dissolve the distinction between Christ and creatures.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.32** The hypothetical personal union occurs among concessions testing the conventional qualifications of a mediator. (Edition p. 86.)
- **II.33** The argument advances from possible capacity to the Son's unique dignity and willing undertaking. (Edition p. 86.)

In this edition. The supplied 2026 note describes the theological teaching Traherne is testing. Preserve the repeated qualifications in his argument: a provisional possibility is not an asserted event. Hypostatic union is the explanatory headword; the text uses the adverb hypostatically.

See also. Incarnation; Person; Angels; Redemption; Socinians.

Ignorance

ignorance; ignorant; unknowing; obscured understanding[233]

The word. Ignorance is the absence of knowledge, but its value depends on what is not known and how that absence operates. Traherne can describe it as a deprivation or, unusually, as a childhood advantage.

In Traherne. Ignorance of God, the world, and one's own powers prevents enjoyment of an inheritance already given. It can act like a lid shutting a reflective eye, withholding the love that fuller perception would awaken. Yet the infant's ignorance of quarrels, exactions, sickness, and death helps explain the freedom of the first apprehensions. Traherne does not propose preserving every childhood error. Adult reason is to recover what was true in that early vision. The refusal to remain ignorant thus belongs to a mature Christianity that loves wisdom, while freedom from corrupt assumptions remains a condition of learning.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.16** Ignorance can destroy the joy available through knowledge of God, self, and world. (Edition p. 11.)
- **III.2** The child's ignorance of certain injuries and conventions is described as advantageous. (Edition p. 128.)
- **IV.5** Christian identity is associated with loving wisdom rather than consenting to ignorance. (Edition p. 201.)
- **IV.86** Ignorance is one lid by which a soul interrupts the reception and return of love. (Edition p. 254.)

In this edition. The favourable childhood occurrence is deliberately qualified by its objects. It does not make ignorance generally superior to learning, nor cancel the book's insistence on mature understanding.

See also. Knowledge; Child and childhood; Blindness; Custom; Understanding.

233 Primary text: I.16; III.2; IV.5; IV.86.

Illimited

illimited; without limit; unbounded[234]

The word. Illimited means not bounded or circumscribed. It need not mean that something has been proved mathematically infinite.

In Traherne. Traherne uses the word to loosen the reader's customary boundaries. The world first appears a bounded collection of physical objects; entered through its value and service, it becomes a field of inexhaustible variety. The point is an enlargement of enjoyment, not merely an increase in size. His round earth is also called illimited because the traveller finds no enclosing wall or final edge. Yet the same meditation expressly leaves undecided whether the universe is infinite.

This distinction matters: experiential openness, endless circulation, and divine infinity can illuminate one another without becoming identical propositions. The word often marks the passage from counting possessions to discovering a world in which attention can continually advance.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.18** The world becomes an illimited field when its value and service are perceived. (Edition p. 12.)
- **II.21** The round earth has no terminal border; the universe's actual infinitude remains undecided. (Edition p. 77.)

In this edition. Read illimited as unbounded in its immediate context. II.21 prevents treating every occurrence as a literal assertion of infinite physical extension.

See also. Infinity; World; Enlargement; Enjoyment.

Illustrate

illustrate all it illuminates[235]

The word. To illustrate can mean to make illustrious, illuminate with splendour, or shed glory upon. The common modern sense of explaining by an example or picture is not the principal sense here.

234 Primary text: I.18, II.21.

235 Primary text: III.61; historical gloss: 2026 edition note to III.61.

In Traherne. Traherne's account of the divine image moves from seeing to containing, loving, and shining. A soul communicates itself in beams of affection and illustrates the things it illuminates. The repeated light language is therefore active and evaluative: love adds the honour of being known and prized to the objects it encounters. This is not a claim that thought manufactures those objects or that affection changes their material composition. It describes a spiritual relation in which their beauty becomes manifest and is answered by the beholder's own generosity.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.61** The perfected creature shines in affection and illustrates its objects with beauty and glory. (Edition p. 170.)

In this edition. The 2026 note glosses the older sense as making illustrious. The neighbouring "illuminates" confirms that the sentence concerns radiance and glorification rather than explanatory examples.

See also. Glory; Light; Love; Image.

Image

image; likeness; similitude; resemblance[236]

The word. An image represents or resembles an original. In the phrase image of God, resemblance concerns the creature's powers and manner of living.

In Traherne. The divine image is the strongest expression of created human dignity. Its defining resemblance is neither facial nor bodily: the soul can know, love, enjoy, and communicate goodness. In I.67 likeness makes friendship possible, because the soul is both lovable and disposed to love. Its excellence belongs to a relation with its maker rather than to isolated self-sufficiency.

III.61 draws an important limit. God cannot make a second God; the utmost creature is God's image. This creature contains things as a mirror and communicates itself as a sun. Thus receiving and giving are complementary aspects of likeness. To become the image fully is to exercise the bestowed capacities, not merely possess them unused.

236 Primary text: I.19, I.67, III.61.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.19** The image lies in the soul's powers, inclinations, and principles rather than facial features. (Edition p. 12.)
- **I.67** Likeness grounds reciprocal love and eternal friendship. (Edition p. 41.)
- **III.61** The image is the highest creature, distinguished from a second God. (Edition p. 170.)

In this edition. Likeness and similitude name the same representative relation here. Claims of resemblance should not erase Traherne's explicit distinction between God and creature.

See also. God; Soul; Love; Mirror; Knowledge.

Imagination

imagination; imaginations; imagining; unsupposing[237]

The word. Imagination is the power or activity of making something present to thought when it is not immediately supplied by the senses.

In Traherne. Its work is strikingly double. In II.81 imagination removes the entire sensible world, allowing the reader to notice the space that cannot similarly be imagined away. In V.3 it requires boundless room in which thoughts and affections can move. But III.10 remembers the glass of imagination as a socially restricted medium: the child begins to see only what other people talk about and prize. Heaven and earth disappear from effective awareness while pennies and fine clothes fill it.

The contrast is between uses, not an announced division of faculties. Imagination can expose the narrowness of sense or reproduce the narrower horizons of custom. The reader must ask what supplies its objects, and whether it enlarges or confines enjoyment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.81** Imagining the world annihilated leaves its space still present to thought. (Edition p. 112.)
- **III.10** Other people's valuations crowd out the child's direct apprehension of creation. (Edition p. 136.)

237 Primary text: II.81, III.10, V.3.

- **V.3** Infinite extension supplies room for imaginations, desires, and affections. (Edition p. 266.)

In this edition. Traherne does not establish a fixed technical opposition between imagination and fancy. Their particular work must be inferred from the surrounding argument.

See also. Fancy; Custom; Infinity; Thought; Education.

Immortality

immortality; immortal; endless life[238]

The word. Immortality is exemption from death or the enduring life to which a person is destined. Immortal can also describe how something appears to a perceiver.

In Traherne. The word belongs both to Christian hope and to the remembered child's vision. In the first Century, life without end is humanity's intended fellowship with God; the fall and the Cross form the setting in which that destination is recovered. In III.3 the wheat and the people appear immortal because the child has not learned sowing, reaping, birth, and death. The experience is genuinely revelatory for Traherne without functioning as agricultural or biological description.

The mature prayer of I.95 locates the fountain of immortality in the Father and joins lasting life to the Spirit's present work of awakening perception. Endless duration without knowledge and love would not express the desired fullness.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.75** Humanity's intended endless life is recalled in a prayer before the Cross. (Edition p. 47.)
- **I.95** The Father is the fountain of immortality within Trinitarian communion. (Edition p. 61.)
- **III.3** Corn and human beings appear immortal to the child's unmeasured vision. (Edition p. 129.)

In this edition. Distinguish the doctrinal noun from the phenomenological immortal in the childhood narrative; the latter reports an apprehension rather than denying ordinary change.

238 Primary text: I.75, I.95, III.3.

See also. Eternity; Life; Death; Child and childhood.

Immutability

immutability; unchangeable; Eternal Act[239]

The word. Immutability is unchangeableness. Traherne explains the divine attribute through complete and eternal activity, so it cannot be understood here as lifeless stillness or unused power.

In Traherne. The preceding meditation describes God as simple being and pure act, without a composition of power and act. The next draws the consequence: no divine power remains unemployed. Infinite power is wholly and eternally exerted, wisely directed towards excellent ends. Traherne joins this account to the generation of the Son and the perfection of love towards creatures. Because the activity is wholly eternal, it is unchangeable. Immutability consequently belongs to the fullness of God's living operation. It underwrites the expectation of goodness in created things rather than describing a deity withdrawn from them.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.63** Divine simplicity excludes composition from power and act. (Edition p. 171.)
- **III.64** Eternal, wholly exerted power grounds the Son's generation, perfect love, and divine unchangeableness. (Edition p. 171.)

In this edition. Keep the causal sequence: eternal act explains unchangeableness. Replacing act with inactivity reverses the meditation's explicit argument.

See also. Simplicity; Eternity; Action and activity; God.

Impertinence

impertinence; impertinent[240]

The word. Impertinence means irrelevance: something that does not pertain to the matter or end in question. The modern sense of impudent

239 Primary text: III.63, III.64.

240 Primary text: III.40, IV.15, IV.96. Supplied 2026 editorial note 205 to III.40 explains the historical sense of impertinence.

rudeness is misleading in these passages. An impertinent object seems to have no bearing on one's life or happiness.

In Traherne. Traherne applies the word both to a mistaken judgment about things and to a fruitless way of studying them. In III.40 even God and angels can be the subjects of impertinent study if the learner seeks only display, idle knowledge, or curiosity. The sacredness of the topic does not by itself make the activity fruitful. The relevant question is whether study leads to love of God and goodness toward people.

IV.15 approaches the problem from the object's supposed relation to oneself. A person who regards other human beings as irrelevant to happiness will scarcely love them. Misapprehension obstructs use, enjoyment, and affection just as mistaking a tool's character prevents its proper employment. Calling someone impertinent to joy can thus disclose a defect in the observer's understanding rather than a genuine absence of relation.

IV.96 supplies the remedy: repeated meditation makes apparently remote things familiar and reveals them as one's own concern. Relevance is not restricted to what produces an immediate private advantage. It includes the relations through which the soul learns to esteem and enjoy a wider world.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.40** Study pursued for ostentation is fruitless impertinence even when its subjects are divine. (Edition p. 156.)
- **IV.15** Believing other people irrelevant to happiness obstructs love. (Edition p. 209.)
- **IV.96** Meditation turns apparent irrelevance into recognized belonging and importance. (Edition p. 261.)

In this edition. The supplied 2026 note glosses the historical word as irrelevance. Preserve the difference between truly fruitless inquiry and things only mistakenly judged irrelevant; Traherne uses both applications.

See also. Concernment; Interest; Relation; Study; Use.

Implicit faith and assurance

implicit faith; assurance; full assurance of understanding[241]

The word. Implicit faith here is trust whose grounds and contents are not yet fully understood. Assurance is the clearer conviction gained by apprehending the reality and worth of the goods believed. The pair describes intellectual and spiritual growth, not merely a change in emotional confidence.

In Traherne. In III.53 trust in God's goodness becomes a rule for inquiry. If goodness is infinite, Traherne reasons, the best things should be commonly available. He accordingly studies air, light, water, the earth, and human society, comparing their usefulness with the scarcity and conventional esteem of precious stones and metals. The initial trust is fruitful because it sets thought to work and exposes a mistaken scale of value.

IV.6 makes the desired development explicit. A Christian may believe in God, salvation, immortality, and heavenly joys sufficiently to begin obeying, yet still lack a full apprehension of what these beliefs contain. Knowledge of the soul's dignity, the goodness of God's works, and the blessedness of grace strengthens assurance by making their riches evident. Communion with God requires enjoyment, and enjoyment requires a lively awareness that its objects are real.

Traherne therefore neither treats preliminary trust as worthless nor recommends leaving it unexamined. Its fulfilment is an increasingly intelligent participation in the goods it first accepts. The immediate emphasis falls on the reality of joy and the understanding that supports possession; it should not be expanded without evidence into a complete doctrine of assurance of election.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.53** Implicit trust directs a comparison of common goods with scarce, conventionally prized possessions. (Edition p. 165.)
- **IV.6** The full assurance of understanding makes believed riches available for conscious enjoyment. (Edition p. 201.)

241 Primary text: III.53, IV.6. Supplied 2026 editorial notes 213 and 264–265 explain implicit faith and identify the Pauline language of assurance.

In this edition. The 2026 notes explain the older theological phrase and its controversial history. Traherne adapts it to trust in divine goodness and explicitly seeks its development into understanding.

See also. Faith; Belief; Understanding; Common things; Trust.

Impression

impression; impressions; impressed; engraven[242]

The word. An impression is a mark made upon a surface, and by extension a durable effect upon the mind or affections.

In Traherne. Christ's wounds are impressions that must be read through the greater reality of his love. Their visible marks remain dim if the beholder does not perceive the person and the eternal generosity they express. The physical sign is indispensable to the meditation but cannot exhaust its meaning.

Conversely, divine goodness ought to impress itself so deeply upon the recipient that it becomes continually felt and remembered. The movement is from mark to meaning, then from perceived meaning to settled disposition. Traherne wants a truth to endure in the soul with the force of an engraving, rather than pass through it as a momentary observation.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.64** The wounds are inadequate signs unless the beholder perceives Christ's person and love. (Edition p. 39.)
- **II.14** God's goodness ought to leave impressions that remain, are felt, and produce joy. (Edition p. 73.)

In this edition. Impression does not here mean a tentative opinion. Its material force survives in engraven and in the demand that goodness be deeply impressed.

See also. Cross; Memory; Consideration; Love.

242 Primary text: I.64, II.14.

In-being and objective presence

in-being; In-being; objectively; object in a faculty[243]

The word. In-being means a thing's manner of being in something else. An object may be in the mind that apprehends it without being enclosed there as a body in a vessel. Objectively here means as an object of apprehension, not impartially or independently of a perceiver.

In Traherne. The closing meditation of the First Century uses a technical distinction to explain the devotional claim that Christ dwells in the heart by faith. A thing's physical location cannot by itself accomplish the end for which the thing is given. A beautiful object standing in an unperceived room has no enjoyer there; known by a living soul, it can elicit pleasure proportioned to its goodness, wisdom, steadfastness, love of its giver, and thanksgiving. This is why Traherne ranks its presence to a faculty above other manners of inclusion.

The contrast does not make the external thing unreal. Both the placed thing and its place enter understanding. What changes is their experienced and acknowledged significance. The meditation thus connects knowledge with love and use: mental presence is fruitful when the soul sees excellency and answers it, rather than merely recording that something exists. Historical distance likewise ceases to prevent inward presence. Christ's conception, birth, life, and death can be continually before the believer; all ages, kingdoms, saints, and angels become objects of understanding and esteem.

Traherne explicitly translates the language of things being within us into their being in our sight, sense, love, and esteem. This gloss controls the otherwise extravagant claim to comprehend eternity and infinity. He is describing the soul's receptive and appreciative relation to divine and created realities, not the physical compression of the universe into a human organ. The reciprocal assertion that the saints are in him and he in them extends this account to communion.

He mentions eight manners of in-being but does not list them. The supplied editorial note relates the number to Aristotle's classification, whose examples range from part and whole to form and matter and physical containment. That historical connection clarifies the vocabulary;

243 Primary text: I.100. Supplied 2026 editorial notes to I.100, especially notes 84–87, provide the Aristotle reference, historical sense of objectively, and scriptural identifications.

Traherne's own emphasis falls on the superior fruitfulness of an object known and loved.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.100** The complete argument moves from an object's presence in a faculty to Christ's indwelling, reciprocal communion, and the practice of meditation. (Edition p. 64.)

In this edition. The 2026 notes distinguish this scholastic sense of objectively from modern usage and explain the Aristotelian reference. Their list of eight relations is editorial background, not a list supplied by Traherne. The passage ends in prayer and praise, so its technical vocabulary serves a devotional purpose.

See also. Object; Presence; Comprehensor; Soul; Meditation.

Incarnation

incarnation; the Son made present in human life[244]

The word. Incarnation names the Son's assumption of human life. It belongs to the sequence of Christ's saving acts rather than to an abstract theory of embodiment.

In Traherne. Traherne insists that its value becomes clear when the reader understands what redemption restores. Remembering innocence and the world's original blessedness supplies the end by which the means can be prized. Incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension then appear in a newly glorious light.

The third Century gathers the same event into the soul's comprehensive communion with God. The incarnation is among the acts to be made inwardly near and enjoyed as riches, alongside creation and providence. It therefore participates in two structures at once: the historical work of salvation and the present enlargement of the contemplative life. Neither structure makes it merely a useful symbol.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.5** Knowledge of the lost happiness makes Christ's incarnation and saving history rightly precious. (Edition p. 68.)

244 Primary text: II.5, III.100.

- **III.100** The incarnation belongs among the divine works enjoyed in communion with God. (Edition p. 197.)

In this edition. The two explicit occurrences emphasize valuation and communion. They do not provide a separate technical exposition of Christ's two natures.

See also. Christ; Redemption; Innocence; Communion.

Inclination

inclination; inclinations; propensity; proneness[245]

The word. An inclination is a natural leaning or tendency of the soul toward an object or end, prior to its complete direction by judgment.

In Traherne. Traherne refuses to identify large desire with vice. The inclination toward riches and dominion is noble, even a highest virtue when rightly guided; misery arises from pursuing inadequate objects by the wrong means. Gifts already near the senses answer desires that conquest leaves unsatisfied.

The study of humanity therefore investigates inclinations rather than simply suppressing them. Curiosity, ambition, emulation, tenderness, and the desire to be esteemed all have a place in the equipment for felicity. Their magnitude indicates the magnitude of the objects intended for them. This affirmative account still requires discrimination: an inclination reveals capacity and destination, but its accustomed object may be an invention of corrupted education.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.23** The desire for riches becomes virtuous when directed toward freely given treasures. (Edition p. 16.)
- **III.42** The study of human inclinations leads from humanity to divinity. (Edition p. 157.)

In this edition. Inclination and propensity describe native tendencies here; neither term alone guarantees that a particular choice or acquired appetite is right.

See also. Desire; Nature; Appetite; Man and mankind; Education.

245 Primary text: I.23, III.42.

Inconvenient

inconvenient[246]

The word. Inconvenient can mean unfitting, unsuitable, or inconsistent with the nature and purpose of something. It is stronger than a minor practical nuisance or disruption of comfort.

In Traherne. The account of redemption asks how God can accomplish what no creature can do when the required suffering is inconvenient for God. The difficulty concerns fitness to divine nature, not unwillingness to accept inconvenience. In the childhood enquiry, imagined arrangements of the universe and an infinitely bulky body prove inconvenient because they fail to make a workable and beautiful order. The word therefore participates in both theological and natural reasoning: a proposed solution must suit the being and relations involved.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.38** The inadequacy of creatures and the unfittingness of divine suffering create the redemptive dilemma. (Edition p. 90.)
- **III.19** An endlessly large body would lack the form, movement, and visibility proper to human life. (Edition p. 141.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to II.38 gives the theological gloss and compares Anselm. That comparison is editorial; Traherne does not name Anselm in this meditation.

See also. Body; Incarnation; Order; Redemption.

Individually

individually; individually one; individually united[247]

The word. Individually here means indivisibly or inseparably, rather than separately, one person at a time. The older sense can reverse a modern reader's first understanding of the sentence.

In Traherne. God's love for Himself and His love for creatures are individually one because divine simplicity forbids treating them as disconnected components. What seems a competition between divine

246 Primary text: II.38, III.19; gloss and theological comparison: 2026 edition note to II.38.
247 Primary text: IV.65, III.99, II.81; historical gloss: 2026 edition note to IV.65.

self-love and concern for others is resolved as one loving act. The same adverb describes union with God and the inward presence of infinity to the soul. These contexts concern intimate cohesion, not isolated individualism. The practical result is joy, courage, and fidelity in duty: being united to God strengthens outward action rather than abolishing the created person.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.65** Divine self-love and love of creatures are indivisibly one. (Edition p. 237.)
- **III.99** Indivisible union supports joyful and courageous duty. (Edition p. 196.)
- **II.81** Infinity is spoken of as intimately within the soul. (Edition p. 112.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to IV.65 glosses indivisibly. Its cross-reference to I.78 is not treated here as an additional occurrence of the exact adverb.

See also. Simplicity; Union; Unity; Love.

Infancy

infancy; infant; first apprehensions[248]

The word. Infancy denotes the earliest stage of life. Traherne also makes it a name for the beginnings of a greatness that later reflection must recover.

In Traherne. The third Century opens by proposing infancy as evidence. Its apprehensions are called pure and virgin, given rather than purchased or derived from books. Their importance is not simply that they precede error: they supply the light by which the world can still be rightly understood. Remembering them becomes a present gift.

The poem in III.4 complicates any picture of uninterrupted childhood bliss. Divine approaches meet cold acceptance, and the adult confesses a long failure to understand their end. Infancy is therefore neither a sufficient education nor a closed paradise to which maturity can literally return. Its remembered disclosure must become an intelligible and sustained enjoyment.

248 Primary text: III.1, III.4.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.1** Early apprehensions are the continuing light for seeing the universe. (Edition p. 128.)
- **III.4** The poem recalls both early divine approaches and the failure to receive them. (Edition p. 130.)

In this edition. Infancy in these passages is Traherne's retrospective category. His interpretation of childhood should be distinguished from the child's unreflective experience.

See also. Child and childhood; Innocence; Memory; Education.

Infinity

infinity; infinite; infinit; immensity; illimited extent[249]

The word. Infinity signifies absence of limit. Traherne applies it to divine being, the space in which creatures stand, the reach of the soul, and the inexhaustibility of its good.

In Traherne. Infinity is not an ornamental way of saying very large. It repeatedly supplies the conditions under which generosity, thought, and enjoyment can be adequate to one another. A boundless power requires room for its works; an unlimited desire requires objects and a field worthy of it. The vocabulary of rooms, repositories, kingdoms, and bosoms gives infinity an intimate inhabitable character. What first seems remote from life becomes the place in which life already occurs.

II.81 reverses an ordinary account of knowledge. The infinite is first felt by the soul; finite bounds are learned when the senses encounter resistance. The experiment of supposing the world annihilated leaves its place behind. Traherne identifies the inescapable presence of infinity with God's nearness. This is the text's argument, not a demonstration the lexicon silently imports from later theories of space.

The visible world expresses infinity without settling every cosmological question. II.21 rejects an endless wall as a poor manifestation: divine abundance appears more adequately in useful variety, mutual service, and delight. The same meditation says that we cannot tell whether the universe itself is infinite. Its argument depends on

249 Primary text: II.21, II.81, IV.98, V.2, V.4. The 2026 editorial note at II.81 [144] supports the spelling and substantive-use caution.

the excellence and unsearchability of the gift rather than a measured proof of endless matter.

The fifth Century makes the relation most explicit. Infinity is both surrounding region and inward life, at once a dwelling place and the energy that enlarges its inhabitants. V.4 joins space to power, bounty, wisdom, and blessedness, refusing the idea of an empty magnitude unrelated to value. The soul's expansive language similarly concerns knowing and loving presence, not the dispersal of its body through space.

A reader should consequently resist collapsing every infinite into one technical sense. Spatial, divine, intellectual, and evaluative uses converge through an argument about adequate generosity. Their convergence is daring and deliberate; their local differences remain essential to understanding how the meditations move.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.21** The world manifests infinity through beneficial variety while its physical infinitude remains undecided. (Edition p. 77.)
- **II.81** Infinity is claimed as naturally prior to sensible boundaries; imagined annihilation leaves space. (Edition p. 112.)
- **IV.98** The soul's contemplative power ranges freely across infinity and other divine objects. (Edition p. 262.)
- **V.2** Divine immensity is the soul's surrounding and inward dwelling place. (Edition p. 265.)
- **V.4** Infinite capacity answers almighty power and gives bounty room for its gifts. (Edition p. 267.)

In this edition. At II.81 the 2026 note explains that the manuscript's Infinit is an adjective used substantivally, not a defective infinity. Immensity is treated here as a related term, without making every use identical.

See also. Space; Eternity; Capacity; Illimited; God; Soul.

Influence

influence; influences; healing influences[250]

The word. Influence retains the older image of a power flowing from the heavens, especially from stars, into earthly life. It also names less visibly situated effects upon thought, education, and affection.

In Traherne. The stars minister influences that sustain living things, and the sun's relations include strengthening them. Against this beneficent cosmic circulation stands the evil influence of an education that obscures the child's light. Love then acquires healing influences of its own, extending the language of celestial operation to spiritual communication. The word binds natural, social, and inward worlds without making their operations identical. Its flowing and radiant associations explain why it sits so readily beside beams, nourishment, and refreshment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.55** The sun's value includes its relation to the stars' influences. (Edition p. 166.)
- **III.7** Bad education exerts an evil influence upon childhood vision. (Edition p. 134.)
- **IV.80** Love communicates healing influences throughout its reach. (Edition p. 249.)

In this edition. The historical stellar sense is explained by the 2026 notes to III.7 and III.55. These passages report Traherne's cosmological language, not established modern astrophysics.

See also. Communication; Education; Stars; Sun.

Ingratitude

ingratitude; unthankful; despising benefits[251]

The word. Ingratitude is failure to recognize or answer a benefit. For Traherne it includes the habitual devaluation of what one already possesses.

250 Primary text: III.55, III.7, IV.80; historical gloss: 2026 edition notes to III.7 and III.55.
251 Primary text: I.21, I.31, I.32.

In Traherne. The central fault is not limitless desire but the strange inability to value a received good. Once a desired object becomes familiar, its possession itself becomes a reason to despise it. This process can never be satisfied by increasing the stock of possessions, because it destroys every satisfaction upon arrival.

Traherne extends the diagnosis from personal restlessness to a whole culture of invented wealth. People abandon solid gifts for fashionable substitutes and then blame their deprivation. Ingratitude is thus a disorder of perception with ethical and theological consequences: it makes an abundant world effectively absent and refuses the giver within the gift. Its correction requires present esteem, not merely thanks after a temporary rescue.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.21** Insatiableness is distinguished from the ingratitude that despises every acquired good. (Edition p. 14.)
- **I.31** Failure to perceive the world's beauty is treated as blindness and ingratitude. (Edition p. 19.)
- **I.32** Benefits themselves become the occasion of contempt and the pursuit of invented treasures. (Edition p. 19.)

In this edition. The explicit approval of insatiableness in I.21 prevents reading ingratitude as a synonym for ambition or a desire that exceeds present possessions.

See also. Gratitude; Custom; Esteem; Desire.

Innocence

innocence; innocent; pure and virgin apprehensions; estate of innocence[252]

The word. Innocence denotes freedom from sin or corruption. The estate of innocence gives that freedom a theological setting in humanity's original blessed condition.

In Traherne. Traherne's childhood account makes innocence a mode of apprehension as well as a moral condition. The young observer sees things as new, glorious, precious, and his own. His ignorance of sickness, death, demands, and quarrels removes the impediments through which adults habitually view the world. What is absent from his awareness

252 Primary text: II.5, III.1, III.2, III.3. For primitive clarity, see III.7.

allows what is present to appear with astonishing fullness. Innocence is consequently not described as blankness. It possesses a positive knowledge and an expansive enjoyment.

The wording of III.2 is carefully comparative: he seemed as one brought into the estate of innocence. The adult narrator does not simply equate his personal childhood with a second historical Eden. He draws an analogy between an original felicity and an experience that disclosed what the world could mean before corrupted valuation intervened. III.3 carries that analogy into streets, trees, wheat, and ordinary people. The theological vision is inseparable from familiar visible things.

The later recovery is also more than nostalgia. What was known by intuition has been collected again by the highest reason. The child's apprehension supplies evidence and direction; mature meditation tests, understands, and learns to sustain its value. Social teaching can corrupt, but the remedy is not permanent resistance to thought or learning. It is an education able to explain and enact what was initially seen without explanation.

II.5 places innocence within redemption. Unless the lost happiness is understood and valued, the reader cannot appreciate the work that restores it. Incarnation, death, resurrection, and reconciliation receive their proper esteem through recognition of their end. The remembered goodness of creation thus heightens the value of Christ's work rather than making it superfluous.

The relation between ignorance and knowledge should therefore remain open in reading. Ignorance of harms helps the child see unshadowed beauty; knowledge later discovers how that beauty may be loved despite the harms. Innocence supplies a standard of undivided apprehension, but mature felicity must include responsibilities and truths not yet visible to the infant.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.5** Remembering the estate of innocence makes the end and value of redemption intelligible. (Edition p. 68.)
- **III.1** The first apprehensions remain a gifted light for seeing the universe. (Edition p. 128.)
- **III.2** The narrator compares childhood to innocence and contrasts intuition with recovered rational knowledge. (Edition p. 128.)

- **III.3** Edenic perception encounters ordinary streets and people, then is corrupted by acquired valuations. (Edition p. 129.)
- **III.7** The primitive clarity of infancy is eclipsed by acquired valuations. (Edition p. 134.)

In this edition. The phrase seemed as one in III.2 matters. It introduces a retrospective likeness, not an explicit claim that infancy abolishes the fall or makes redemption unnecessary. Primitive in III.7 means belonging to the first or original condition; it does not mean intellectually inferior or crudely formed.

See also. Infancy; Adam; Eden; Fall; Redemption; Reason.

Insatiableness

insatiableness; insatiable; unsatiable[253]

The word. Insatiableness is an appetite or capacity that finite acquisitions cannot finally fill. Traherne deliberately gives the word a favourable sense while distinguishing it from ingratitude. The distinction is between a soul's great capacity and its refusal to appreciate what it already receives.

In Traherne. I.21 first condemns the person who despises present mercies, perpetually reaches for more, and then despises the new acquisition too. Such a habit defeats happiness because no enlargement of supply repairs the damaged power of esteem. Only after this warning does Traherne pronounce insatiableness good.

I.22 explains the paradox through the relation between the soul and its benefactor. Desire need not be shamefully small, because the giver delights to bestow. Yet the meditation immediately sets acquisitive conquest beside that generous possibility. Pyrrhus's projected victories promise a rest that he could enjoy already; Alexander's proverbial demand for further worlds dramatizes an appetite greater than accumulated kingdoms. Multiplication alone cannot provide the right fulfilment.

The two meditations therefore do not celebrate every restless urge. They ask the reader to prize the present world while recognizing a

253 Primary text: I.21–22. Supplied 2026 editorial note 22 explains the favourable historical sense; the primary narratives furnish the contrast with accumulation.

capacity for goods exceeding any private stock of possessions. The soul's nobility consists in its reach, but that reach is misused when it makes existing blessings invisible or turns other people's lands into the necessary material of satisfaction. Grateful enjoyment can coexist with unexhausted receptivity.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.21** Separates a good insatiableness from the disease of despising every present gift. (Edition p. 14.)
- **I.22** Calls the soul insatiable, then uses conquest stories to expose the inadequacy of mere accumulation. (Edition p. 14.)

In this edition. The 2026 note explains the favourable sense as capacity for the infinite. Read the compact paradox with its surrounding criticism; detached from that context it could seem to authorize the covetousness the argument is exposing.

See also. Appetite; Desire; Avarice and covetousness; Ingratitude; Pyrrhus and Cineas.

Interest

interest; interests; share; concern; advantage[254]

The word. Interest can mean a share in something, a concern that affects one, or an advantage pursued. It need not imply payment for a loan.

In Traherne. The word exposes the ambiguity of self-concern. Particular and feeble interests divide people when each treats private advantage as an exclusive good. Yet an interest in other people's praises can unite the observer with their happiness and with the divine benefits they celebrate. Having a share need not diminish anyone else's share.

IV.60 gives the problem a sharper ethical form. Heavenly love and advantage coincide, whereas bodily need makes earthly love appear divided against its interest. Sacrificial action is therefore tested here. Traherne does not deny hunger or personal necessity; he asks how love can act through their pressure and discover an interest ultimately enlarged by the good of others.

254 Primary text: I.33, II.94, IV.60.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.33** Exclusive private interests participate in the disorder of invented wants. (Edition p. 20.)
- **II.94** God's praise gives the reader an interest in the praises of others. (Edition p. 121.)
- **IV.60** Earthly love is tested where its operations and immediate interest appear divided. (Edition p. 234.)

In this edition. Read interest locally as share or advantage. The same word can denote a constricted concern or an enlarged participation without contradiction.

See also. Self-love; Common things; Love; Profit.

Interminable

interminable Temple; interminable sphere[255]

The word. Interminable means boundless or without an ending or limit. Its frequent modern implication of tiresome prolongation is absent from Traherne's celebratory uses.

In Traherne. The soul is an interminable temple because temporal and spatial distance cannot make its contemplated objects simply unavailable. Christ's Cross remains present to understanding even when imagined millions of ages away. Love is likewise an interminable sphere: its beams reach objects with undiminished vigour rather than fading as physical distance increases. The two images relate limitless receptivity to limitless communication. Neither requires the embodied person to occupy an infinitely large physical volume; their force lies in spiritual presence, thought, and affection.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.92** The soul's temple brings distant events, especially the Cross, into living nearness. (Edition p. 58.)
- **IV.66** Love's sphere extends its beams without a limiting circumference or weakening reach. (Edition p. 238.)

255 Primary text: I.92, IV.66; historical gloss: 2026 edition note to IV.66.

In this edition. The 2026 note to IV.66 supplies the boundless gloss. The exuberance of the images should not be flattened into the modern complaint that something lasts too long.

See also. Infinity; Love; Soul; Temple.

Intuition

intuition; knew by intuition; immediate apprehension[256]

The word. Intuition is an immediate apprehension, a knowing that does not proceed through an articulated chain of reasoning. Here it means neither an ungrounded hunch nor a mysterious prediction. Traherne contrasts it with the later rational recovery of what was once directly evident.

In Traherne. III.2 gives intuition a precise place in the story of childhood, corruption, and recovery. The child encounters a world whose beauty, preciousness, and apparent belonging are immediately manifest. He does not first assemble an argument for its value. In retrospect the narrator calls that knowledge divine and says that, after his apostasy, he gathered it again by the highest reason. Intuition and reason thus belong to different moments of access to the same central goods. The sentence honours reason's restorative labour rather than dismissing it.

What the child knows must nevertheless be read alongside what he does not know. The meditation expressly lists ignorance of sin, complaint, poverty, sickness, and death. This absence allows the world to appear at rest in an Edenic peace. It is not a claim that the child possesses encyclopedic knowledge. The following meditation supplies further examples: corn seems never to have been sown and people seem not to be subject to death. Such remembered impressions belong to the visionary account of innocence; they are not empirical propositions the adult reader is required to defend.

The intuition at stake is therefore best understood through the whole account of apprehended value. The world addresses a receptive soul as glorious, joyful, and intimately its own. Adult recovery need not reproduce every childhood misunderstanding in order to recover that

256 Primary text: III.1–3. Supplied 2026 editorial notes 167–169 explain the philosophical sense and distinguish birth-given light from prenatal recollection.

esteem. Reason can recognize real worth in common things after experience has disclosed mortality, division, and conflict.

III.1 also locates the remembered light in the speaker's birth and entrance into this world. The supplied editorial notes distinguish that language from a doctrine of prenatal recollection. Nothing in the immediate contrast between intuition and reason requires a previous life. Its practical force is nearer at hand: learned habits can obscure a gift of perception, yet disciplined understanding can help renew an awareness that once came without discursive effort.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.1** Introduces remembered apprehensions given at birth and offers experience as the means of teaching them. (Edition p. 128.)
- **III.2** Explicitly contrasts intuitive knowing with later recovery by the highest reason. (Edition p. 128.)
- **III.3** Shows both the vivid perception of value and the child's ignorance of temporal change. (Edition p. 129.)

In this edition. The 2026 notes explain the contrast between immediate and discursive knowledge and caution against reading pre-existence into the birth imagery. Intuition is Traherne's own word; the distinction between enduring insight and childhood factual impressions is an interpretive aid.

See also. Reason; Knowledge; Child and childhood; Innocence; Apostasy.

Invention

invention; inventions; devised riches[257]

The word. Invention is something devised by human wit. It can indicate productive contrivance, but the passages on acquired wealth emphasize artificial valuation.

In Traherne. Traherne contrasts riches of invention with riches of nature. Gold, clothes, and land become false measures of wealth when their social valuation eclipses souls, bodies, faculties, and the world. The criticism concerns a system of esteem rather than the bare existence of

257 Primary text: III.9, III.10, III.13.

human making: a garment need not be wicked for fashionable distinction to corrupt the way it is prized.

The educational sequence is crucial. These riches are learned laboriously and later than the child's first apprehensions, yet they displace them. Inventions therefore exercise power through common speech, example, and habit. They fill imagination with attractive substitutes until the works of God cease to appear excellent or even worth noticing.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.9** Natural endowments are opposed to an invented account of wealth. (Edition p. 135.)
- **III.10** Acquired valuations overcome the child's earlier knowledge of heaven and earth. (Edition p. 136.)
- **III.13** Fashionable inventions prevent the appreciation of common blessings. (Edition p. 138.)

In this edition. Riches of invention names manufactured standards of worth in these passages. It should not be generalized into a condemnation of every art or human artifact.

See also. Art and artifice; Custom; Nature; Imagination; Riches.

Invisible

invisible; unseen; beyond bodily sight[258]

The word. Invisible means unavailable to bodily sight. It does not by itself mean unreal, unknowable, or without effects.

In Traherne. God's invisibility is defended as a condition of creation. A visible infinite body would exclude everything else from its place; an incorporeal source can leave room for creatures while sustaining them. The argument then distinguishes dead bulk from the unseen life that moves, knows, and desires.

Invisibility also describes valuable relations the soul can perceive more securely than private property. Glory, dominion, and participation in distant ages are not colours or shapes, yet the true possessor of the world enjoys them. Traherne's language of seeing must therefore be read

258 Primary text: II.19, II.98, I.2.

beyond optical sensation. Visible creation educates an apprehension that recognizes the love, order, and communion embodied in its services.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.19** Divine invisibility permits creatures room and distinguishes living power from bulk. (Edition p. 75.)
- **II.98** Glory and dominion are invisible joys made evident through enjoyment of the world. (Edition p. 124.)
- **I.2** Unseen attraction provides an analogy for desire directed toward an unknown good. (Edition p. 4.)

In this edition. Traherne's seeing often includes understanding. Calling something invisible does not withdraw it from every possible form of apprehension.

See also. Sense; Sight; God; Body; Knowledge.

Jacob's ladder

Jacob's ladder; Jacob; Gate of Heaven; House of God[259]

The word. The ladder is the passage between earth and heaven seen in Jacob's dream at Bethel. Traherne explicitly identifies it with Christ's Cross. The name therefore carries a particular biblical scene into his account of how suffering love teaches heavenly enjoyment.

In Traherne. I.60 makes ascent an education in love. From the Cross the reader sees a heavenly company of patriarchs, saints, prophets, apostles, teachers, and angels. The image immediately becomes a burning tree whose invisible flame is Christ's love. That light shows how to possess heaven and earth after Christ's likeness. The apparent poverty of the bleeding, naked sufferer is compatible with his universal inheritance: worldly goods minister to him in an invisible manner. The ladder thus joins the Cross's humiliation to the widest possible enjoyment.

Two other meditations recall Jacob's awakening without naming the ladder. I.31 makes his astonishment a pattern for recognizing the neglected world as God's temple and heaven's gate. Its setting is the obligation to help others enjoy what blindness and ingratitude conceal. III.67 places Jacob beside Moses, Abraham, and Adam as witnesses to the

259 Primary text: I.60, I.31, III.67. Supplied 2026 editorial notes 52, 30, and 222 identify the biblical passages and explain the language of awe.

riches of creation. His awe supports the argument that blessedness comes through clearer understanding rather than the accumulation of devised possessions. These scenes illuminate the ladder image, but they should remain distinct from its explicit Christian application in I.60.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.60** The Cross is named Jacob's ladder; ascent opens into Christlike love and enjoyment. (Edition p. 37.)
- **I.31** Jacob's awakening exemplifies recognition of the world as God's house. (Edition p. 19.)
- **III.67** Jacob's awe joins other scriptural witnesses to natural riches. (Edition p. 173.)

In this edition. The supplied notes identify Genesis 28:12 and 28:16–17, and connect Christ's application of the ladder to himself with John 1:51. Dreadful in the awakening scenes means awe-inspiring. Only I.60 explicitly calls the Cross the ladder.

See also. Cross; Heaven; Dreadful; Dream; Enjoyment.

Joy

joy; joys; rejoicing[260]

The word. Joy names the pleased response to a good and the good as actively enjoyed. Its plurality allows many relations and benefits to enter one happiness.

In Traherne. Joy is neither a mere mood nor an automatic consequence of having things. The world can be given while its owner remains joyless through failed esteem. IV.17 accordingly makes rejoicing a discipline of principle: continuance and commonness should increase the value of a good rather than wear it away. Malice can destroy an entire world of joys by altering the mind that receives it.

Desire gives joy its depth. Satisfied wants yield delight, and awareness of possessing that delight becomes a further joy. This reflective multiplication helps explain Traherne's abundance of plurals. The same good is enjoyed as gift, fulfilment, shared benefit, and evidence of the giver's love.

260 Primary text: I.43, I.54, IV.17.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.43** Satisfied wants produce joys and a further joy in their possession. (Edition p. 26.)
- **I.54** The attentive soul gathers the joys of many ages and communities. (Edition p. 33.)
- **IV.17** Daily and common joys require settled principles of present esteem. (Edition p. 210.)

In this edition. Joys can denote enjoyed goods as well as feelings. Reducing the plural to repeated emotional excitement obscures its relational and reflective force.

See also. Delight; Felicity; Desire; Esteem; Common things.

Jubilee

Jubilee; jubilees[261]

The word. Jubilee evokes festive release and rejoicing. The supplied note recalls Israel's fiftieth year of release, giving the word a biblical depth beyond an ordinary celebration.

In Traherne. Traherne imagines continual jubilees within earthly life. Joined to Sabbaths, the word makes present enjoyment sound like participation in sacred time. Yet the poem does not claim that temptation or suffering has vanished. Its later stanzas make victory over inward lusts, and the transformation of tears into future bliss, part of that joy. In the prayer over bodily gifts, jubilee follows a different recognition: eyes, ears, limbs, and speech already exceed the treasures people admire. Right esteem would turn these near and neglected gifts into continuing praise. Celebration depends upon recognizing and using what has been given.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.47** The poem's continual jubilees coexist with spiritual combat, suffering, and hope. (Edition p. 161.)
- **I.66** Appreciating bodily faculties at their true value would produce enduring delight and jubilee. (Edition p. 41.)

261 Primary text: III.47, I.66. Supplied 2026 editorial note 210 at III.47 identifies the jubilee background in Leviticus 25:8–17.

In this edition. The plural extends the biblical festival into a recurring quality of life; it does not announce a literal calendar observance.

See also. Sabbath; Joy; Liberty; Thanksgiving.

Judgment

judgment; judgments; the Day of Judgment[262]

The word. Judgment can name discernment, a ruling, or the divine act of judging. Biblical judgments also signify God's just dispositions and dealings.

In Traherne. Traherne's universe includes judgment rather than stopping at presently visible things. The world encompasses the treasures that abide after the final judgment, and contemplation can make that event present alongside creation and redemption. Temporal distance does not exclude it from the soul's concern.

The plural in his exposition of the Psalms has a broader force. God's judgments belong with mercy, faithfulness, and righteousness among the excellencies enjoyed in the divine house. They are not reduced to punitive sentences. This range matters because judgment can be named as a source of delight without erasing accountability: what is prized is the rightness of divine government within a comprehensive vision.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.18** The world's full scope includes treasures abiding after the Day of Judgment. (Edition p. 12.)
- **I.54** Judgment and creation become objects present to comprehensive contemplation. (Edition p. 33.)
- **III.76** The Psalm's judgments are enjoyed with mercy, faithfulness, and righteousness. (Edition p. 182.)

In this edition. Do not translate every plural judgments into punishments. Its scriptural company in III.76 gives it the wider sense of just divine government.

See also. Justice; Righteousness; Punishment; Mercy.

262 Primary text: I.18, I.54, III.76.

Justice

justice; equity; right[263]

The word. Justice is conformity to what is due or right. Traherne often approaches its substance through righteousness, equity, and the ordering of the heart.

In Traherne. IV.41 refuses to locate every misery in the external arrangement of things. The decisive disorder is a heart that has departed from justice, equity, and right; restoring its rule makes the world newly delightful. This is a demand upon the recipient, not permission to call every social arrangement just.

The soul's range also includes the divine justice manifested in punishment. IV.67 describes its capacity to recognize that justice while loving persons and actions far removed in time or space. Justice thus belongs to the comprehensive spiritual vision that sees more than whatever immediately gratifies the observer. It cannot simply be replaced by agreeable feeling.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.41** The heart's departure from justice disorders its enjoyment of things. (Edition p. 221.)
- **IV.67** The soul can contemplate divine justice as part of its reach beyond the present. (Edition p. 239.)

In this edition. Justice is less frequent than righteousness in the primary text. The latter's expansive account of rightly ordered love should inform, but not replace, these local uses.

See also. Righteousness; Judgment; Heart; Love.

Kindness

kindness; loving kindness; loving-kindness[264]

The word. Kindness is a benevolent disposition expressed in benefits. Loving kindness is especially the scriptural language of divine goodness toward creatures.

263 Primary text: IV.41, IV.67.
264 Primary text: I.79, II.14, III.76.

In Traherne. The word is often encountered through David's Psalms, which Traherne treats as models of actual enjoyment. Divine kindness is something to be remembered, praised, and inwardly tasted, not merely listed among correct attributes. In III.76 it belongs to the abundance of God's house and the river of pleasure from which the soul drinks.

The prayer in I.79 moves from received kindness to needed transformation. The speaker can perceive universal love but cannot yet regulate his own affection adequately. He asks to become a blessing through the use of blood, property, life, and time. Kindness consequently joins contemplation to costly service without pretending that recognition alone completes the work.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.79** God's loving kindness is invoked to transform inadequate love into service of others. (Edition p. 49.)
- **II.14** David's praise models the continual remembrance of received goodness. (Edition p. 73.)
- **III.76** Loving kindness is part of the abundance enjoyed in God's house. (Edition p. 182.)

In this edition. The frequent phrase loving kindness carries scriptural resonance. Its warmth should not obscure the concrete expenditure and service sought in I.79.

See also. Goodness; Benefactor and beneficence; Mercy; David.

King and kingdom

king; kings; kingdom; reign; royal[265]

The word. King and kingdom name sovereignty and its realm. Their devotional extension gives the soul dignity, possession, and responsibility without requiring political office.

In Traherne. The reader becomes king over the world by discerning its parts and rejoicing in their whole composition. This reign is deliberately contrasted with exhausting wars and conquests. It receives an already prepared dominion rather than creating wealth through the exclusion or defeat of rivals.

265 Primary text: I.23, I.70, II.85.

Royal comparisons also measure the value of love: a king's favour seems more precious than a beggar's, and divine love surpasses both. Yet the soul itself can become great and beautiful enough to make its own love precious. Kingdom language therefore describes reciprocal glorification as well as ownership. The recipient is elevated so that the response can be worthy of the giver.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.23** Kingship consists in understanding and enjoying the composed world rather than conquering it. (Edition p. 16.)
- **I.70** God's law honours the soul through the analogy of royal friendship and a court. (Edition p. 44.)
- **II.85** Royal favour illustrates how greatness makes love precious. (Edition p. 116.)

In this edition. Royal vocabulary is frequently analogical. Its emphasis on shared enjoyment prevents interpreting every kingdom as exclusive jurisdiction over other people.

See also. Dominion; Crown; Honour; Possession; Love.

Knowledge

knowledge; knowing; intelligence; understanding[266]

The word. Knowledge is apprehension of what is true. Traherne repeatedly asks what such apprehension knows, what it accomplishes, and how it becomes a lived relation to its object.

In Traherne. The basic test is theological and affective. To know God is to know goodness and the beauty of infinite love. An apprehension that supplies power without delight in its goodness remains, in I.17, superstition. This does not make pleasant feeling a substitute for truth. It insists that a true account of the giver must include the generosity that makes the gift intelligible.

The world is known inadequately if it is treated as alien information. III.37 remembers useful university learning while regretting that no tutor professedly taught felicity. The criticism concerns the end of study: knowledge was collected without understanding why it mattered to the

266 Primary text: I.17, II.84, III.37, III.68, IV.7. For divine knowledge of created excellencies, see II.67.

learner. Its seeds remain valuable, and later reflection develops rather than simply discards them. Learning becomes complete when the things studied are understood as enjoyments in which the knower has a share.

II.84 states the metaphysical ambition behind this programme. God is an infinite act of knowledge and wisdom; human capacity should likewise become act. To know is to make objects present to the soul and to receive their forms and excellencies into its life. The divine image is fulfilled through active attention, rather than through a merely potential ability to understand. The world supplies objects that fill and beautify a soul otherwise extended through emptiness.

III.68 brings knowledge beside life and love as the means of enjoyment. The same objects confront many people, yet their apprehensions and affections differ. Intelligence is compared to tasting, knowledge to light, and perfected life to an activity extended through its objects. These figures refuse the picture of a detached intellect accumulating propositions while the person remains unchanged.

The expansiveness nevertheless depends upon exercise. To have powers is not already to use them, and to possess a little instruction is not to have reached enough. IV.7 treats the belief that small knowledge suffices as a rationalization of sloth. Knowing is therefore both a gift of capacity and a sustained labour, ordered toward the good for which the capacity was given.

The divine measure of knowledge

In II.67 a river, an apple or a grain of sand has excellencies known by God beyond those we apprehend. These concern its relations, its giver, its recipient and its place among the best means to the best ends. Divine knowledge supplies a measure for loving the thing more adequately. Omniscience is a useful conceptual lookup term here, not the noun used in that meditation.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.17** Knowledge of God requires delight in goodness rather than an isolated dread of power. (Edition p. 11.)
- **II.84** The divine act of knowledge models the conversion of human powers into activity. (Edition p. 114.)
- **III.37** University learning is retained but criticized for lacking felicity as its declared end. (Edition p. 154.)

- **III.68** Knowledge, life, and love jointly make objects enjoyable. (Edition p. 174.)
- **IV.7** The claim that little knowledge suffices is exposed as an excuse for neglect. (Edition p. 202.)
- **II.67** God's knowledge of a small creature exceeds ours through apprehension of its excellencies and relations. (Edition p. 104.)

In this edition. In II.84 prevented with Act means anticipated or already met by act, not obstructed by it. Knowledge here regularly includes appreciative and transformative apprehension.

See also. Understanding; Wisdom; Learning; Love; Object; Felicity.

Labour

labour; labouring; labor; toil[267]

The word. Labour is sustained effort or toil. The word can describe either the necessary pursuit of an end or futile exertion under a false account of that end.

In Traherne. Acquisitive labour expands without conclusion when every gain merely authorizes another demand. The stories of conquerors in I.22 expose activity that postpones rest indefinitely. I.23 sharpens the irony: those who struggle for invented satisfactions pass by gifts already available without price.

Traherne nevertheless does not advocate a wholly effortless life. The unknown felicity toward which desire presses is worthy of labour; indeed other projects derive their worth from serving it. The proper contrast is between labour that obscures the end and labour that discovers and cultivates it. Reading, examining, and learning to esteem what is near can be demanding even when the treasures themselves are freely bestowed.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.22** Endless acquisition yields further toil rather than the promised rest. (Edition p. 14.)
- **I.23** Misguided labour leaves freely available satisfactions behind. (Edition p. 16.)

267 Primary text: I.22, I.23, III.56.

- **III.56** Felicity alone supplies the final end worthy of sustained labour. (Edition p. 167.)

In this edition. Free gifts and necessary effort are not alternatives in the argument. The gift is unpurchased; the appreciative life may require diligent formation.

See also. Diligence; Work; Felicity; Riches; Desire.

Language

language; speech; voice[268]

The word. Language is articulate expression; by analogy, it includes the intelligible testimony of things that do not speak as human beings do.

In Traherne. Traherne acknowledges both the reach and the limitation of words. Language, miracles, and apparitions cannot establish religion independently of a clear sight of the truth of things. Speech must bring the reader toward the realities it communicates; verbal authority alone does not complete that encounter.

The Psalms offer another kind of language: the heavens declare glory everywhere. Their universal witness becomes intelligible through meditation, then gives way to praise of divine law. The movement is not from meaningless nature to meaningful words, but between mutually illuminating manifestations. When discussing figurative writing in IV.78, Traherne likewise asks readers to find a serious interior meaning beneath luxuriant poetic expression.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.45** Language requires clear apprehension of the things to which it bears witness. (Edition p. 160.)
- **III.72** Psalm 19 presents cosmic testimony as speech heard throughout the earth. (Edition p. 179.)
- **IV.78** Poetic language is interpreted for the serious account of inward transformation it contains. (Edition p. 248.)

In this edition. Voice and speech in III.72 come through a quoted Psalm. The heavens' testimony is figurative language with an epistemic claim, not literal human utterance.

268 Primary text: III.45, III.72, IV.78.

See also. Word; Scripture; Book and writing; Truth.

Law

law; laws; lawgiver; commandment[269]

The word. Law is an authoritative rule. Traherne particularly understands divine laws as directions for blessed living and as expressions of the natures they order.

In Traherne. His thought experiment asks what laws the soul would choose if it understood its own excellence and God's. The answer is love: the giver's nature and the recipient's nature alike require the relation by which each is enjoyed. Command therefore appears as an articulation of felicity rather than a wholly extrinsic obstacle to it.

The preceding meditation turns the law outward. God commands his subjects to love the individual, so that authority becomes a form of honour and protection. The reader is simultaneously beneficiary and obligated participant. Psalm 19 then places law beside creation as something more desirable than gold and sweeter than honey. Its value is experienced through right living, not exhausted by submission.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.70** The lawgiver honours the soul by commanding others to love it. (Edition p. 44.)
- **I.71** Laws of nature and blessedness direct the soul toward reciprocal love. (Edition p. 45.)
- **III.72** The laws praised in Psalm 19 become treasures and sources of delight. (Edition p. 179.)

In this edition. Law of nature here includes the requirements of God's and humanity's loving natures; it should not automatically be read as a modern scientific law.

See also. Commandment; Obedience; Nature; Love; Duty.

269 Primary text: I.70, I.71, III.72.

Learning

learning; learned; study; teaching[270]

The word. Learning can name acquired knowledge, the process of acquiring it, or the institutions and disciplines through which it is transmitted.

In Traherne. Traherne can include the learning of universities among the riches available to a comprehending soul while criticizing the way university study was pursued. Its disciplines awakened powers and planted seeds; the defect was their separation from the learner's felicity. The opposition is not between learned adults and truthful children as fixed classes of people. It is between knowledge ordered toward enjoyment and knowledge handled as someone else's concern.

Nor is the central lesson quickly finished. I.45 makes awareness of wants and treasures a study for an entire life and a practice for eternity. Learning becomes a sustained formation of attention whose fruit is an increasingly adequate response to what is given.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.45** Awareness of wants and treasures is a lifelong lesson with an eternal practice. (Edition p. 27.)
- **I.54** University learning belongs to the soul's extensive inheritance. (Edition p. 33.)
- **III.37** Acquired knowledge becomes fruitful when its end is rightly understood. (Edition p. 154.)

In this edition. Learned can be appreciative or critical. Its value depends on what the learning apprehends and the end for which it is exercised.

See also. Education; Knowledge; Study; School.

270 Primary text: I.45, I.54, III.37.

Liberty

liberty; free action; freedom[271]

The word. Liberty is the power to act without coercion. Here it particularly concerns the creature's capacity to receive, refuse, imitate, and love.

In Traherne. Creation can bestow worlds and faculties, but it cannot make an involuntary response count as friendship. IV.46 accordingly represents liberty as the gift through which created beings become fountains of actions resembling God's. Their free praise and imitation give the world a use that mere abundance cannot supply.

IV.48 places the responsibility directly on the reader. Even the most lavish gifts achieve no enjoyment if they are despised or neglected. Liberty is thus more consequential than many exterior events: the decisive work is to receive and esteem. Traherne's language of divine generosity never eliminates the possibility that the creature can frustrate the good intended for it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.46** Created liberty permits friendship, obedience, and free imitation that gifts alone cannot secure. (Edition p. 225.)
- **IV.48** Neglect or refusal can nullify the enjoyment of every bestowed treasure. (Edition p. 227.)

In this edition. Liberty concerns voluntary action and response in these passages. It is not primarily a claim about civil rights or release from political restraint.

See also. Freedom; Will; Choice; Obedience; Love.

Life

life; living; alive; quickening[272]

The word. Life includes bodily vitality, active spiritual powers, and the fulfilled manner of being made possible by their exercise.

In Traherne. Motion makes invisible life discernible, but Traherne does not stop at a simple equation between movement and animation.

271 Primary text: IV.46, IV.48.
272 Primary text: II.22, II.47, III.68.

II.22 acknowledges the movement of watches, then turns to creatures that breathe, perceive, know, and love. Their ordered service leads the argument toward a living giver and an appreciative human recipient.

The life of love gives the term its fullest evaluative meaning. Such a life delights in its objects and becomes delightful to them, finding joy in that reciprocity. III.68 accordingly describes perfected life as extended to all its objects through knowledge and love. To be fully alive is to exercise a received capacity in relation, not merely to continue existing.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.22** Living motion and the ordered relations of creatures disclose the creator. (Edition p. 79.)
- **II.47** The life of love is delighted in its objects and delightful to them. (Edition p. 94.)
- **III.68** Perfect life is active extension to objects through knowledge and love. (Edition p. 174.)

In this edition. Traherne moves between biological and spiritual life, often within one argument. Alive to a benefit means responsive to it, not simply surviving beside it.

See also. Motion; Love; Knowledge; Enjoyment.

Light

light; illumination; enlightening; beams[273]

The word. Light is what makes visible. Its extended senses name intelligibility, the soul's apprehension, and the communicable power by which one person enables another to see.

In Traherne. The sun's familiar light exposes the failure of gratitude: people would lament its absence yet despise it because it is present. Here actual illumination supplies both a material benefit and an image of a benefit made invisible by custom.

The soul's light is equally relational. In III.6 the writer proposes to show the reader the universe through his own apprehension, making autobiographical disclosure a gift of sight. II.78 gives the relation a more exact optical shape: beams become manifest through the objects they

273 Primary text: II.7, II.78, III.6.

illuminate, just as powers become known through their exercise. Light is therefore not merely a synonym for certainty. It figures the reciprocal manifestation of perceiving power and perceived world.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.7** The neglected sun shows how familiar illumination can occasion moral blindness. (Edition p. 69.)
- **II.78** Reflected light models the manifestation of powers through their objects. (Edition p. 110.)
- **III.6** The writer offers the light of his soul as a means for the reader's perception. (Edition p. 133.)

In this edition. Keep the literal optics active within the metaphor. Beams, objects, and reflection explain the argument more precisely than replacing every light with knowledge.

See also. Sun; Sight; Knowledge; Mirror; Blindness.

Limner and pencil

limner; pencil; painter; picture[274]

The word. A limner is a painter or delineator. Pencil here means a painter's brush, not the modern graphite writing instrument.

In Traherne. The fifth Century imagines infinite space as a prepared painting surface. Its scale answers the maker's intention, and leaving it bare would suggest a failure of skill, material, or purpose. Traherne assigns distinct parts of painting to divine attributes: wisdom is the art, goodness the will, the Word the pencil, and beauty and power the colours.

The analogy ends by exceeding itself. Creatures are more real than painted shadows, and the spectator lives among the works as his own possessions. The world is therefore neither a flat representation nor a spectacle from which the observer remains excluded.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **V.5** The divine painting analogy assigns the Word to the pencil and makes the spectator an inhabitant and possessor. (Edition p. 268.)

274 Primary text: V.5.

In this edition. Pencil must retain its older brush sense. Table in the same passage is the prepared painting support, not household furniture.

See also. Picture; Art and artifice; Space; Word.

Love

love; loving; beloved; benevolent affection[275]

The word. Love names a benevolent movement toward another, delight in that other, and the generosity through which the beloved is made and enjoyed as good.

In Traherne. Love is the organizing reality of the Centuries. The world manifests it, the soul receives it, and felicity depends on returning and extending it. Traherne refuses a picture of gifts as sufficient in themselves: without living affection, even worlds become a silent wilderness. Material abundance matters because it expresses a giver and enables a communion. To enjoy the world truly is to perceive love at its fountain and at its end.

Its reciprocity is essential. Love desires the beloved's happiness and delights in that happiness; the beloved's response becomes a further treasure. God's generosity therefore does not merely transfer goods from one stock to another. It establishes persons able to know and love, and hence to become delightful to the giver. The creature's dignity and responsibility arise together from this relation.

II.40 discovers a Trinitarian structure within loving: love in its source, love communicated, and love present in the beloved are one love in distinct manners of subsistence. This is more than a decorative comparison. It allows the act that joins persons to become a means of contemplating divine unity and distinction. Yet it should not be flattened into the claim that any three feelings constitute three divine persons. The meditation develops an analogy through its own careful language of unity, procession, and presence.

Self-love presents a second apparent difficulty. IV.55 treats it as a basis capable of fulfilment and overflow, rather than as either an absolute good or an evil to be simply amputated. A person who receives enough can love the benefactor and then others more fully. IV.65 carries the

275 Primary text: II.40, II.47, II.62, IV.55, IV.65.

reasoning into divine simplicity: God loves himself as the lover of his beloved, so his self-delight and their welfare belong to one act.

For human beings this harmony is a vocation, not a description of every impulse. Love must be educated and exercised amid wants, competing interests, and failures of esteem. Its freedom matters because coerced affection would contradict what it is. The lexicon's neighbouring terms, charity, benevolence, delight, self-love, and communion, name distinguishable workings within this larger movement.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.40** One love appears as source, communication, and presence in the beloved in a Trinitarian analogy. (Edition p. 91.)
- **II.47** Love delights in its objects and in being delightful to them. (Edition p. 94.)
- **II.62** Without love, even the abundant world is a silent wilderness. (Edition p. 101.)
- **IV.55** Fulfilled self-love becomes a reservoir capable of overflowing to others. (Edition p. 231.)
- **IV.65** Divine self-love is inseparable from love for the beloved and their felicity. (Edition p. 237.)

In this edition. The repeated same and one in II.40 guard the analogy against dividing love into separate substances. Elsewhere loving can include willing good, giving, esteeming, and delighting, rather than a single emotional state.

See also. Charity; Self-love; God; Communion; Gift; Felicity.

Lustre

lustre; brightness; splendour[276]

The word. Lustre is radiance or shining appearance; figuratively it is the manifest excellence that makes something worthy of admiration.

In Traherne. Traherne's lustre belongs as readily to persons and relations as to bright surfaces. Holy souls are discovered by their spiritual radiance, but the observer must become virtuous enough to recognize

276 Primary text: I.44, I.82.

and approach them. Their light is active: they teach, encourage, honour, and delight those who enter their company.

Even want can put a lustre upon enjoyment. Awareness of what a gift answers prevents its possession from becoming dull through familiarity. The brilliance of the thing is not merely increased by another external ornament; its existing goodness becomes vivid through a rightly sustained relation to need. Lustre thus names excellence as perceived and communicated, not a decorative shine detachable from its source.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.44** The abiding sense of wants gives lustre and sweetness to fulfilled enjoyment. (Edition p. 27.)
- **I.82** Holy companions are known by their lustre and reveal divine likeness to others. (Edition p. 52.)

In this edition. The metaphor remains visual even when its subject is a soul or an enjoyment. It signals manifested worth, rather than simply fashionable polish.

See also. Brightness; Glory; Light; Friendship; Want.

Magnanimous

magnanimous[277]

The word. Magnanimous means great-souled, generous in disposition, and capable of noble purposes. The modern emphasis on graciousness toward a defeated opponent represents only part of this wider moral sense.

In Traherne. Traherne uses the adjective in the portrait of the rare friends who can help make earthly life heavenly. Their greatness appears in liberality, cheerful holiness, fidelity, counsel, and the sharing of comforts and honours. They exchange souls rather than competing for exclusive possession. The surrounding list therefore supplies the word's practical measure: the great soul has room for another person and freely communicates its goods. This is not mere social grandeur, nor an assertion that such friends must belong to a noble family.

277 Primary text: I.83.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.83** Magnanimity belongs to the chosen companions whose affection represents the New Jerusalem. (Edition p. 53.)

In this edition. The headword follows Traherne's attested adjective; "magnanimity" is supplied only as a finding aid. Do not attach an unmentioned technical doctrine of great-souledness to this brief use.

See also. Friendship; Generosity; Greatness; Soul.

Magnificence

magnificence; magnificent; splendour; greatness[278]

The word. Magnificence joins greatness of scale with splendour and generosity. It can describe a palace or kingdom, but also the world considered as a gift.

In Traherne. The world's magnificence initially creates a paradox: it seems too large to enjoy. Traherne answers by changing the relation between greatness and possession. Its vastness is the scale of the recipient's treasury, an inconvenience that is itself happy. The observer needs open eyes rather than a smaller world.

Royal splendour provides a familiar comparison, as the soul visits Solomon's kingdom in thought. Yet the Cross can surpass this visible magnificence as the place where love becomes most deeply intelligible. IV.82 finally gathers palaces, precious stones, music, and virtues into love's enjoyment. Magnificence belongs to an ordered plenitude whose elements become more valuable through the relation that joins them.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.37** The magnitude that seems to defeat enjoyment is reinterpreted as the size of one's treasury. (Edition p. 22.)
- **I.55** Solomon's magnificence enters contemplation that culminates in the Cross. (Edition p. 33.)
- **IV.82** Love gathers the splendour of palaces with natural and spiritual excellencies. (Edition p. 251.)

278 Primary text: I.37, I.55, IV.82.

In this edition. Magnificence is not confined to expensive display. Its force depends on the scale, usefulness, and communicative purpose of the splendour described.

See also. Greatness; Glory; King and kingdom; Love.

Malice

malice; malicious ill will[279]

The word. Malice is actively hostile feeling or ill will. It deforms relations to persons and, through them, the enjoyment of the world.

In Traherne. In I.33 malice belongs to the social consequences of choosing the wrong riches. Artificial scarcity and competitive acquisition transform other people from fellow enjoyers into rivals. The vice is therefore connected to a distorted account of value rather than treated only as an inexplicable private passion.

IV.17 makes its destructive disproportion memorable: a tiny obstruction can prevent the eye from seeing the heavens, and a small amount of malice can abolish a world of joys. What is damaged is the receiving power and its relation to the whole. The remedy involves principles of common enjoyment, under which a benefit is more valuable because it serves other people too.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.33** Malice arises within a pattern of competitive and mistaken valuation. (Edition p. 20.)
- **IV.17** The grit-in-the-eye analogy shows how a slight malice can obstruct vast enjoyment. (Edition p. 210.)

In this edition. Malice here means ill will, without requiring the narrower modern legal sense of a formally established malicious intention.

See also. Hatred; Envy; Common things; Joy.

279 Primary text: I.33, IV.17.

Man and mankind

man; men; mankind; human nature[280]

The word. Man often denotes the human creature generally, and mankind the human community. The same noun can also refer to a particular person or a gendered figure.

In Traherne. Traherne studies humanity through powers, needs, inclinations, and ends. The question is not merely what humans are made of, but what kind of happiness fits such a being. III.42 makes their capacities a route into theology, since their proportions reveal what the giver has prepared for them.

The fourth Century intensifies the distinction between capacity and act: the human vocation must be exercised through divine philosophy. Its long engagement with Pico's account of dignity explores humanity's unusual power of transformation. The individual is thus both highly endowed and unfinished in practice. Universal claims of worth do not mean that every person already lives at the height of the powers bestowed.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.42** Human faculties and inclinations are investigated in relation to their sovereign end. (Edition p. 157.)
- **IV.3** Being human in act requires the exercise of capacities through divine philosophy. (Edition p. 199.)
- **IV.74** Traherne introduces Pico's account of human dignity and extraordinary capacity. (Edition p. 243.)

In this edition. In IV.74 much of the argument is explicitly quoted or translated from Pico. Distinguish that received voice from Traherne's framing and subsequent application.

See also. Soul; Nature; Image; Dignity; Philosophy.

280 Primary text: III.42, IV.3, IV.74.

Marriage

marriage; bride; bridegroom; spouse; epithalamium[281]

The word. Marriage denotes the union of spouses. An epithalamium is a wedding song; Traherne applies that literary form to the Psalm's royal union.

In Traherne. III.77 interprets the wedding as the relation between Christ and the Church. The bride leaves familiar country and inherited customs to enter the king's palace, which Traherne expands into the entire world. Renunciation is answered by an enlarged habitation and a more glorious relationship.

The image then moves between the Church and each soul. Every soul joined to Christ can regard the saints as its own children and deepest relations. Marriage therefore figures a communion that generates wider belonging rather than an enclosed pair. The psalmist can enjoy bride, bridegroom, and palace together as a true possession.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.77** Psalmic royal marriage becomes Christ's union with the Church and the soul's relation to the saints. (Edition p. 182.)

In this edition. This occurrence is an explicitly allegorical exposition. Its instructions concern spiritual allegiance and communion, not a general set of rules for ordinary marriages.

See also. Bride and bridegroom; Christ; Church; Communion.

Matter

matter; matters; content; concernments[282]

The word. Matter can mean material substance, the subject of discourse, or the business that occupies attention. Several important occurrences concern content rather than physical stuff.

In Traherne. The distinction between the Bible's matter and its manner structures Traherne's account of coming to trust it. Its matter supplies the glad tidings he desired: divine love, enduring life, universal inheritance, and communion. The manner concerns how that revelation

281 Primary text: III.77.
282 Primary text: III.7, III.29, III.32.

reached him and how he could know its authority. Admiration of the content initially coexists with doubt about its delivery.

Elsewhere other matters bury the child's earlier apprehensions. Here matter names competing concerns that fill conversation and thought. Reading these passages as a technical discussion of material substance would miss their educational and epistemic work. What occupies the mind governs what remains available to enjoyment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.7** Other matters and concernments obscure and finally displace early apprehensions. (Edition p. 134.)
- **III.29** The Bible's matter is distinguished from the manner of its arrival. (Edition p. 150.)
- **III.32** Excellent content sustains hope while the manner of revelation is still questioned. (Edition p. 151.)

In this edition. Matter in III.29 and III.32 means content. Do not substitute a metaphysical sense of matter merely because neighbouring discussions address bodies and spirit.

See also. Body; Book and writing; Revelation; Consideration.

Measure

measure; measures; measuring; proportion[283]

The word. Measure can be extent, the act of comprehending an extent, or a standard that determines the adequacy of something else.

In Traherne. The soul measures heaven and can examine another soul without being physically as large as its object. Traherne uses measurement to dramatize intellectual capacity: knowing comprehends without displacing or occupying in the manner of bodies. The surprising case is another soul, equally fathomless, whose powers can nevertheless become objects of understanding.

In the ethical register, God's love is the measure of the reader's answering love. Measurement now concerns proportion and likeness rather than quantity. The same vocabulary links great capacity with a

283 Primary text: I.19, II.71, I.72.

correspondingly great obligation: the soul is fitted to receive extensively and called to love on the scale of what it receives.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.19** The understanding measures heaven and treats great times as objects within its reach. (Edition p. 12.)
- **II.71** One soul can comprehend the powers and operations of another. (Edition p. 106.)
- **I.72** Divine love supplies the law and measure of the creature's response. (Edition p. 45.)

In this edition. Measure shifts between comprehending extent and supplying a norm. Neither use requires that spiritual acts be reducible to numerical calculation.

See also. Capacity; Understanding; Infinity; Love; Obligation.

Meditation

meditation; meditating; serious consideration[284]

The word. Meditation is sustained, purposeful thought that draws its object into the active life of the soul. It is not confined to silence or withdrawal from visible creation.

In Traherne. I.8 starts with an apparent contradiction: thinking is easy, but thinking well can be difficult. The difficulty comes from corrupt habit, not from a natural hostility between thought and happiness. Meditation retrains attention toward thoughts whose truth and goodness can be enjoyed.

Its movements can be inward journeys to the Cross or careful attention to the providential histories recorded in the Psalms. III.92 insists that such earthly matters are divine and celestial when rightly considered. To meditate is to see excellence, taste sweetness, admire, rejoice, and praise. The sequence makes it more than extended analysis, while its requirement of rational knowledge prevents it from becoming ungrounded emotional absorption.

284 Primary text: I.8, I.56, III.92.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.8** Good meditation answers nature but must overcome acquired habits of thinking. (Edition p. 7.)
- **I.56** Contemplation travels to the Cross through a journey of the soul. (Edition p. 34.)
- **III.92** Meditating on works, ways, and laws makes earthly attention a heavenly life. (Edition p. 191.)

In this edition. The text supplies no single mechanical meditation technique. Its recurring structure joins considered understanding with affection, enjoyment, and praise.

See also. Contemplation; Consideration; Thought; Devotion; Cross.

Meekness

meekness; meek; gentleness[285]

The word. Meekness is a restrained and gentle disposition, especially under provocation. It need not imply timidity, passivity, or lack of moral strength.

In Traherne. The Cross teaches meekness in company with courage, zeal, constancy, and action. Traherne's list refuses the idea that gentleness disables energetic service. What the beholder learns is a manner of loving others after Christ's likeness.

In the account of holy companionship, meekness helps make a person amiable and fit for the enjoyment of others. It belongs to a reciprocal discipline: one seeks good company while becoming capable of contributing to it. The social result is not mere absence of conflict but an environment of rest, honour, and mutual sweetness. The virtue prepares relations in which other people can appear as treasures rather than threats.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.61** Meekness is learned at the Cross alongside courage, zeal, and perseverance. (Edition p. 37.)
- **I.80** Meekness makes the soul fit for mutually enjoyable holy companionship. (Edition p. 50.)

285 Primary text: I.61, I.80.

In this edition. Do not isolate meekness from the active virtues listed beside it. Their coexistence is part of the passage's account of Christian strength.

See also. Gentleness; Humility; Patience; Friendship.

Memory

memory; remembering; remembered things[286]

The word. Memory preserves what is absent from present sensation and makes it available to thought. It can also name a shared inward place where an event continues to live.

In Traherne. Traherne treats memory as a region rather than a mere store of fading impressions. The ancient works of God can no longer be seen in the visible world, yet they remain accessible through minds and the teaching that joins generations. Their absence from the street does not make them absent from human life.

The Cross has a related communal presence: Christ's death lives in every memory and his person is held in affection. The contemplative can enter this shared remembrance and find the same inexhaustible object in many souls. Memory therefore enlarges both time and company. It preserves relations capable of renewed understanding, gratitude, and enjoyment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.86** Christ's death lives in many memories and becomes a shared interior presence. (Edition p. 54.)
- **III.89** Intergenerational teaching preserves divine works in the luminous region of memory. (Edition p. 190.)

In this edition. Memory is not interchangeable with bodily witnessing. III.89 expressly distinguishes things no longer visibly present from their continued accessibility through minds.

See also. Remembrance; Time; Presence; Scripture.

286 Primary text: I.86, III.89.

Mercy

mercy; mercies; merciful goodness[287]

The word. Mercy is beneficent concern for need or misery. In Traherne it includes rescue and forgiveness, but also the free provision of the conditions of blessed life.

In Traherne. The bodily and spiritual endowments required for happiness are prepared through mercy in I.40. Their unearned availability allows the person to live without the artificial necessities of pomp and display. Mercy is therefore evident before the discussion reaches an exceptional deliverance from danger.

It can also name release from the mistaken valuations through which the world becomes a prison. That two people can inhabit the same world as Eden and torment reveals the importance of an altered apprehension. In the Psalms, mercy joins faithfulness and righteousness as something positively enjoyed. Traherne's emphasis is not only relief from what hurts but admission to the abundance the relief makes accessible.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.36** Freedom from enslaving error allows one to inhabit the world as paradise. (Edition p. 22.)
- **I.40** God's mercy freely prepares the endowments and riches needed for felicity. (Edition p. 24.)
- **III.76** Mercy is enjoyed with faithfulness and righteousness in the divine house. (Edition p. 182.)

In this edition. Mercy can signify a bestowed benefit as well as the disposition that gives it. Its scope here exceeds pardoning a particular offence.

See also. Kindness; Forgiveness; Grace; Goodness.

287 Primary text: I.36, I.40, III.76.

Microcosm

image of all His work; comprehensive head; bond of all[288]

The word. Microcosm, or little world, is a conventional name for the conception of humanity as gathering the kinds and powers of the larger creation within itself. It is an explanatory headword here, not a word used in the cited meditations.

In Traherne. In the sequence translating and discussing Pico della Mirandola, Traherne presents the human being as the image of the whole divine work. After the orders of creatures have received their particular endowments, man receives something of what is distributed among them all. This comprehensiveness helps explain the human vocation to contemplate, admire, and love the universe.

The story is not offered as a literal account of God forgetting humanity until the remaining places were full. IV.79 expressly calls it a little fable and rejects that chronology. Humanity can be last in execution while first in intention, because the intended end guides the ordering of the preceding work. Nor does the adjacent language of becoming beast or angel describe changes of skin or bodily species: IV.78 places the decisive difference in the soul's inward character and understanding.

Traherne's final emphasis is therefore on comprehensive capacity, free response, and mediation. The human being is a head and bond of the visible and invisible worlds, capable of receiving their service and choosing union with God. The microcosm concept identifies the gathering of diverse powers; the moral application asks how that breadth will actually be used.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.75** Man becomes the image of the whole work, receiving something of the diverse creatures' endowments. (Edition p. 246.)
- **IV.78** The apparent changes into other creatures are interpreted as inward dispositions. (Edition p. 248.)
- **IV.79** Rejects literal chronology and explains humanity as comprehensive head and bond. (Edition p. 249.)

288 Primary text: IV.74–79. Supplied 2026 editorial note 321 to IV.75 explains Traherne's change to Pico and names the microcosm concept.

In this edition. The 2026 note identifies an important change from Pico's wording: Traherne makes humanity the image of all creation. Microcosm names that concept without pretending to reproduce his literal vocabulary. The larger borrowing and its limits are treated under Pico della Mirandola.

See also. Man and mankind; Pico della Mirandola; Image; Copula and Hymenaeus; End and means.

Mind

mind; minds; mens; mentes[289]

The word. Mind names the inward power and disposition of thought. The phrase mind of God concerns divine understanding and purpose, not a bodily organ.

In Traherne. A mind is in frame when it prizes things according to their real value. To resemble God inwardly is therefore to adopt a truthful ordering of attention and esteem, rather than merely repeat approved statements. The divine works and attributes make the giver's thought accessible through what they disclose.

II.84 develops the mind as an active presence to objects. Human minds resemble the divine Mind when their powers become exercised knowledge and wisdom, filled with the world rather than remaining empty capacity. The Latin singular and plural preserve the relation without merging the participants. The mind's enlargement must finally appear in action, since the meditation ends with becoming like God in what one does.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.10** Thinking well is inward service and the setting of the mind in a divine frame. (Edition p. 8.)
- **I.13** Likeness to God depends on rightly valuing objects. (Edition p. 9.)
- **II.84** Mentes and mens express created minds' likeness to the eternal Mind through active knowing. (Edition p. 114.)

289 Primary text: I.10, I.13, II.84.

In this edition. In frame means rightly disposed or ordered. The Latin mens and mentes are mind and minds, not names for separate faculties.

See also. Soul; Thought; Knowledge; Image; Esteem.

Minister

minister; ministering; ministry; serving[290]

The word. To minister is to serve or supply what is needed. The verb's range is broader than the modern noun for an ordained religious officer.

In Traherne. Heaven, earth, other people, and the chain of living creatures minister to the person who is made to enjoy them. This vocabulary translates natural dependence into personal benefit while retaining the actual services: light nourishes plants, plants feed creatures, and creatures sustain human life. The recipient answers through understanding and praise.

The Cross extends the paradox. The apparently dispossessed, suffering Christ is still served invisibly by the world whose heir he is. Ministering does not therefore require goods to be physically accumulated around the beneficiary. It can describe their relation to a person through divine purpose, knowledge, and love, even where outward conditions conceal the inheritance.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.60** The world ministers invisibly to Christ even as he suffers exposed on the Cross. (Edition p. 37.)
- **I.64** Creation and human activity are acknowledged as services to the recipient. (Edition p. 39.)
- **II.22** The ordered service of light, plants, animals, and humanity supports the argument for providential order. (Edition p. 79.)

In this edition. Read the common verb as serve or supply. Only where the context names ecclesiastical offices should minister be narrowed to a cleric.

See also. Service; Use; Providence; Creature; Christ.

290 Primary text: I.60, I.64, II.22.

Miracle

miracle; miracles; wonderful work[291]

The word. A miracle is an extraordinary work or wonder. Traherne also uses the word to recover the wonder concealed within familiar human existence.

In Traherne. The most arresting reversal is that the soul exceeds the spectacular miracles by which people commonly expect to recognize divine power. Its capacity to contain innumerable objects in knowledge and pour out affection makes a single created soul a greater wonder than extraordinary changes in outward nature. Familiarity, together with devotion to sensible things, conceals this marvel.

This does not simply invalidate signs. The discussion of revelation considers their place within a history shared by many persons and ages. Yet III.45 insists that miracles, like language, cannot replace direct apprehension of the truth to which they point. Wonder should awaken understanding rather than excuse its inactivity.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.33** The imagined demand for private miraculous assurance is tested against communal and historical revelation. (Edition p. 152.)
- **III.45** Miracles cannot establish religion without a sight of truth itself. (Edition p. 160.)
- **IV.81** The soul's knowing and loving powers surpass external marvels as evidence of divine wisdom. (Edition p. 250.)

In this edition. IV.81 enlarges a saying attributed to Hermes; its sweeping comparison is Traherne's argument within a received tradition, not an independently reported miraculous event.

See also. Wonder; Soul; Revelation; Knowledge.

291 Primary text: III.33, III.45, IV.81.

Mirror

mirror; looking-glass; glass; reflection[292]

The word. A mirror receives and returns an image or light. Traherne uses its optics to describe both representative knowledge and the circulation of love.

In Traherne. The soul can contain a world without taking its bodily size, as a small mirror holds a large prospect. IV.84 then develops reflection into agency: the beams originate in the sun but genuinely flow from the mirror in which the sun appears. Received divine love similarly becomes a real outpouring of the person who receives it.

The next complication is freedom. Human mirrors have lids. Ignorance or inconsideration can interpose and interrupt their shining, so reception does not mechanically ensure return. The image holds together dependence and responsibility: one cannot manufacture the original light, but one can refuse it or fail to communicate it. The world itself is also a mirror whose beauty remains unseen without attention.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.31** The world mirrors infinite beauty that habitual blindness overlooks. (Edition p. 19.)
- **IV.84** A mirror returning sunlight models the soul's real communication of received love. (Edition p. 252.)
- **IV.86** Mirrors with lids express the freedom to interrupt or communicate the light. (Edition p. 254.)

In this edition. Mirror is not a theory of wholly passive mind. The added lids and the claim that love truly proceeds from the soul explicitly complicate mechanical reflection.

See also. Image; Light; Liberty; Love; Reflection.

292 Primary text: I.31, IV.84, IV.86.

Misery

misery; miserable; wanting amid enjoyments[293]

The word. Misery is wretchedness or an unfulfilled condition. Traherne distinguishes its experienced pain from the moral disorder that may initially remain unfelt.

In Traherne. The sharp contrast is between having without prizing and prizing without having. The second condition feels deprivation intensely; the first may feel little because its apprehension is asleep. Greater culpability and greater present discomfort therefore do not always coincide. The warning of awakening gives the distinction its eschatological seriousness.

The language of love supplies another measure. To hate and be hated is a profound bondage, from which redemption restores the soul to relationship. Misery is consequently not exhausted by an inventory of missing goods. It may consist in the inability or refusal to enter the relations that make existing goods enjoyable, while still remaining capable of desire.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.48** Want can become torment when goods are seen and desired but not enjoyed. (Edition p. 29.)
- **I.49** Unfelt deprivation is distinguished from the keen misery of valuing what one lacks. (Edition p. 29.)
- **II.63** Hatred and being hated constitute the bondage from which love restores humanity. (Edition p. 102.)

In this edition. Traherne's contrasts explain different forms of misery; they do not establish that every sufferer's deprivation results from ingratitude or a voluntary failure to prize.

See also. Want; Hatred; Hell; Felicity; Enjoyment.

293 Primary text: I.48, I.49, II.63.

Mistake

mistake; mistaken; misapprehension; misapplication[294]

The word. A mistake is an erroneous apprehension or application. In these meditations practical failure often follows from first misunderstanding what a thing is.

In Traherne. The tool analogy in IV.15 makes the sequence concrete. A saw cannot be used properly if taken for a knife. More consequential errors concern the world, the soul, and other people: what is not recognized as belonging to one's felicity will not be loved or enjoyed adequately. Misapprehension destroys access without necessarily removing the object.

Mistaken riches then spread the problem socially. A community may agree in pursuing scarce and inadequate treasures, and its agreement makes error appear wisdom. The remedy must therefore be more searching than conformity to majority opinion. It requires a corrected apprehension of things and the uses through which their goodness becomes one's own.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.33** A shared mistake in the choice of riches produces destructive social conduct. (Edition p. 20.)
- **IV.15** Misidentifying tools models the loss of use and enjoyment through misapprehension. (Edition p. 209.)

In this edition. The tool comparison is a practical epistemology: mistake is not just a wrong label, but an error that alters use, affection, and happiness.

See also. Error; Apprehension; Use; Truth; Riches.

Monuments

monument; monuments of Arabia[295]

The word. A monument may be a commemorative structure, but monuments can also be records or writings that preserve knowledge. Traherne uses both the physical and documentary ranges.

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294 Primary text: I.33, IV.15.

295 Primary text: III.55, IV.74; documentary gloss: 2026 edition note to IV.74.

In Traherne. The small piece of a kingly monument illustrates relational value: detached from the whole, its beauty disappears, whereas in place it gives and receives ornament. The monuments of Arabia, by contrast, are records in which Pico says he read a saying about humanity's excellence. Reading the latter as buildings would mislocate the act of reading and conceal the chain of textual testimony. The contrast is a useful reminder that preserved memory can be material, architectural, or written without giving the noun a single fixed referent throughout the book.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.55** A fragment of a royal monument illustrates the dependence of beauty on relation and place. (Edition p. 166.)
- **IV.74** Arabian monuments are the written records introduced in Pico's testimony. (Edition p. 243.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to IV.74 supplies the documentary gloss. The speaker of the embedded "I have read" is Pico as rendered by Traherne, not a fresh claim about Traherne's own archival research.

See also. Book and writing; Ornament; Pico della Mirandola; Relation.

Moses

Moses; the servant of God; the song of Moses[296]

The word. Moses is the scriptural leader of Israel. His name also enters Christian worship through the song of Moses joined to the song of the Lamb.

In Traherne. Traherne visits Moses and the passage through the sea as part of the soul's access to other ages. The point is not a claim of bodily time travel. Scriptural history becomes presently intelligible, admirable, and enjoyable to powers that are not confined to what the eye now sees.

The song supplies a related movement from historical act to shared praise. In I.100 and II.74 the worship of Revelation joins Moses with the Lamb, binding creation, justice, victory, and redemption into one recognition of divine greatness. Moses consequently helps articulate both

296 Primary text: I.55, I.100, II.74.

the breadth of contemplation and the unity of scriptural praise across distinct events and ages.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.55** The soul contemplatively visits Moses and Israel's passage through the sea. (Edition p. 33.)
- **I.100** The song of Moses and the Lamb voices enjoyment of the eternal kingdom. (Edition p. 64.)
- **II.74** Revelation's song models praise of God's works and just ways. (Edition p. 107.)

In this edition. The song of Moses in these latter passages is mediated by Revelation's vision. It should not be treated as an independent quotation solely from the Exodus narrative.

See also. Scripture; Time; Praise; Christ.

Motion

motion; motions; moving; activity[297]

The word. Motion includes bodily movement and, by extension, the activity of affection or inward response. The context determines which kind of movement matters.

In Traherne. II.22 starts from movement as evidence of life, then acknowledges that watches move too. The argument turns toward the more complex acts of living creatures and their ordered relations. Traherne is not unaware of the difference between mechanism and animation; he uses it to refine what counts as a disclosure of the giver.

The remembered dining room offers a personal counterpart. Splendid but empty furnishings become tedious; living company, music, and dancing transform the place. Later reflection identifies affection as the best motion, though invisible. The value of movement lies increasingly in relation and meaningful activity rather than in mere change of position.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.22** Mechanical movement is distinguished from the revealing activities of living creatures. (Edition p. 79.)

297 Primary text: II.22, III.22.

- **III.22** A populated dining room teaches the superior value of living company and affection. (Edition p. 144.)

In this edition. Motion need not mean locomotion. When affection is called a motion, the analogy concerns active inward life rather than physical displacement.

See also. Life; Action and activity; Affection; Music.

Music

music; melody; singing; harmony[298]

The word. Music denotes ordered sound and the art that produces it. It also provides an image for coordinated delight and expressive praise.

In Traherne. Its value cannot be separated from the life and relations it animates. In the dining-room memory, music accompanies the people whose presence converts dead splendour into enjoyment. The lesson later drawn concerns affection rather than luxurious entertainment alone.

Music also belongs among the arts whose relevance to felicity becomes visible through university learning. Traherne can thus criticize a child's rattle being falsely magnified while preserving the larger discipline as a genuine good. The distinction turns on proportion and understanding. A pleasing sound becomes false wealth when it displaces greater goods; musical art becomes a treasure when its capacities are understood within the whole of human enjoyment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.11** A rattle's supposed music exemplifies disproportionate valuation in childhood teaching. (Edition p. 137.)
- **III.22** Music and dancing participate in the transformation of an empty room by living company. (Edition p. 144.)
- **III.36** Music belongs among the disciplines later understood as serving felicity. (Edition p. 154.)

In this edition. Do not infer opposition to music from the criticism of the rattle. The text criticizes an educational valuation while explicitly retaining music among valuable arts.

See also. Harmony; Pleasure; Learning; Praise.

298 Primary text: III.11, III.22, III.36.

Mystery

mystery; mysteries; hidden fellowship[299]

The word. Mystery is a truth or divine purpose previously hidden or not yet rightly understood. It can be disclosed without becoming small or exhausted by explanation.

In Traherne. The opening programme is to unfold a mystery in plain terms: the reader is heir of the world and called to communion in divine glory. Traherne's surprising truths are not valued because they remain inaccessible. Their concealment has prevented enjoyment, and friendship now undertakes to make their interior beauty known.

Redemption is inseparable from this disclosed end. The mystery includes Christ's love in saving, but also the communion for which salvation occurs. Elsewhere it is mysterious that the same world can be paradise to one person and prison to another. Mystery thus often signals a relation hidden within familiar experience, requiring an altered apprehension rather than an exotic object.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.3** The work promises a plain unfolding of the reader's concealed inheritance. (Edition p. 5.)
- **I.5** The mystery includes the end of redemption in communion with divine glory. (Edition p. 6.)
- **I.36** Opposite experiences of one world reveal a mystery of apprehension and enjoyment. (Edition p. 22.)

In this edition. Mystery does not automatically mean an unintelligible proposition. In the opening meditations it is precisely what the writer undertakes to unfold.

See also. Revelation; Communion; Redemption; Heir and inheritance.

299 Primary text: I.3, I.5, I.36.

Nakedness

nakedness; naked; unadorned human endowment[300]

The word. Nakedness is the absence of clothing. Traherne uses Adam's naked condition to separate original human wealth from goods conferred by other people.

In Traherne. The paradox of IV.36 declares the naked human richest when the world and the powers of enjoyment are rightly possessed. Remove what other people can give and Adam's inheritance remains: dependence on social gifts does not define the whole of riches. Poverty in knowledge, rather than Adam's lack of apparel, prevents this wealth from being seen.

The claim is an exercise in revaluing foundational gifts. It does not establish that clothing, shelter, or relief of bodily need is dispensable in every fallen circumstance. Its immediate setting is a principle of security grounded in paradise and divine love.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.36** Adam's nakedness challenges an account of wealth based entirely on socially bestowed goods. (Edition p. 219.)

In this edition. The paradox concerns the riches present before additions. It should not be converted into practical indifference toward material deprivation or exposure.

See also. Adam; Poverty; Clothing; Nature.

Nature

nature; natural; natures; human nature[301]

The word. Nature can mean the created order, the characteristic constitution of a being, or the native tendencies through which that being approaches its proper good.

In Traherne. The word's several senses cooperate without becoming interchangeable. Natural things are the world's given realities; the soul and body have natures constituted by powers and inclinations; and particular things have qualities, relations, causes, and ends available to

300 Primary text: IV.36.
301 Primary text: III.9, III.42, III.43, III.44, IV.44.

inquiry. Traherne can therefore speak of the nature of love and of natural philosophy without referring only to what a modern reader calls the outdoors.

In the childhood narrative, nature exposes acquired valuations as artificial. Bodies, souls, senses, and faculties are genuine riches; a ribbon or purse of gold does not become supremely precious simply because other people declare it so. The contrast is not between matter and spirit, since bodily endowments belong among the natural treasures. Nor is every human artifact excluded: the error lies in letting conventional valuation obscure a better and more comprehensive good.

Human inclinations provide a positive route into that good. III.42 asks why the creator fitted persons with such curiosity, ambition, sympathy, and capacity to esteem. Their excess over small objects suggests an end proportionate to them. But native goodness does not make every socially directed choice good. IV.44 explains corruption through a desire to please: an originally generous inclination follows others who have mistaken felicity. Nature's capacity for relationship helps explain its susceptibility to miseducation.

Natural philosophy can be correspondingly narrow or broad. In III.44 its usual subject is corporeal causes and effects, a worthy study that prepares the enjoyer's eyes. Extended to the inquiry into all natures, it includes souls, virtues, affections, angels, and God. Traherne makes this expansion explicitly, so the reader should neither impose it on every occurrence nor assume the term always excludes theology.

Finally, nature does not erase the history of sin and redemption. The account of divinity in III.43 examines humanity in innocence, misery, grace, and glory. Natural endowment, acquired disorder, restored communion, and fulfilled life remain distinguishable. The recurring appeal to nature is an effort to recover the goodness and purpose of created powers within that history, not an assertion that whatever occurs is already good.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.9** Natural endowments are distinguished from socially invented measures of wealth. (Edition p. 135.)
- **III.42** The investigation of human powers and inclinations leads toward their divinely prepared ends. (Edition p. 157.)

- **III.43** Human nature is studied through innocence, misery, grace, and glory. (Edition p. 158.)
- **III.44** Natural philosophy is distinguished in its usual corporeal scope and a proposed wider inquiry into all natures. (Edition p. 159.)
- **IV.44** The desire to please explains how a good inclination can be misdirected by social error. (Edition p. 224.)

In this edition. Distinguish nature as constitution from nature as the created field. Traherne's proposed expansion of natural philosophy in III.44 is his own stated move, not the unvarying meaning of the phrase.

See also. Creation; Inclination; Custom; Philosophy; Man and mankind; Fall.

Necessity

necessity; necessary; of necessity; necessities[302]

The word. Necessity can mean an unavoidable consequence, a requirement of a nature or end, or a practical want that must be supplied.

In Traherne. The strongest occurrences articulate the requirements of divine generosity. If love is to satisfy its own fullness, its gift cannot be confined to inadequate treasures; if power is infinite, capacity must answer it. The necessity is argued from what love and power are, not pictured as an external force compelling God against his will.

Similar reasoning governs the human response: a rightly known God and world must be enjoyed because their goodness is then seen as one's own. Yet the Centuries continually acknowledge ignorance and refusal. Such statements describe the fitting consequence of adequate apprehension, not a denial that actual persons can fail to attain it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.16** True knowledge of self, God, and world is said necessarily to issue in enjoyment. (Edition p. 11.)
- **II.77** Infinite treasures answer what divine love requires for its satisfaction. (Edition p. 109.)
- **V.4** Infinite capacity is argued as the necessary counterpart of almighty power. (Edition p. 267.)

302 Primary text: I.16, II.77, V.4.

In this edition. Of necessity often signals a consequence within an argument about a nature or end. It should not automatically be translated into physical compulsion or determinism.

See also. Liberty; Nature; Power; Want; Love.

News

news; tidings; glad tidings; ON NEWS[303]

The word. News is information of something newly disclosed or brought from afar. In Traherne's account it also names the hoped-for announcement of an unknown good. The word connects childhood curiosity with the Gospel's glad tidings and the discovery of happiness in Scripture.

In Traherne. III.25 describes a child listening eagerly because each report might conceal the happiness he seeks. Remote kingdoms seem promising, and the historical arrival of the Gospel from Judaea gives that expectation a decisive object. The poem in III.26 dramatizes the movement: the soul seems to gather at the ear, hurry out to welcome tidings, and return inward to prepare a place for them. Its last stanza reverses the expectation of distant treasure by disclosing the riches already surrounding the child and the greatness of the receiving soul.

The following sequence transfers the desire into an imagined book from heaven. Traherne first pictures an angel bringing revelation to him alone, then recognizes the Bible as a better fulfilment. Its content supplies the desired news; its public, historical transmission provides companionship, enduring testimony, and the manifestation of divine love across ages.

News therefore becomes a test of what information is for. A curiosity that yields no happiness disappoints him, while revelation transforms his understanding of himself and his inheritance. The sequence moves beyond the thrill of novelty toward goods made real by belief, meditation, and shared understanding.

303 Primary text: III.25–33, including the complete poem in III.26. Supplied 2026 editorial note 193 identifies Jury as Judaea.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.25** Connects appetite for reports with the Gospel and with disappointing searches into curiosities. (Edition p. 146.)
- **III.26** The poem ON NEWS stages the soul's eager reception and its discovery of present treasure. (Edition p. 146.)
- **III.29** Scripture's content answers the desire for glad tidings. (Edition p. 150.)
- **III.33** Public revelation proves better than an imagined private angelic delivery. (Edition p. 152.)

In this edition. Read the poem with III.27–33, which tests both the message and its mode of arrival. The 2026 note glosses Jury as Judaea; it is not a reference to a court or jurors.

See also. Expectation; Desire; Gospel; Revelation; Book and writing.

Nothing

nothing; nought; out of nothing; no being[304]

The word. Nothing can deny existence, value, or a specified content. Creation out of nothing and the judgment that a thing is worth nothing are different uses.

In Traherne. Being raised from nothing makes existence itself a gift before any particular possession is counted. The recipient has no earlier stock of merit or property against which to reckon the world. This beginning amplifies the surprise that the created soul can become an extensive temple of knowledge and love.

IV.87 places creation beside redemption: God loves where there was no creature, then loves creatures who are evil. Human love can imitate the second generosity by benefiting those who deserve nothing. V.4 goes further in describing nothing as obedient to power and capable of receiving perfections. The language is deliberately personifying; it expresses unrestricted creative capacity rather than identifying a hidden material called nothing.

304 Primary text: I.92, IV.87, V.4.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.92** The joy of existence begins in being raised from nothing to enjoy the world. (Edition p. 58.)
- **IV.87** Creation from nothing and redemption from evil model unmerited love. (Edition p. 255.)
- **V.4** Nothing is figuratively presented as the subject upon which almighty power can work. (Edition p. 267.)

In this edition. Nought can mean evil or worthless as well as nonexistent. IV.87 exploits their proximity while keeping creation and redemption as distinct acts.

See also. Being; Creation; Emptiness; Grace; Power.

Obedience

obedience; obeying; living by divine laws[305]

The word. Obedience is conformity of action to an authoritative command. Traherne emphasizes the good the command makes available to the one who fulfils it.

In Traherne. The divine law joins righteousness to blessedness by making obedience an enjoyment. This is not the removal of duty but a claim about its content: the commanded love lets the soul participate in goods it would otherwise refuse. Disobedience consequently despises the giver, the duty, and the benefit together.

Redemption intensifies the relation. I.76 thanks Christ for restoring the speaker to the enjoyment and obedience of the laws, then hears the renewed command to love others as Christ has loved. The command is old in its substance but new in the obligation supplied by redemption. Obedience therefore becomes an answering likeness in thought, action, and use of life.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.76** Redemption restores both enjoyment of the law and obedience to the renewed command of love. (Edition p. 48.)
- **II.29** Obedience is described as fruition of blessedness, making refusal a many-sided rejection. (Edition p. 84.)

305 Primary text: I.76, II.29.

In this edition. The phrase enjoyment and obedience does not oppose two separate programmes. It expresses the text's effort to discover their union in rightly understood law.

See also. Law; Commandment; Duty; Liberty; Redemption.

Object

object; objects; objected; that which a power apprehends[306]

The word. An object is what thought, sight, desire, or another power is directed toward. It can be a person, an event, an attribute, or a material thing.

In Traherne. Objects are necessary to the soul's fulfilment. Capacity without something to know or love remains desolate; things present without love remain ineffective as treasures. Traherne therefore joins the power, its exercise, and its object in an account of enjoyed life.

II.78 gives this relation an optical form. Light discloses an object, but its activity also becomes evident through that object. In the same way the soul learns its own powers by finding them active about what they apprehend. The beloved as object is not thereby depersonalized: II.25 describes divine love creating and magnifying a responsive person. The term identifies the direction of an act rather than ranking its recipient as inert stuff.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.25** The beloved object is a person whom love magnifies and makes blessed. (Edition p. 82.)
- **II.65** Life without objects is empty, while objects without love fail as treasures. (Edition p. 103.)
- **II.78** Objects manifest and exercise the powers through which they are apprehended. (Edition p. 110.)
- **III.68** Different apprehensions of the same objects explain differences of enjoyment. (Edition p. 174.)

In this edition. Object is broader than physical object. The older verb objected means set before a power or presented to it, not necessarily disputed.

306 Primary text: II.25, II.65, II.78, III.68.

See also. Knowledge; Love; Capacity; Apprehension; Light.

Obligation

obligation; obligations; binding benefit; duty[307]

The word. Obligation is what binds one to a response or duty. It can also refer to a benefit that creates such a bond of gratitude.

In Traherne. God's love supplies both the measure and the obligation of human love. The recipient owes a response to the giver and, because the giver loves others, owes love to them as well. The movement prevents gratitude from remaining a closed exchange between God and a single soul.

After redemption the obligations increase, but their increase is presented as an advantage. A more fully displayed love gives the soul stronger reason and greater ability to love in return. The binding force is not conceived only as an added burden. It reveals a desirable object whose goodness draws the person toward the response by which felicity is enjoyed.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.72** Love received from God obliges love both to God and to all whom God loves. (Edition p. 45.)
- **II.29** Disobedience rejects the beneficent obligations attached to an amiable duty. (Edition p. 84.)
- **IV.53** Redemption adds obligations that themselves strengthen the creature's capacity to love. (Edition p. 230.)

In this edition. Obligations can name benefits as grounds of indebtedness, not merely commands or liabilities. That double force explains their description as advantages.

See also. Duty; Gratitude; Law; Love; Redemption.

307 Primary text: I.72, II.29, IV.53.

Omnipotence

omnipotence; omnipotency; almighty power[308]

The word. Omnipotence is unlimited divine power. Omnipotency is a variant form, not a different attribute.

In Traherne. Traherne measures the gift against the giver's power. The question is whether the natures created and the treasures supplied are as excellent as omnipotence could make them. This inquiry directs attention toward the actual goodness of things rather than toward power considered in isolation.

IV.87 joins omnipotency to a more surprising excellence: God can give being where there is nothing and love those who are evil. Power appears through a generosity that does not wait to find its object worthy. The comparison then instructs human love, which can answer hostility with benefit. Omnipotence is therefore not merely the overwhelming force before which a person trembles; its fullest significance emerges through creation, redemption, and communicated goodness.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.39** The excellence of natures and gifts is tested against what omnipotence could bestow. (Edition p. 155.)
- **IV.87** Creation and redeeming love manifest omnipotency toward nonexistent or evil objects. (Edition p. 255.)
- **V.4** Almighty power includes a corresponding infinite capacity for its gifts. (Edition p. 267.)

In this edition. Include omnipotency with omnipotence. The book usually develops the same attribute under the fuller phrase almighty power.

See also. Power; God; Creation; Love; Nothing.

308 Primary text: III.39, IV.87, V.4.

Omnipresence

omnipresence; present everywhere; divine habitation[309]

The word. Omnipresence is God's presence everywhere. Traherne distinguishes this spiritual presence from the exclusionary occupation of place by a body.

In Traherne. The attribute becomes a habitation and even a throne for the soul. What could seem an abstract doctrine is translated into continual company and a secure region of enjoyment. The soul can never outgrow this dwelling or travel beyond it.

IV.72 explains the throne through a fittingness between person and seat: bodily rulers have bodily thrones, but spirit requires an invisible one. Divine omnipresence and eternity together answer the soul's expansive life, and Christ's shared glory makes the inheritance intelligible. The image does not turn the creature into the deity. It describes participation in a presence that remains God's while being given for the creature's enjoyment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.19** Omnipresence and eternity are the soul's companions and objects of familiar enjoyment. (Edition p. 12.)
- **I.54** Divine omnipresence is called the contemplative soul's house. (Edition p. 33.)
- **IV.72** An invisible throne appropriate to spirits is found in God's omnipresence and eternity. (Edition p. 242.)

In this edition. Spatial images of house and throne express participation rather than bodily enclosure. Compare the explicit refusal of a bodily divine presence in II.19.

See also. Presence; Space; Eternity; God; Soul.

Order

order; ordering; ordered; in frame[310]

The word. Order is an arrangement in which things occupy fitting relations; to order is to direct or dispose something toward its proper end.

309 Primary text: I.19, I.54, II.19, IV.72.
310 Primary text: II.22, IV.8, IV.40.

In Traherne. Natural order appears in coordinated service: light, plants, animals, and human understanding form relations through which creation becomes useful and praiseworthy. Moral order concerns the power that receives this world. The philosopher directs desires and passions by reason rather than allowing customary valuations to rule them.

The practical distinction in IV.40 limits pretensions to mastery. Innumerable outward things belong to divine care, while keeping the heart is the work entrusted to the individual. This is not a licence for careless conduct, since the heart orders action; it is a reallocation of responsibility. The soul's first disorder is often its attempt to secure felicity by rearranging everything except its own apprehensions.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.22** The service of creatures to one another displays the order of the world. (Edition p. 79.)
- **IV.8** Reason orders desire, passion, and conduct toward a superior end. (Edition p. 203.)
- **IV.40** Keeping the heart is distinguished from controlling innumerable outward things. (Edition p. 221.)

In this edition. Order may be active moral government rather than a static sequence. In frame and out of frame describe the corresponding inward disposition.

See also. Nature; Reason; Heart; Providence; Principle.

Orient

orient; oriently[311]

The word. Orient means brilliant, lustrous, or radiantly precious, carrying associations of the rising sun and fine jewels. It need not locate an object in the geographical East.

In Traherne. The child's orient wheat is perceived with the brilliance of an inexhaustible treasure, before the adult associations of sowing, reaping, and scarcity intervene. The jewel-image returns when a natural principle of giving is freed from the rust of corruption. At the Cross, divine love shines most oriently through the apparent darkness and loss

311 Primary text: III.3, IV.45, I.90; historical gloss: 2026 edition note to III.3.

of glory. These uses connect natural vision, ethical restoration, and redemption through the recognition of a radiance that ordinary valuation can miss.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.3** The child sees corn as orient and immortal wheat. (Edition p. 129.)
- **IV.45** The principle of giving is an orient jewel beneath corruption's rust. (Edition p. 224.)
- **I.90** Divine love breaks forth oriently in Christ's humiliation. (Edition p. 57.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to III.3 explains the lustrous sense. The word does not make the wheat an imported eastern crop.

See also. Brightness; Child and childhood; Treasure; Light.

Original sin

sin, original and actual; inherited corruption; Adam's fall[312]

The word. Original sin names humanity's fallen condition as related to Adam, distinguished from actual sins committed in particular acts.

In Traherne. Traherne includes original and actual sin in the subjects belonging to humanity's estate of misery. His autobiographical account nevertheless places much greater explanatory weight on custom, example, and parental lives than on inward corruption or bodily descent. He then explicitly traces the world's corrupt examples and inclinations back to Adam.

Both statements must remain visible. The narrative of childhood innocence should not be converted into a simple denial of inherited sin, nor should the doctrinal list cancel the unusual emphasis on acquired blindness. The tension gives education a major role in the account of falling away and recovering felicity.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.8** Custom and example are emphasized over inward corruption, while their origin is linked to Adam. (Edition p. 134.)

312 Primary text: III.8, III.43. The 2026 editorial note at III.8 [179] supplies the comparison with Article IX.

- **III.43** Original and actual sin appear explicitly in the outline of humanity's fallen estate. (Edition p. 158.)

In this edition. The 2026 note at III.8 places the passage beside Article IX. That editorial comparison is useful context, not an additional doctrinal declaration by Traherne.

See also. Adam; Fall; Corruption; Innocence; Custom.

Ornament

ornament; adorning; decoration; excellence conferred[313]

The word. An ornament adorns and lends distinction. In Traherne it may be an integral excellence of a person or whole, not a dispensable embellishment.

In Traherne. III.55 makes ornament reciprocal. A part receives beauty from the larger composition while also contributing beauty to it. Isolated from its place and relations, the same part loses the value it possessed. Ornament consequently helps explain why felicity requires broad knowledge: one cannot understand a treasure without knowing what it gives and receives.

People themselves become ornaments of the divine kingdom. The prayer in I.97 asks to join a company whose members are each other's joy and light. The language dignifies the person as a contributor to shared glory, rather than reducing the person to an attractive object arranged for someone else's pleasure.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.97** Each person in the blessed assembly is a light and ornament of the kingdom. (Edition p. 62.)
- **III.55** A part gives and receives ornament through its place in a whole. (Edition p. 166.)
- **IV.7** The scriptural ornament of grace figures the distinction conferred by wisdom. (Edition p. 202.)

In this edition. Ornament here can be constitutive of expressed excellence. The modern implication of something merely superficial would distort III.55's account of relation.

313 Primary text: I.97, III.55, IV.7.

See also. Beauty; Relation; Whole; Glory; Wisdom.

Pain

pain; pains; torment; suffering[314]

The word. Pain denotes bodily or inward suffering. The cited passage uses the plural for the torments of hell, imagined as an extreme test of fidelity.

In Traherne. In I.91 the speaker asks for a love no threat, torment, or attraction could divide from God. The comparison attributed to Anselm places even the pains of hell below the evil of sinning against the beloved. Its force is comparative and devotional: love seeks constancy under the most extreme conceivable trial.

The prayer then turns to sun, flame, sea, and altar as images of inexhaustible affection. Pain is not sought as a good in itself; it is the imagined pressure through which the desired firmness of love is expressed.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.91** The preference attributed to Anselm makes extreme suffering a measure of desired fidelity. (Edition p. 58.)

In this edition. This is a prayerful wish framed through a received comparison, not an instruction to inflict or seek suffering.

See also. Affliction; Patience; Love; Hell.

Paradise

paradise; Eden; house of Paradise[315]

The word. Paradise names the original blessed habitation and, by extension, a present manner of inhabiting the world in knowledge, charity, and enjoyment.

In Traherne. Traherne does not leave paradise entirely behind the fall or beyond death. The world remains capable of being recognized as God's paradise, although human blindness and conflict make it function

314 Primary text: I.91.
315 Primary text: I.20, I.31, IV.22.

as a prison. Its recovery concerns perception and relationship as well as place.

IV.22 gives this claim an exact social test. To enjoy paradise one must put on its charity. The house becomes a house of Paradise when strangers are welcomed and its goods treated as theirs as well as the host's. Sharing knowledge and grace belongs to the hospitality. The image therefore corrects a merely private reading of Edenic enjoyment: a world seen as one's inheritance must become a world offered to others.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.20** Reciprocal love makes the world a paradise and the gate of heaven. (Edition p. 13.)
- **I.31** The world is God's paradise despite the blindness that prevents its recognition. (Edition p. 19.)
- **IV.22** Paradise is enacted through charity, hospitality, and shared household goods. (Edition p. 213.)

In this edition. Paradise shifts between the scriptural original and a present mode of life. In IV.22 the household application is practical, not only figurative scenery.

See also. Eden; Charity; Brotherhood; Common things; Enjoyment.

Parents

parents; father and mother; first parents[316]

The word. Parents are those who beget and raise children. First parents names Adam and Eve; ordinary parents also provide an analogy for divine delight.

In Traherne. Parents appear as both givers of love and transmitters of distortion. I.52 compares God's happiness in human happiness to parents' joy in their children. The analogy conveys a relation in which another's good is immediately one's own delight.

The childhood account places parental lives within the social formation that can blind a receptive child. Its memorable contrast with parental loins emphasizes example over biological descent, while the following sentence still links corruption to Adam. The criticism is

316 Primary text: I.52, III.5, III.8.

therefore concerned with what children are taught to attend to and prize. Parental influence is powerful precisely because the child is responsive, trusting, and eager to belong.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.52** Parental happiness in children models the reciprocity of divine and human delight. (Edition p. 30.)
- **III.5** Love in parents belongs to the restored field of pure apprehension. (Edition p. 132.)
- **III.8** Parents' lives exemplify the influence of custom and conduct on childhood perception. (Edition p. 134.)

In this edition. The loins/lives contrast in III.8 is followed by an explicit relation to Adam. Quoting only one half would make its doctrinal implication too simple.

See also. Child and childhood; Education; Father; Original sin.

Passion

passion; passions; Christ's Passion; affections[317]

The word. Passion may denote suffering, especially Christ's suffering, or the movements of feeling and desire that require government. These senses should be kept distinct.

In Traherne. The Passion becomes inwardly present through remembrance and prayer. In I.88 the torn veil and darkened sun are applied to the speaker's resistant heart and pride: the historical suffering is asked to exert transformative force in the present soul.

Human passions require direction rather than mere extinction. II.100 criticizes moralists who recommend their government without showing the goods to which they should be guided. Right government removes impediments and fits the passions to proper objects. The distinction between true and false pleasures therefore precedes any adequate account of restraint. Affect is a power of enjoyment whose disorder needs healing, not evidence that enjoyment itself should disappear.

317 Primary text: I.86, I.88, II.100.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.86** Christ's Passion remains present in the memory and affection of believers. (Edition p. 54.)
- **I.88** The Passion's signs become a prayer for inward transformation. (Edition p. 55.)
- **II.100** Government of the passions guides them toward fitting objects rather than leaving them empty. (Edition p. 126.)

In this edition. Capitalization alone may not reliably distinguish the senses. Christ's passion is his suffering; our passions are affective movements needing right direction.

See also. Affection; Desire; Cross; Reason; Pleasure.

Patience

patience; patient endurance; constancy[318]

The word. Patience is the capacity to bear difficulty, deprivation, or delay without abandoning the good. It is an active durability rather than simple inertia.

In Traherne. The Cross offers patience together with courage and zeal, binding endurance to love's work. Its purpose is not to glorify helplessness but to teach a fidelity able to persist when immediate circumstances oppose it.

IV.89 considers the lack of external goods. Where a person cannot give materially, patience, faith, and courage can themselves become more valuable ornaments than money. The principle reassesses what remains possible under deprivation; it does not make generous action worthless when means are present. Traherne's larger demand is that one virtue be prized above stored wealth, because the formed soul can answer circumstances in ways possessions alone cannot secure.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.61** Patience is among the active and enduring virtues learned from the crucified Christ. (Edition p. 37.)
- **IV.89** Patience and faith become precious excellencies where external means are withheld. (Edition p. 256.)

318 Primary text: I.61, IV.89.

In this edition. Patience belongs beside courage, not in opposition to it. The valuation of inward virtue addresses limited means without denying the worth of beneficence.

See also. Meekness; Trust; Affliction; Virtue.

Peace

peace; repose; freedom from contention[319]

The word. Peace is the absence of destructive conflict and the positive repose of rightly ordered relations. It describes both a method of instruction and the world's intended life.

In Traherne. The opening promise rejects bloody advancement in favour of peace and love. A loving teacher chooses methods that delight and sustain the person being raised. Peace is thus an expression of the end within the means, not merely the result after a difficult operation.

The world itself is a region of peace until human beings disquiet it. False wealth, competing interests, and invented wants flood its beauty with contention. This diagnosis makes peace more than an inward exemption from public disorder: recovering it requires another way of valuing goods and persons. The book's gentle instruction aims at that larger transformation by changing what its reader can see and desire.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.4** The writer promises an advancement by peace and loving instruction. (Edition p. 5.)
- **I.31** Human disturbance obscures the world's character as a region of light and peace. (Edition p. 19.)
- **I.33** False wealth and competing private interests drown nature's peace in contention. (Edition p. 20.)

In this edition. Peace can name an intended order that actual conduct destroys. Its praise should not be mistaken for a factual denial of war or social violence.

See also. Repose; Love; War; Contentment; Custom.

319 Primary text: I.4, I.31, I.33.

Peculiar

peculiar; peculiar treasures; peculiar friend[320]

The word. Peculiar means specially one's own, proper to a person, or privately belonging. Depending on the sentence, it can also mark a distinctive excellence; oddness is rarely the point.

In Traherne. The book's repeated claim that all things belong to each person makes peculiar possession surprisingly compatible with universal enjoyment. Each soul can be God's peculiar friend while delighting in His equally intimate love for others. The world is God's peculiar treasure, and divine likeness makes it ours too. In the rendering of Pico, however, a peculiar office would be a fixed assignment distinguishing one creature from the rest. The word therefore marks specific belonging or determination, with the local argument deciding whether that particularity is restrictive or enriching.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.97** Each heavenly person is God's peculiar friend while loving the others. (Edition p. 62.)
- **III.74** God enjoys the world as His peculiar treasures. (Edition p. 181.)
- **IV.76** Adam is not confined to a peculiar office. (Edition p. 247.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to III.72 glosses peculiar treasures as private possessions. Private here must be read beside Traherne's insistence on undiminished shared enjoyment.

See also. Friendship; Possession; Propriety; Treasure.

Perfection

perfection; perfect; complete; fully exercised[321]

The word. Perfection is completeness or fulfilment according to a thing's nature and end. Divine perfections also name excellencies such as wisdom, power, and goodness.

In Traherne. Felicity requires perfection on both sides of enjoyment: the objects must be excellent, and the manner of enjoying must be

320 Primary text: I.97, III.74, IV.76; historical gloss: 2026 edition note to III.72.
321 Primary text: I.38, III.57, III.61.

adequate. III.57 gives the second a striking priority. An excellent manner of enjoyment becomes itself an additional good enjoyed, increasing rather than merely delivering the object's value.

I.38 likewise makes the recipient's excellence inseparable from the gift. God gives in a perfect manner by creating a soul able to enjoy nobly and generously, in divine likeness. Mere possession of the world would be inadequate if the possessor remained incapable of its good. Perfection therefore concerns an active relation between bestowed powers, suitable objects, and their fulfilment in knowledge and love.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.38** Perfect giving includes making the recipient fit for generous enjoyment. (Edition p. 23.)
- **III.57** Felicity requires excellent objects and an excellent manner of enjoying them. (Edition p. 168.)
- **III.61** The divine image is the highest creature rather than a second deity. (Edition p. 170.)

In this edition. Perfect need not mean flawless by an unspecified modern standard. Ask which nature, activity, or end supplies the measure of completion in the passage.

See also. Felicity; Image; Capacity; Enjoyment; Excellency.

Person

person; persons; personal presence[322]

The word. Person ordinarily names a particular human or spiritual being. In Trinitarian contexts it has a distinct theological use within the unity of God.

In Traherne. A person is the greatest gift that love can offer. In II.86 wisdom and inward light adorn the lover so that the gift of self becomes acceptable and precious. This adornment is not an alternative to generosity: the person's formed life is what is most fully given.

Universal love does not abolish particularity. IV.69 asks that every person be loved intimately, as if alone, while all are included. The expansive lover becomes concerned in many transactions and remains

322 Primary text: II.59, II.86, IV.69.

willing to humble himself for the individual beloved. The test of an apparently lofty universality is thus concrete readiness to serve. Each person contributes a centre of delight that cannot be replaced by an abstract total.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.59** Presence and affection can delight a loving person more than costly gifts. (Edition p. 100.)
- **II.86** The lover's own person is the greatest gift offered to God. (Edition p. 116.)
- **IV.69** Universal love is described as intimate love toward each particular person. (Edition p. 240.)

In this edition. Keep ordinary persons distinct from the technical phrase Trinity of persons in III.43. The shared word does not erase differences between those contexts.

See also. Love; Man and mankind; Self; Trinity; Gift.

Philosophy

philosophy; philosopher; divine philosophy; natural philosophy[323]

The word. Philosophy is disciplined inquiry into wisdom, nature, and the good life. Traherne distinguishes kinds and purposes rather than either rejecting or accepting it without qualification.

In Traherne. Vain philosophy is genuinely vain, but that does not make all philosophy an obstacle to Christianity. IV.4 finds the highest philosophy in scriptural teachings about creation, divine likeness, spiritual dignity, and the laws of virtue. Without understanding these goods, devotion remains immature.

Natural philosophy has an equally valuable subordinate role in revealing the causes, relations, and uses of corporeal things. Extended beyond its customary boundary, it can investigate all natures. Yet philosophical identity depends on practice: the philosopher orders desire, governs passion, and lives toward the end discovered. Mere fluency about happiness fails the standard. The integration of Christian faith, inquiry, and formed conduct is the central claim.

323 Primary text: III.44, IV.3, IV.4, IV.8.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.44** Natural philosophy reveals bodily creation and can be extended into inquiry about all natures. (Edition p. 159.)
- **IV.3** Philosopher, Christian, and divine are presented as mutually implicating vocations. (Edition p. 199.)
- **IV.4** Vain philosophy is distinguished from the divine philosophy of scriptural truth. (Edition p. 200.)
- **IV.8** The philosopher must practise virtue and live by reason. (Edition p. 203.)

In this edition. Traherne's divine philosophy is a programme of integrated understanding and life. It is not simply the modern academic discipline supplemented with religious examples.

See also. Reason; Learning; Divinity; Nature; Virtue.

Phocion

Phocion; poor Athenian; Luther; needless and hurtful superfluities[324]

The word. Phocion was an Athenian general and statesman, dated approximately 402–318 BC in the supplied edition, and remembered for honest poverty. Traherne invokes his refusal of riches for his children as an example of freedom from covetousness, extending the lesson to friends.

In Traherne. The example completes a two-stage argument. In IV.33 the exemplary man has already ceased desiring wealth for himself: further possessions would help him only through being given away. Yet the desire to enrich others can conceal a remaining acquisitive impulse. He comes to see that refusing anxious accumulation may sometimes please God as much as acquiring property and then distributing it in particular charities. The qualification sometimes matters; charitable giving is not simply condemned.

IV.34 supplies Phocion's sharp alternative. Children who share his character will not need riches; if they lack that character, riches will become needless and harmful superfluities. The argument concerns their

324 Primary text: IV.33, IV.34. Supplied 2026 editorial note 289 identifies Phocion, gives the Plutarch parallel, and records the untraced Luther attribution; note 288 explains the preceding wholesale–retail image.

capacity to use wealth well, not indifference to their welfare. Transferred to friends, it separates love of another person from an automatic wish to increase that person's possessions.

Luther supplies a subsidiary example in the same meditation. The exemplary man can now claim, with him, that covetousness has no hold upon him. Traherne joins the two names around this freedom, without identifying their religious positions or circumstances as equivalent.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.33** Questions acquisition justified solely by a future intention to give. (Edition p. 218.)
- **IV.34** Pairs Luther's freedom from covetousness with Phocion's answer concerning his children. (Edition p. 219.)

In this edition. The 2026 note identifies Plutarch's Phocion 30, where a sober son has sufficient inheritance and an undisciplined one can never have enough. Traherne sharpens the alternative. The same note says that Luther's remark has not been traced to a source.

See also. Poverty; Riches; Friendship; Avarice and covetousness; Plutarch.

Phoenix

Phoenix; rare Phoenix[325]

The word. The phoenix is the fabulous bird associated with singular rarity and renewal through death. These two aspects support different but related uses in Traherne.

In Traherne. The consistently charitable person, living on little while doing good to others, is a rare phoenix. The phrase measures the difficulty of making an ideal continuous practice; the speaker immediately acknowledges his own infirmities. Later Love itself is a phoenix that revives in its ashes and remains sweet in the grave. What looked like a destruction becomes the setting for undiminished or renewed efficacy. The image belongs to the sequence in which earthly disadvantages can become love's occasions of glory, while its earlier use prevents the ideal from being mistaken for an easy accomplishment.

325 Primary text: IV.29, IV.61; mythic and Christian background: 2026 edition note to IV.61.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.29** The rare phoenix names an unusually constant life of generous simplicity. (Edition p. 216.)
- **IV.61** Love's phoenix survives its ashes and the grave. (Edition p. 235.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to IV.61 supplies the mythic background and Christian resurrection association. Traherne uses the bird figuratively rather than reporting an observed species.

See also. Love; Resurrection; Sacrifice; Virtue.

Physic

physic; physician; medicine[326]

The word. Physic means medicine or a medicinal treatment; a physician practises it. It must be distinguished from physics as inquiry into the natural world.

In Traherne. Love administering physic chooses balms and cordials rather than corrosives. The metaphor explains how the writer intends to advance the reader: an effective remedy should express care in its manner as well as in its end. Spiritual instruction is healing offered through delight.

A physician's reputation also illustrates voluntary attraction. People seek the healer because they expect benefit, just as the soul should be drawn to the Cross by love and desire. The image depends on recognition of need and credible good, not force. In the autobiographical pursuit of knowledge, a secret in physic is investigated for its possible contribution to happiness.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.4** Medicinal gentleness models the method of loving instruction. (Edition p. 5.)
- **I.57** The sick person drawn by a physician's reputation illustrates willing attraction. (Edition p. 35.)
- **III.25** A secret in physic is tested for the happiness it may disclose. (Edition p. 146.)

326 Primary text: I.4, I.57, III.25.

In this edition. Physic in these contexts is medical. The list of university disciplines in III.36 separately names Physics and Medicine.

See also. Health; Love; Attraction and loadstone; Learning.

Pico della Mirandola

Picus Mirandula; De Dignitate Hominis[327]

The word. Picus Mirandula is Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, the Renaissance writer whose oration on human dignity Traherne renders and then comments upon. The normalized modern name provides a useful finding aid.

In Traherne. This is an extended encounter rather than a passing learned reference. The account begins with humanity as an object of wonder, then dramatizes the Creator's provision for a creature without a fixed place or exclusive pattern. Adam receives powers of self-formation, and the seeds cultivated determine the life that develops. Traherne welcomes the imaginative freedom of the language but directs its meaning inward: the changeable form concerns the soul's disposition, not a bodily metamorphosis. His reading supports the claim that choosing love can transform a person's mode of being. It also modifies what it receives, particularly in representing humanity as the image of the whole creation.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.74** The introduction to Pico begins the extended rendering of his oration. (Edition p. 243.)
- **IV.76** The speech to Adam dramatizes self-formation without a fixed office. (Edition p. 247.)
- **IV.78** Traherne interprets the transformations as changes of inward life. (Edition p. 248.)
- **IV.80** The ensuing argument connects choice with becoming Love. (Edition p. 249.)

In this edition. The 2026 notes distinguish Traherne's changes and correct his report of a university delivery: the planned oration was not

327 Primary text: IV.74–80; identification, translation comparison, and historical correction: 2026 edition notes to IV.74–78.

delivered. That correction belongs to the edition, not Traherne's testimony.

See also. Adam; Copula and Hymenaeus; Freedom; Man and mankind.

Picture

picture; pictures; painting; painted representation[328]

The word. A picture is a made representation. Its composition, visual reception, and relation to living reality supply different arguments in different meditations.

In Traherne. Light and shade make a picture excellent together; Traherne uses this relation to explain how wants and supplies compose felicity. The shade is not merely an unfortunate patch to be removed, because contrast helps the good become appreciable.

Pictures can also expose the weakness of habitual attention. A work admired at first may eventually become as unnoticed as its wall, showing why sheer visible beauty cannot guarantee lasting esteem. V.5 then enlarges painting into creation, but refuses to leave creatures as mere shadows: the spectator inhabits and owns the pictured world. The visual analogy is useful precisely where Traherne also marks its limit.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.41** Pictorial light and shade model the relation of wants and supplies. (Edition p. 25.)
- **II.20** A familiar picture becomes unnoticed, revealing the limits of mere visible display. (Edition p. 75.)
- **V.5** The world exceeds a painted landscape because its spectator inhabits the works as possessions. (Edition p. 268.)

In this edition. Picture does not always mean an inadequate copy. Its force changes between composition, neglected beauty, and the divine art of creation.

See also. Limner and pencil; Image; Beauty; Want; Custom.

328 Primary text: I.41, II.20, V.5.

Piety

piety; devout fidelity; religious conduct[329]

The word. Piety is reverent devotion expressed in belief and conduct. It is not restricted to formal worship or a visibly solemn manner.

In Traherne. I.84 places piety in the difficult practice of continuing to benefit people who disappoint or mistreat the giver. Christ's unwearied love provides the example; the desired result is a virtue strengthened rather than extinguished by others' failures.

IV.98 uses the term for a generous judgment about divine giving. Traherne considers it pious to believe that God has truly, without mere metaphor, placed humanity under infinite obligation. The connection is confidence in the scale of goodness. Piety receives the gift with adequate seriousness and then attempts a response whose conduct bears that recognition out.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.84** Piety persists in cheerful beneficence despite mistreatment. (Edition p. 53.)
- **IV.98** Believing the literal greatness of divine obligation is presented as piety. (Edition p. 262.)

In this edition. The first passage concerns conduct and the second an affirmative theological judgment. Neither reduces piety to observance detached from the understanding of love.

See also. Devotion; Faith; Charity; Obligation.

Place

place; places; proper place; in-being[330]

The word. Place can be spatial location, the position of a part within a whole, or the inward presence an object has in an understanding.

In Traherne. Traherne does not treat these senses as competitors. Goods are most useful in their proper external places, while their known relations give them a place within the soul. III.55 argues that even the sun cannot be valued apart from the eye, sea, fields, and other things it serves.

329 Primary text: I.84, IV.98.
330 Primary text: I.100, II.77, III.55.

Place therefore includes an order of relations rather than bare coordinates.

II.77 rejects the idea that riches are better when accumulated in one small enclosure. Distributed treasures make the enjoyer at home everywhere. I.100 then gives the inward place its purpose: things present in an understanding awaken pleasure, wisdom, love, and praise. Spatial arrangement reaches its end in the living response it makes possible.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.100** The presence of things in an understanding fulfils the purpose of their outward placement. (Edition p. 64.)
- **II.77** Riches dispersed through many places enlarge rather than diminish possession. (Edition p. 109.)
- **III.55** A thing's proper place is understood through its relations and uses. (Edition p. 166.)

In this edition. Proper place can mean fitting relational position, not merely customary location. Objective in-being refers to presence as an object of the soul.

See also. Space; Relation; Presence; Possession; Object.

Platforms

platforms before conceived[331]

The word. Platforms are plans, patterns, or models on which a thing can be formed. The word here has neither the modern digital sense nor its ordinary sense of a raised standing surface.

In Traherne. In Traherne's rendering of Pico, the Creator has completed the ordered world but finds no unused pattern for the new contemplator who is to admire it. The difficulty is dramatized so that humanity's unusual dignity can emerge: instead of receiving only a fixed allotment, man participates in the goods assigned to the several creatures. The architectural language suits the surrounding description of God as supreme architect and the world as house and temple. Understanding platform as model keeps the problem intelligible: this is about the form of a new creature, not finding it somewhere to stand.

331 Primary text: IV.75; historical gloss and translation comparison: 2026 edition note to IV.75.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.75** No preconceived platform remains for the creation of humanity after the other orders are complete. (Edition p. 246.)

In this edition. The 2026 note identifies Pico's corresponding word as patterns or archetypes. The passage is a dramatized account of dignity, not a literal failure of divine planning.

See also. Art and artifice; Creation; Pico della Mirandola; Temple.

Plato

Plato; Platonic testimony; the citadel of reason[332]

The word. Plato is a named philosophical authority in the Centuries. His presence should be located through Traherne's actual citations rather than inferred from every resemblance.

In Traherne. II.84 joins Plato with Cato and the Apostle as witnesses to the divine Mind. Their converging authority supports the claim that human minds should become active likenesses of the eternal understanding. The following Latin verse, however, shortens the opening couplet of the Distichs of Cato; it does not come from a Platonic dialogue.

III.60 attributes a sentence about rest in the highest citadel of reason to Plato. Its role is practical: seeing felicity brings repose and redirects reform toward the perceiver. The 2026 note cautions that the sentence is not a known direct quotation. The entry therefore records Traherne's use of authority without converting an attributed commonplace into a verified verbatim source.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.84** Plato is named with Cato and the Apostle in support of the language of divine Mind. (Edition p. 114.)
- **III.60** A saying attributed to Plato figures the repose reached through rational vision. (Edition p. 169.)

In this edition. The 2026 note at III.60 identifies the Latin sentence as an untraced attribution with a Platonic image. Do not cite it as Plato's verified wording.

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332 Primary text: II.84, III.60. The 2026 editorial notes at II.84 [150–151] distinguish the witnesses and the Cato couplet; III.60 [217] cautions against a direct Platonic attribution.

See also. Reason; Mind; Philosophy; Repose.

Pleasure

pleasure; pleasures; pleasant; delight[333]

The word. Pleasure is enjoyment or a pleasing good. Traherne distinguishes its true and false objects rather than treating the term itself as either virtuous or vicious.

In Traherne. II.100 resists negative accounts of felicity that merely remove riches, honours, and pleasures. Such teaching leaves human powers without objects and makes contentment an unexplained demand. The needed distinction is between clear and pure pleasures and those that are muddy or unwholesome.

Pleasure therefore belongs within the practice of virtue, not solely on the opposite side of restraint. II.99 gathers rival accounts of happiness into a comprehensive life of knowledge, love, contemplation, action, and enjoyment. The poem on David similarly contrasts fading courtly pleasures with delight in heavens, law, and praise. What changes is the scale and truth of the good perceived, not the soul's capacity to find it sweet.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.99** Pleasure is integrated with wisdom, action, rest, and communion in a comprehensive felicity. (Edition p. 125.)
- **II.100** True pleasures must be distinguished from false ones instead of denied altogether. (Edition p. 126.)
- **III.69** David's poetic life relocates pleasure from fading honour to contemplation and praise. (Edition p. 175.)

In this edition. The moral question is regularly which pleasures and by what means. Reading pleasures as automatically sensual or suspect obscures the argument.

See also. Delight; Joy; Passion; Felicity; Virtue.

333 Primary text: II.99, II.100, III.69.

Plutarch

Plutarch; Ignorant Dread[334]

The word. Plutarch is the Greek moralist whom Traherne names as an authority on superstition. The direct citation concerns fearful misconception of divinity rather than the historical biographies for which he is also known.

In Traherne. Traherne's test of religious knowledge is whether divine power and wisdom are understood as serving goodness and love. Plutarch's account of superstition provides a negative counterpart: dread without delighted recognition of goodness is a distorted apprehension of God. The borrowed authority is thus fitted to the meditation's central claim that knowing God is knowing the loveliness of the giver. The text presents this as a definition Plutarch rightly offers, but the supplied edition distinguishes Traherne's added emphasis. Elsewhere the edition identifies Plutarch behind anecdotes of Pyrrhus and Alexander; those source identifications should not be confused with explicit naming by Traherne in those passages.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.17** The named definition of superstition supports the movement from fear toward divine goodness. (Edition p. 11.)
- **I.22** The edition traces the Pyrrhus and Alexander stories to Plutarchan sources. (Edition p. 14.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to I.17 identifies On Superstition and attributes the clause about lacking joy in goodness to Traherne. It is not a verbatim translation of Plutarch's complete definition.

See also. God; Pyrrhus and Cineas; Superstition; Goodness.

Pomegranate

pomegranate; seeds of graces; seeds of glory[335]

The word. The pomegranate is a many-seeded fruit. Traherne makes its crowded interior an image for the virtues potentially contained in the

334 Primary text: I.17, I.22; source and attribution distinctions: 2026 edition notes to I.17 and I.22.

335 Primary text: II.95–96. Supplied 2026 editorial note 160 identifies Ecclesiastes 3:11 and distinguishes the biblical wording behind the image.

world's enjoyment. Seed is therefore a useful subsidiary term: the image concerns a power of growth rather than a mere abundance of separate objects.

In Traherne. II.95 ends the story of Darius and Zopyrus with the king's wish for as many faithful servants as a pomegranate has seeds. II.96 takes the fruit out of that anecdote and turns it into a model of creation received inwardly. The world, sown in the heart, contains the beginnings of grace and glory.

Traherne immediately qualifies the assertion that all virtues lie in the world: he means in its fruition. The virtues do not grow automatically from physical proximity to things. Considered enjoyment awakens a response to the giver. Recognition that one inhabits a dominion bestowed by God should produce fidelity, gratitude, and reluctance to betray the benefactor in the very midst of his gifts.

The image also joins creation to redemption. The world is greater than Babylon, and its restoration has cost more than the injuries of Zopyrus. The fruit's many seeds thus gather ethical consequences within a single enjoyed inheritance. This is an account of moral fertility: rightly receiving the world makes possible a life that bears the character of the love through which it was given.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.95** Darius's wish for many Zopyruses introduces the many-seeded fruit. (Edition p. 122.)
- **II.96** The fruit becomes the world in the heart, whose enjoyed goodness gives rise to fidelity and other virtues. (Edition p. 123.)

In this edition. The 2026 note identifies the allusion to Ecclesiastes 3:11. Scripture supplies the world placed in the heart; the pomegranate and the explanation of its seeds are Traherne's development, not wording quoted from Ecclesiastes.

See also. Fruit; World; Heart; Virtue; Darius and Zopyrus.

Pomp

Pomps; Pomps and Vanities[336]

The word. Pomp is outward splendour, ceremonial display, or worldly magnificence. In Traherne's plural uses it names ostentatious additions that people can mistake for necessary riches.

In Traherne. Pomps belong to the world men have invented through distorted valuation, set against the beautiful world made by God. The Socratic episode similarly separates enjoyment of freely prepared creation from dependency on trivial splendours. The criticism therefore falls on the prestige and supposed necessity of display, not on all magnificence or all visible beauty. Traherne can elsewhere value coronations, palaces, and ceremonial splendour as images or gifts. The local grouping with vanities tells the reader when magnificence has become a distraction from true treasure.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.7** Invented riches, pomps, and vanities characterize the humanly manufactured world. (Edition p. 7.)
- **I.40** The happy person needs no pomps in addition to the given treasures of creation. (Edition p. 24.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to I.7 connects the phrase with the baptismal renunciation in the Prayer Book. That resonance gives moral weight to an apparently decorative noun.

See also. Custom; Magnificence; Ornament; Vanity.

Possession

possession; possessions; possessor; ownership; having as one's own[337]

The word. Possession is having or holding something as one's own. Traherne extends it beyond physical custody and exclusive legal title to knowing, loving, and enjoying what genuinely serves the possessor.

In Traherne. The defining paradox is that every person can be sole heir of the world. I.29 does not resolve this by subtracting the inheritance of other people; their equal inheritance makes one's own greater, because

336 Primary text: I.7, I.40; liturgical resonance: 2026 edition note to I.7.
337 Primary text: I.29, I.38, II.79, IV.39, IV.96.

the fellow enjoyers themselves become treasures. Possession has changed its governing relation. What is owned through love and enjoyment need not be unavailable to anyone else.

This enlarged sense does not simply make outward things imaginary. I.38 insists that they serve best in their proper places. The sun need not be removed from the sky and lodged in a private room to become one's own. The decisive addition is a suitably formed recipient: clear sight, generosity, capacity for delight at a distance, and joy in others' felicity. The possessor's excellence matters more than a nominal title to everything.

II.79 explores two apparently contrary desires. A person wants everything for himself and also wants companions to whom his joys can be told and whose happiness can be shared. Divine giving makes the desires mutually enriching. Others do not merely tolerate one's enjoyment; their responsive lives provide part of its substance. This account depends on goods whose use can be communicated without depletion, and on a spiritual interpretation of relation that should not be mistaken for ordinary rules of acquisition.

The practical consequence is tested in IV.39. The world is possessed as a theatre of virtues because it sustains persons toward whom care, fidelity, prudence, and love can be exercised. To claim universal possession while refusing concern for others would contradict the mode by which possession becomes real. Inward esteem and outward care belong to one account.

Finally, IV.96 explains why celestial riches can initially seem irrelevant. Familiar meditation changes the apprehension: remote things become near and what seemed unconnected with the self appears truly its own. Ownership therefore requires recognition, but recognition is recognition of an offered relation, not permission to seize goods. Traherne's attack on false proprieties opens an ethical and contemplative critique; it is not a detailed replacement for civil property law.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.29** Every person's sole inheritance enlarges rather than diminishes that of every other. (Edition p. 18.)
- **I.38** Things serve best in their proper places; worthy enjoyment requires an excellent recipient. (Edition p. 23.)

- **II.79** Private possession and shared enjoyment are reconciled through the value of companions. (Edition p. 111.)
- **IV.39** The world is possessed as the theatre of care and the exercise of virtues. (Edition p. 221.)
- **IV.96** Meditative familiarity discloses celestial things as genuinely one's own. (Edition p. 261.)

In this edition. Possession here often exceeds legal ownership without simply abolishing it. Propriety retains the older meaning of property or a rightful relation of belonging; its context determines whether the relation is praised or criticized.

See also. Enjoyment; Propriety; Common things; Heir and inheritance; Charity; Esteem.

Poverty

poverty; poor; lack of worldly goods[338]

The word. Poverty is lack of material means, but poor can also describe deficient knowledge or a constricted apprehension of one's true riches.

In Traherne. The sharp claim in IV.36 is that the enjoyer of paradise remains rich even when goods provided by other people disappear. Adam's nakedness tests the standard: if bodily and spiritual endowments and the world are genuine riches, outward additions cannot be the sole basis of wealth. The person who calls Adam poor may be poor in knowledge.

I.98 makes spiritual comfort equally resistant to poverty, sickness, and death through communion with the Father and Son. These are devotional claims about an inheritance that cannot be confiscated, not evidence that bodily loss is unreal. Traherne's language seeks a secure depth of well-being while naming the afflictions against which that security is tested.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.98** The Spirit's comfort supplies an enduring inheritance amid poverty and other afflictions. (Edition p. 63.)

338 Primary text: I.98, IV.36.

- **IV.36** Adam's naked wealth exposes a poverty of knowledge in conventional measures of riches. (Edition p. 219.)

In this edition. The word changes register within IV.36 from material condition to deficient understanding. Keep the distinction rather than translating every poverty into an inner fault.

See also. Nakedness; Riches; Want; Help; Holy Spirit.

Power

power; powers; ability; capacity; power and act[339]

The word. Power means ability or capacity; in the contrast with act it names what can be exercised, as distinguished from its actual exercise.

In Traherne. The distinction enables Traherne to describe both divine fullness and human vocation. III.64 presents God as power wholly and eternally exerted, not a being with unused potential awaiting improvement. The argument joins divine simplicity, love, and immutability.

Human powers, by contrast, need objects and exercise. Their great reach shows what the creator has enabled them to become, while failure to employ them leaves the gift incomplete in practice. IV.98 argues expansively from divine power and love toward the soul's contemplative capacity. This is more than coercive power over other beings: the ability to know, esteem, and love is itself an excellent strength. Power is rightly measured by the good it brings into activity.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.84** Human knowing powers become divine likeness through conversion into act. (Edition p. 114.)
- **III.64** God is described as infinite power wholly and eternally exerted. (Edition p. 171.)
- **IV.98** Divine power grounds the possible greatness of the soul's contemplative ability. (Edition p. 262.)
- **V.4** Almighty power implies a corresponding infinite capacity for its gifts. (Edition p. 267.)

339 Primary text: II.84, III.64, IV.98, V.4.

In this edition. Power and act are technical partners in several passages. Do not read power there only as authority or force, or act only as a single outward deed.

See also. Action and activity; Capacity; Omnipotence; Knowledge; Love.

Praise

praise; praises; praising; returning benefits[340]

The word. Praise acknowledges and celebrates excellence. In Traherne it is the active return of a benefit first understood and enjoyed.

In Traherne. II.94 compares the relation to breathing: the soul cannot breathe out what it has never drawn in. Blindness to benefit therefore closes the lips. Praise is neither empty repetition nor a payment unrelated to the gift; it transforms what is received into knowledge, affection, and expression directed toward the giver. The world is its temple, altar, fuel, and material.

III.82 explains why this response can matter to divine love. Acknowledgment shows that the gift and giver have been prized, and the recipient's joy becomes delightful to its source. Others' praises likewise become one's own joy through love of their giver. Praise is consequently a shared circulation of recognized goodness rather than isolated verbal performance.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.94** Benefits become praises through apprehension, and the world supplies their substance and occasion. (Edition p. 121.)
- **III.81** Other people's praise is enjoyed as a service to the God the observer loves. (Edition p. 184.)
- **III.82** Praise joins knowledge, complacency, thanksgiving, and interior love. (Edition p. 186.)

In this edition. Praises can include inward acknowledgment and delighted esteem as well as spoken or sung words. The surrounding language repeatedly makes apprehension prior to utterance.

See also. Thanksgiving; Gratitude; Love; World; Music.

340 Primary text: II.94, III.81, III.82.

Prayer

prayer; prayers; petition; speaking to God[341]

The word. Prayer is address to God, including petition, confession, praise, and desire for a transformed life. Many meditations enact it without naming it.

In Traherne. The turn from explaining a truth to asking to live it marks an important movement of the Centuries. I.78 asks that remembered glory deepen humility and penitence rather than encourage self-exaltation. The soul needs help to inhabit what it has learned to recognize.

Prayer also belongs to a larger company. Revelation's images in II.74 make the prayers of saints part of heavenly worship, while II.92 asks that every prayer be animated by awareness of the soul's greatness. The speaker does not have to choose between bold inheritance and dependence. The more fully the gift is seen, the more searchingly the recipient can ask for the life adequate to it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.78** Petition seeks humility, penitence, and renewed sight within the memory of original glory. (Edition p. 49.)
- **II.74** The prayers of saints appear within Revelation's heavenly praise. (Edition p. 107.)
- **II.92** Prayer is to be animated by the soul's understood greatness and capacity. (Edition p. 120.)

In this edition. First-person prayers are enacted devotional speech, not merely biographical reports of completed attainment. Their petitions often disclose a gap between seeing and doing.

See also. Devotion; Praise; Repentance; Holy Spirit; Humility.

341 Primary text: I.78, II.74, II.92.

Precedent

admirable precedent[342]

The word. Precedent means an example or pattern available for imitation. The emphasis here is exemplary conduct, rather than a binding legal ruling or merely something that happened earlier.

In Traherne. After considering David's inward life of contemplation, Traherne turns to his outward dealings with others. David supplies a pattern in public praise, courageous testimony, fidelity to costly promises, care for enemies, and mercy toward the poor. The catalogue shows that a heavenly interior life must produce visible acts of gratitude and friendship toward God. Calling the psalmist a precedent makes his life available for present practice: readers are to perform analogous effects of love within their own power, rather than admire an exceptional figure at a safe historical distance.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.93** David is an admirable precedent in outward conduct toward other people. (Edition p. 193.)

In this edition. The 2026 note glosses example or pattern and identifies scriptural foundations for the catalogue. Traherne's single word does not make every action in David's biography an example to follow.

See also. David; Example; Faith; Tendering.

Presence

presence; present; inward nearness[343]

The word. Presence is being with or before something. Traherne distinguishes bodily proximity from the presence of understanding, memory, and love.

In Traherne. The soul's sight is its presence. I.55 uses this claim to bring Eden, the flood, the Exodus, and the Cross into a life no longer confined to its present age. To understand and love a historical object is a real mode of being with it, although not a relocation of the body.

342 Primary text: III.93; historical gloss and scriptural identifications: 2026 edition note to III.93.

343 Primary text: I.55, III.23, I.32.

The same distinction answers loneliness in III.23. Distant cities, friends, and kingdoms sustain the person through their intelligible reality and the providence that connects them. Conversely, the mere external presence of riches cannot make an ungrateful person happy. Presence adequate to felicity requires that what exists become inwardly apprehended, esteemed, and loved.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.55** The understanding's sight makes distant ages spiritually present. (Edition p. 33.)
- **III.23** Goods absent to the eye remain present as assurance and consolation. (Edition p. 144.)
- **I.32** Riches can be outwardly present yet unavailable to the person who despises them. (Edition p. 19.)

In this edition. Real presence of understanding does not claim bodily time travel. The text explicitly differentiates the mode by which the soul is with its objects.

See also. Omnipresence; Memory; Time; Object; Enjoyment.

Preservation

preservation; continued blessings; uphold; conservation[344]

The word. Preservation is the sustaining of something already given or made. Traherne's theological starting point treats every moment of continued existence as a renewed gift. Conservation is a useful historical synonym, though it is not the word used in the meditation.

In Traherne. II.91 applies a theological maxim to the life of thought. Because preservation may be understood as creation continued, a blessing's duration increases the recipient's obligation rather than diminishing its worth. Familiarity ought not to make what remains available seem less gratuitous or less precious.

Traherne then makes sustained inward attention the human counterpart of this divine continuance. The soul constructs an inward apprehension of heaven and earth for God; each faithful continuation of that apprehension has worth, not only the original moment of discovery.

344 Primary text: II.91. Supplied 2026 editorial note 156 explains the theological maxim of conservation as continued creation.

A sudden imaginative achievement can be easy for a wise person, whereas maintaining it calls for diligence and love. The ability to demolish or rebuild one's inward world does not excuse instability.

Preservation therefore corrects a possible enthusiasm for novelty. The first vision of beauty is not the only spiritually important moment. Repairing attention, restoring a weakened apprehension, and continuing to esteem what one already knows are themselves acts of fidelity. The analogy does not claim that human thought keeps the physical universe in existence. Its object is the world's living presence in the soul and the soul's continuing offering of that presence to God.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.91** Moves from each moment's divine preservation to the faithful maintenance and repair of the world apprehended within the soul. (Edition p. 119.)

In this edition. The 2026 note identifies the maxim as conservation understood as continued creation. Keep the two levels distinct: God sustains created being; the meditator sustains an inward, appreciative apprehension of creation.

See also. Creation; Providence; Diligence; Thought; Fidelity.

Preternatural

preternatural[345]

The word. Preternatural means outside or beyond nature's proper course. In this passage it describes acquired ways of valuing things that the untrained child does not spontaneously recognize.

In Traherne. Gold, ribbons, feathers, and glittering toys require explanation before they can seem precious. Traherne presents his early resistance to that lesson as evidence of nature's sound judgment. Natural riches are souls, bodies, faculties, and the world prepared for their enjoyment. The opposed riches depend upon human invention and erroneous esteem. Preternatural thus marks a distortion in education and valuation, rather than an uncanny event. His attack reaches the claim that houses and land are naturally riches in their conventional proprietary

345 Primary text: III.9.

sense; it does not deny that the created world itself is beautiful and valuable.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.9** The child resists imposed valuations, and natural endowments are distinguished from invented riches. (Edition p. 135.)

In this edition. The sentence about calling preternatural things natural is syntactically abrupt. Its condemnation continues the contrast between nature's riches and invented wealth.

See also. Nature; Custom; Riches; Education.

Prevent

prevent; prevented; preventedst[346]

The word. To prevent often means to go before, anticipate, or provide in advance. The modern sense of stopping something from happening cannot simply replace it in these devotional and philosophical contexts.

In Traherne. God prevents the speaker with gifts already bestowed before they are noticed, and prevents the desire for a heavenly book by providing Scripture before the speaker's birth. Eternity also lets understanding prevent bodily movement by reaching destinations in thought before the traveller arrives. In the account of pure divine activity, power is prevented with act: no unrealized potential waits to become effective. These uses make priority an expression of generosity or plenitude, rather than frustration. The verb can still shade toward forestalling danger, so it needs local attention.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.66** Divine blessings arrive before grateful recognition. (Edition p. 41.)
- **III.27** The desired book is provided before the desire arises. (Edition p. 148.)
- **V.8** Understanding goes ahead of bodily travel. (Edition p. 270.)

346 Primary text: I.66, III.27, V.8, II.84; historical gloss: 2026 edition notes to I.66, III.27, V.8.

In this edition. The 2026 notes to these passages explain the older sense. The praise at I.66 does not thank God for obstructing His own blessings.

See also. Bounty; Gift; Providence; Time.

Pride

pride; vainglory; self-exalting error[347]

The word. Pride is a disordered elevation of the self, particularly through false estimates of status and worth. It must be distinguished from recognizing a bestowed dignity.

In Traherne. Traherne's immense claims for the soul can appear proud if detached from their source and purpose. Yet the prayer at the Cross asks for the sun of pride and vainglory to be darkened before Christ's love. True greatness is received and answered through love, not secured by the eclipse of other people.

The social diagnosis in IV.24 places pride among the vices that fill the world with conflict and desolation. Universal charity would remove the destructive relation while allowing useful trades, cities, and splendours to remain. The target is not every form of eminence or human achievement, but the possessive self-valuation that converts difference into rivalry and injury.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.33** Pride participates in the social disorder produced by false riches. (Edition p. 20.)
- **I.88** The speaker asks that Christ's Passion overcome pride and vainglory. (Edition p. 55.)
- **IV.24** Pride disorders the world, while charity would preserve innocent useful arts and splendours. (Edition p. 214.)

In this edition. Do not equate every statement of human greatness with pride. The text distinguishes the dignity of a gift from the vanity that misuses it.

See also. Humility; Dignity; Vanity; Charity; Honour.

347 Primary text: I.33, I.88, IV.24.

Principle

principle; principles; governing conviction; original disposition[348]

The word. A principle is a beginning, foundation, or rule of action. Traherne uses the word both for bestowed dispositions and for convictions deliberately taken into practice.

In Traherne. The fourth Century rejects principles left buried in books. They must be brought into the understanding, then continually revived by exercise. Speaking rightly and acting rightly are not interchangeable, and living beside one's principles is as miserable as having none.

IV.49 calls self-love and gratitude infused principles through which immense ends become possible. The word here describes an operative source rather than a sentence learned by rote. Yet the account of the friend repeatedly distinguishes principles from achieved practice. IV.30 explicitly admits shortfall and repentance. Readers should therefore use the fourth Century as an exposition of commitments and methods, without converting every statement into evidence of flawless personal attainment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.2** Principles must pass from books into understanding and sustained exercise. (Edition p. 199.)
- **IV.30** The friend's glorious principles are distinguished from imperfect practice. (Edition p. 217.)
- **IV.49** Self-love and gratitude are principles through which the creature becomes capable of expansive enjoyment. (Edition p. 227.)

In this edition. The difference between native principle and formulated rule is contextual. IV.30 expressly limits what the account claims about actual practice.

See also. Habit; Nature; Work; Reason; Self-love.

348 Primary text: IV.2, IV.30, IV.49.

Profit

profit; profitable; profitableness; benefit; useful service[349]

The word. Profit means benefit, advantage, or useful effect. Financial gain is only one possible sense and is often inadequate to the passages in which the word occurs.

In Traherne. The world's profitableness appears in breathing, nourishment, fertility, delight, and the recognition of divine love. Its parts are useful through relations that sustain and enrich life. III.21 contrasts this ordered usefulness with a single infinite material body, whose bulk would exclude every other thing and defeat enjoyment.

Love is profitable in a still wider way. It lets the soul receive goods beyond the body's limited pleasures and inclines it to do good to many others. Profit therefore need not imply competition between recipient and beneficiary. The higher advantage is often the power to give, understand, or share, and a gain that excludes those relations may count as remarkably poor.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.21** Natural services disclose goodness through their benefit to life, sense, and love. (Edition p. 77.)
- **II.51** Love profits the lover through receiving and others through communicated good. (Edition p. 96.)
- **III.21** Finite bodies become infinite in profit and delight through their fitted relations. (Edition p. 143.)

In this edition. Translate profitable mentally as beneficial where money is not at issue. In III.21 infinity of profit is expressly distinguished from infinity of bulk.

See also. Use; Benefit; Love; Relation.

349 Primary text: II.21, II.51, III.21.

Propriety

propriety; proprieties; property; rightful belonging[350]

The word. Propriety here usually means property, ownership, or a relation by which something is properly one's own. It does not primarily mean polite or socially correct behaviour.

In Traherne. The term is not uniformly condemned. False or churlish proprieties express an exclusive division that limits enjoyment, but III.39 asks whether all things are truly one's own in propriety. The question of rightful belonging is retained while the criterion expands.

II.79 openly includes love of propriety among human inclinations. Its apparent conflict with communicative joy is answered by a world given wholly to each and shared with all. IV.96 then says that familiar meditation makes celestial things appear one's own by the strictest rules of propriety. Traherne challenges narrow assumptions about what can belong to a person rather than abandoning every language of title.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.3** Churlish proprieties and divisions are absent from the child's original enjoyment. (Edition p. 129.)
- **III.39** The inquiry asks whether the world is genuinely one's own in propriety. (Edition p. 155.)
- **II.79** The desire for propriety is reconciled with the desire for companions. (Edition p. 111.)
- **IV.96** Celestial goods become recognizable as one's own under strict rules of belonging. (Edition p. 261.)

In this edition. The older property sense is essential. Importing modern decorum into the love of propriety in II.79 would make its contrast with communication unintelligible.

See also. Possession; Common things; Invention.

350 Primary text: III.3, III.39, II.79, IV.96.

Prospect

prospect; prospects[351]

The word. Prospect means a view or the scene presented to sight, including inward or imaginative sight. It is not limited to the probability of some future event.

In Traherne. Traherne moves easily from landscapes to the prospect of all nations praising God. The latter exceeds fields and starry heavens in sweetness because willing persons add a responsive life to the spectacle. At the Cross a prospect becomes a position from which heaven and earth can be understood together. The word thus carries both what is seen and an implied way of seeing it. Its uses help track the book's enlargement of vision from pleasant scenery into a world of relations, persons, and divine action.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.8** The sun's illumination entertains its recipient with prospects. (Edition p. 70.)
- **III.87** The view of nations praising surpasses silent natural beauty. (Edition p. 189.)
- **I.61** The Cross supplies a prospect from which to behold heaven and earth. (Edition p. 37.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to III.87 glosses prospect as view. Reading the nations' praise only as a future possibility loses the meditation's present imaginative sight.

See also. Beholding; Entertainment; Sight; Spectacle.

Providence

providence; divine care; government; watchfulness[352]

The word. Providence is divine care and ordering of creatures and events toward their ends. Its concern is wider than occasional fortunate intervention.

In Traherne. Traherne imagines communion with providence throughout the world. Distant houses, peoples, and kingdoms matter

351 Primary text: II.8, III.87, I.61; historical gloss: 2026 edition note to III.87.
352 Primary text: III.5, III.23, V.10.

because divine care sustains goods beyond immediate sight; confidence is enlarged by knowing that one's local horizon is not the boundary of goodness.

The closing meditation joins care and providence to knowledge, love, and felicity within a single active divine life. God is present in operations continually directed toward completing blessedness. This is an account of comprehensive government, not a catalogue proving that each apparent advantage is a special sign. III.5 also prevents trust from becoming the whole of spiritual childhood: clear thought and freedom from corrupt custom are required alongside reliance on providence.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.5** Childlike life requires purity of apprehension as well as reliance on providence. (Edition p. 132.)
- **III.23** Providential care makes unseen places and relations sources of assurance. (Edition p. 144.)
- **V.10** Divine presence is expressed through operations of care that complete the creature's bliss. (Edition p. 272.)

In this edition. Careless reliance in III.5 means untroubled trust in context; it is not sufficient by itself for the recovered childhood the passage requires.

See also. Care; Order; God; Trust; Presence.

Prudence

prudence; wise practical care[353]

The word. Prudence is discerning conduct: judging how to act well in particular circumstances. Its older moral force is richer than mere caution or avoidance of risk.

In Traherne. At the Cross prudence belongs with courage and zeal among the virtues to be learned. Its standard is loving imitation, not simply protection of the self from disadvantage. The combination allows energetic action to be guided rather than merely restrained.

IV.39 provides its field. The world sustains persons toward whom fidelity, wisdom, courage, and prudence can be exercised. Those who

353 Primary text: I.61, IV.39.

receive care are thereby the giver's true treasures. Practical judgment is part of possession understood as responsible participation: one does not adequately enjoy other people without learning how to be wisely employed for their good.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.61** Prudence is learned with courageous and active virtues through contemplation of Christ. (Edition p. 37.)
- **IV.39** Prudence is exercised among the persons whose care makes them treasures. (Edition p. 221.)

In this edition. Prudence need not imply a timid or self-protective policy. Both occurrences associate it with courage and the good of other people.

See also. Wisdom; Virtue; Care; Reason.

Punishment

punishment; punishments; punishing; divine wrath[354]

The word. Punishment is suffering or loss consequent upon wrongdoing. In the redemption argument it raises questions about voluntary substitution, adequate power, and justice.

In Traherne. II.32 tests familiar claims about what a redeemer must be able to suffer. Traherne provisionally asks whether a created angel, sustained by divine power, might bear immense punishment. The hypothetical possibilities do not announce an angelic redemption; they require a deeper explanation of Christ's unique office.

The following argument identifies voluntary consent, divine appointment, the dignity of humanity, and Christ's own fullness. II.36 emphasizes that Christ can endure and offer his suffering through his own power and infinite love. Punishment is therefore considered within an account of agency and willing obedience, not merely as a quantity of pain whose magnitude alone settles the theology.

354 Primary text: II.32, II.33, II.36.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.32** Hypothetical angelic suffering tests whether endurance of punishment sufficiently explains the redeemer's identity. (Edition p. 86.)
- **II.33** Consent, ability, and benefit answer the charge of unjustly imposed substitution. (Edition p. 86.)
- **II.36** Christ's own power and love uniquely sustain and offer the redemptive suffering. (Edition p. 89.)

In this edition. Retain the provisional perhaps of II.32 and read through II.36. Isolating the thought experiment would misrepresent the conclusion of the sequence.

See also. Justice; Redemption; Christ; Obedience; Pain.

Purity

purity; pure; unmixed; clear apprehension[355]

The word. Purity is freedom from corrupting mixture or defilement. The childhood argument gives it a specifically perceptual and formative meaning.

In Traherne. III.5 says that purity reaches deeper than mild anger, simple passions, or easy trust. False colours and evil habits must be removed so that the soul can see what stands before it. Grit and jaundice figure the distortions through which real objects acquire a misleading appearance.

The desired result is not an empty or disengaged mind. It is a recovered field of God's works, light, parental love, human beings, and the heavens. Purification removes acquired obstructions so that native powers can enjoy their proper objects. Moral and perceptual restoration thus belong together, without reducing purity to sexual abstinence or ceremonial cleanliness.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.5** The analogy of false colour, grit, and jaundice makes purity a condition of truthful enjoyment. (Edition p. 132.)

355 Primary text: III.5, III.2.

- **III.2** The child's pure world exemplifies an apprehension not yet burdened by learned divisions. (Edition p. 128.)

In this edition. Purity in III.5 is explicitly defined through thought, habit, and perception. A narrower modern moral association would obscure its stated scope.

See also. Innocence; Custom; Sight; Education; Holiness.

Pyrrhus and Cineas

Pyrrhus; King of Epire; Cineas[356]

The word. Pyrrhus is the conquering king in the anecdote, and Cineas the philosophical counsellor who questions his purpose. Epire is Traherne's form of Epirus; the story concerns the pursuit of rest through endless acquisition.

In Traherne. Asked what each conquest will achieve, the king promises another, until universal success should allow him and his friends to live quietly at home. Cineas points out that the desired quiet is available already. Traherne then transfers the pattern to income, land, and ordinary acquisitiveness. The anecdote is not a rejection of every large desire, however: the same meditation calls the soul's insatiability noble and measures whole worlds as inadequate to it. Its mistake is postponing enjoyment until competitive acquisition has supplied what no finite conquest can provide. The reader is therefore invited to redirect greatness of desire as well as expose its futile itinerary.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.22** The repeated questioning of conquest supplies an analogy for indefinitely multiplying wealth. (Edition p. 14.)

In this edition. The 2026 note identifies Plutarch's Life of Pyrrhus 14 and explains that Traherne's European conquests differ from the ancient narrative. Preserve that distinction instead of correcting his anecdote silently.

See also. Alexander the Great; Ambition; Desire; Plutarch.

356 Primary text: I.22; historical identification and source comparison: 2026 edition note to I.22.

Quick and quicken

quick; quicken; quickened; quickening[357]

The word. Quick can mean alive, keenly sensitive, or responsive; to quicken is to give life, revive, or stir into active exercise. Mere speed does not capture these senses.

In Traherne. The prayer for quickening asks that inert spiritual powers become alive to divine love and glory. Christ and the Holy Spirit are addressed as sources of this animation. The word can also describe curiosity awakened by new experience or affection strengthened into action. When Love is quick and tender, the stress falls on sensitivity throughout its reach, as the spider feels at its extremities. The cluster therefore links spiritual life with actual responsiveness: possessing a faculty is insufficient if it remains numb or idle.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.93** The speaker asks Christ to quicken faculties described as spiritually dead. (Edition p. 59.)
- **I.95** The Holy Spirit is invoked to quicken, illuminate, and awaken. (Edition p. 61.)
- **IV.80** Love is quick and tender throughout its extended presence. (Edition p. 249.)

In this edition. Separate these uses from ordinary "quickly" and the compound "quicksands." Shared spelling does not make every occurrence an example of the spiritual life-giving sense.

See also. Awakening; Divaricated; Holy Spirit; Life.

Quintessence

quintessence[358]

The word. Quintessence is the purest or most concentrated essence. The supplied note traces the word to the fifth essence beyond the four elements and to the alchemist's ideal extract.

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357 Primary text: I.93, I.95, IV.80; compare III.22 and IV.68.

358 Primary text: II.59. Supplied 2026 editorial note 132 at II.59 supplies the fifth-essence and alchemical background.

In Traherne. The beloved receives another soul's most excellent life in the act of being loved. Traherne surrounds quintessence with images of cream, flower, glory, and readiness: love contains the best of a person together with the willingness to help. Material riches ordinarily promise affection, honour, and security; actual love gives those ends immediately. The word's concentrated richness consequently serves an argument against mistaking means for ends. Presence and affection delight a loving person more than crowns could please an alienated one. This is a description of personal relationship, not an instruction in extracting a substance.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.59** Being loved gives the soul's quintessence directly and achieves the end for which riches are sought. (Edition p. 100.)

In this edition. The historical cosmological and alchemical senses illuminate the metaphor; the meditation itself develops its meaning through love.

See also. Essence; Alchemy and philosopher's stone; Love; End and means.

Rapine

rapine[359]

The word. Rapine is violent plunder, forcible seizure, or predatory taking. The older noun names a concrete social wrong rather than desire for possessions in the abstract.

In Traherne. Traherne's opening promise opposes the gentle advancement of the reader to the glory claimed through war and dethronement. Rapine disappears from the paths he offers, along with bloodshed and malice. In the Fourth Century it belongs to the vices that have disfigured a world originally ordered toward peace and beauty. The word therefore helps locate suffering in human action rather than in the gifts of creation themselves. Its violence also qualifies any reading of the book's universal possession as permission to seize what others hold: true enjoyment should abolish predation, not perfect it.

359 Primary text: I.4, IV.24.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.4** The promised path to glory removes rapine and bloodshed. (Edition p. 5.)
- **IV.24** Rapine is among the vices that fill the world with desolation and conflict. (Edition p. 214.)

In this edition. Keep its forceful sense distinct from generic greed. The initial contrast with conquest makes a merely financial or abstract gloss too weak.

See also. Cozenage; Justice; Possession; War.

Reason

reason; reasoning; highest reason; right reason; rational knowledge[360]

The word. Reason is the power and activity of discerning grounds, relations, and consequences. A reason can also be the particular cause or justification discovered through that activity.

In Traherne. Traherne's celebration of childhood intuition does not establish a hostility to reason. III.2 expressly says that what was first known intuitively was later collected again through the highest reason. The recovered knowledge is not worthless because it arrives by a slower path. Reason supplies an adult way of understanding and maintaining the goods first disclosed without deliberate argument.

The inquiry is directed toward happiness but must be adequate to the things investigated. III.44 extends natural philosophy into the study of natures, their causes, qualities, relations, and ends as far as nature and reason can know them. Even its narrower study of bodies has value because it prepares the enjoyer's eyes. Rational discrimination reveals why things are good together, rather than merely substituting abstract terms for experience.

IV.8 insists that reason govern practice. The philosopher orders desire, rules passion, and refuses unexamined obedience to custom. This government does not require suppressing every pleasure. The superior end must be seen in its attractiveness and then lived toward through discouragement and difficulty. The reasons supplied by Christian

360 Primary text: III.2, III.44, IV.8, IV.9, IV.81.

revelation, God's existence, heaven, and Christ's redeeming love, join the perceived excellence of virtue and felicity as motives.

Reason also criticizes the postponement of happiness. IV.9 asks what justification could make it desirable only at the end of life when God offers communion now. The challenge turns an apparently pious delay into a question about what the professed desire actually means. Discernment has force because it exposes inconsistencies in conduct as well as defects in propositions.

Finally, IV.81 makes an ambitious claim for right reason in the exploration of heavenly mysteries and the soul's powers. This confidence should not be turned into a settled theory of reason independent of every other source. The Centuries reason through Scripture, memory, observation, received philosophy, prayer, and the experienced attraction of good. Their distinctive rationality lies in bringing these materials into mutually illuminating relations and testing what follows for a human life. Reason is one of the means by which bestowed capacity becomes active enjoyment, and enjoyment becomes intelligent rather than accidental.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.2** The highest reason recovers truths once immediately known in childhood. (Edition p. 128.)
- **III.44** Reason investigates natures and relations, preparing the eyes for enjoyment. (Edition p. 159.)
- **IV.8** Living by reason means governing passions and conduct toward an understood end. (Edition p. 203.)
- **IV.9** Rational scrutiny challenges the supposed justification for postponing felicity. (Edition p. 204.)
- **IV.81** Right reason is credited with discerning heavenly mysteries and the soul's astonishing capacity. (Edition p. 250.)

In this edition. Distinguish the faculty from particular reasons offered in an argument. The highest reason is compatible with the book's use of revelation and remembered intuition, rather than a term for their automatic exclusion.

See also. Knowledge; Philosophy; Understanding; Innocence; Principle; Passion.

Recreation

recreation; recreations — refreshing or pleasurable occupation[361]

The word. Recreation is an activity that refreshes or delights. Its presence here matters because Traherne does not condemn every occupation associated with the fallen social world.

In Traherne. In his account of the friend's principles, Traherne imagines what ordinary life would become if universal charity displaced the sins that disfigure it. The stars, sun, and sea already retain their created beauty; rapacity and envy, rather than their material fabric, produce human misery. Trades would remain, but would become innocent recreations and pleasant ornaments. Work is therefore capable of transformation through its governing affections.

The passage qualifies the much harsher treatment of shops, markets, and diversions in the autobiographical account. An occupation's capacity to please does not condemn it; the question is whether it serves mutual happiness or distracts people from their true inheritance. Recreation is a result of rightly ordered society, not a substitute for the study of felicity.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.24** Trades become innocent recreations in a society animated by universal charity. (Edition p. 214.)
- **III.14** The earlier account of sport and markets supplies the contrasting picture of diversion without lasting enjoyment. (Edition p. 138.)

In this edition. Innocent does substantive work in the phrase "innocent recreations": the passage envisages occupations freed from vice. Do not turn it into a blanket endorsement of every amusement.

See also. Trade; Charity; Pleasure; Work.

361 Primary text: IV.24, III.14. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Redemption

redemption; redeem; redeemed; Redeemer — deliverance and restoration through Christ[362]

The word. Redemption carries the language of release at a cost. In Christian use it names Christ's saving work, but its force depends also on the freedom and life into which one is brought.

In Traherne. Traherne repeatedly asks the reader to look beyond rescue to its end. Redemption restores access to the glory for which human beings were made: communion with God in the enjoyment of his gifts. A person who does not understand the lost inheritance cannot adequately estimate the Redeemer's love. Creation and redemption consequently illuminate one another rather than competing for the reader's attention.

This expansive account does not make the Cross dispensable. The dignity of the human creature makes its ruin grave, and created righteousness cannot repair it. Christ's unique person and self-offering answer that need. Traherne's prayers therefore join intellectual awakening to cleansing, justification, and the conforming of the human will to Christ. Enjoyment names the fulfilled life of the redeemed, not a technique that replaces redemption.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.5** The end of redemption is communion with God in his glory. (Edition p. 6.)
- **II.5** Knowledge of the lost estate enables the Redeemer's work to be valued. (Edition p. 68.)
- **II.35** Human dignity explains why an angelic redeemer or merely created righteousness would be inadequate. (Edition p. 88.)
- **I.93** Prayer connects redemption to illumination, cleansing, and conformity of will. (Edition p. 59.)

In this edition. The commercial language of ransom and debt belongs to the primary argument. It should not make every occurrence of treasure or purchase a narrowly financial metaphor.

See also. Christ; Cross; Salvation; Innocence; Righteousness.

362 Primary text: I.5, II.5, II.35, I.93. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Reflection

reflection; reflected or returning beams — reconsideration and the return of light[363]

The word. Reflection can name thought turned back upon an experience, or light returned from a surface. Traherne uses both senses, without making them interchangeable.

In Traherne. The autobiographical narrative distinguishes childhood experience from its mature interpretation. The lesson of the populated dining room is identified as a reflection made long afterward: the child's delight precedes the account of why persons and affection are indispensable. Such retrospective reasoning is part of the recovery of innocence.

In the optical register, benefits return as praise, and the soul resembles a mirror receiving and returning divine light. Yet the mirror is not an exhaustive account of agency. Traherne explicitly insists that the soul can originate its own acts of love, including irregular ones. Reflection thus supplies a powerful image of reception and response, while the later argument prevents that image from reducing a person to a passive surface.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.22** A later reflection interprets the childhood experience of an empty and then animated room. (Edition p. 144.)
- **II.94** Praises return received benefits as reflected beams. (Edition p. 121.)
- **IV.84** The mirror models the soul's reception and return of love. (Edition p. 252.)
- **IV.85** The soul is declared a real fountain, more than a mirror. (Edition p. 253.)

In this edition. Keep the qualification that the reflection came long afterward: the mature explanatory account is not presented as the child's fully articulated thought.

See also. Mirror; Thought; Memory; Return; Soul.

363 Primary text: III.22, II.94, IV.84, IV.85. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Relation

relation; relations; relate — connection, bearing, or personal relationship[364]

The word. Relation is a thing's connection with something else, and can also mean a human relationship. In a philosophical setting it concerns how things stand toward one another.

In Traherne. A creature becomes intelligible as treasure through its relations. The sun's excellence is disclosed by what it does for eyes, fields, seas, and other creatures; an isolated account of its material constitution would miss its value. Knowledge must therefore move outward from the thing to the whole order in which it serves and is enjoyed.

The personal sense remains active. Christ has relations and acquaintances, and the reader must learn a pattern of love exceeding merely familiar ties. Traherne does not abolish particular relationships, but refuses to let them define the outer boundary of concern. The movement from private relation to universal communion follows the same logic as the movement from an isolated object to its place among God's gifts.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.44** The enlarged study of nature includes relations, causes, and ends. (Edition p. 159.)
- **III.55** The sun and a piece of gold acquire intelligible value through their relations. (Edition p. 166.)
- **I.60** Christ's ordinary relations are placed within his comprehensive love. (Edition p. 37.)
- **III.97** Being God's children includes likeness and shared glory beyond the bare relation of children. (Edition p. 195.)

In this edition. Relations in I.60 and I.94 can mean relatives or familiar associates. It should not automatically be read as the abstract philosophical term used in III.44.

See also. Order; Use; Value; Person; Communion.

364 Primary text: III.44, III.55, I.60, III.97, I.94. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Religion

religion; true religion — knowledge and worship of God expressed in life[365]

The word. Religion includes belief, worship, and the ordering of life toward God. Traherne frequently couples its truth with its beauty, so that assent alone does not exhaust the term.

In Traherne. The world can confirm religion because its gifts exhibit the character of the giver. To discover that heaven and earth are one's inheritance makes the greater Christian gift of the Son intelligible as the action of the same generous God. The argument proceeds through experienced bounty, not through a promise of private material success.

Traherne also resists a merely external proof of religion. Language, miracles, and apparitions cannot replace insight into the truth and excellence of the things proclaimed. Natural philosophy and ethics prepare such insight by displaying the world and teaching the conduct appropriate to it. Religion becomes certain and fruitful as its objects are understood, loved, and lived with.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.6** The gift of the world supports faith in the gift of the Son. (Edition p. 68.)
- **II.17** The world is a mirror of religion and an occasion of conversion. (Edition p. 74.)
- **III.45** The truth of things is necessary for a clear apprehension of true religion. (Edition p. 160.)
- **III.99** Recognized communion produces courage, fidelity, and praise. (Edition p. 196.)

In this edition. True religion here is Traherne's Christian claim. The word should not be silently broadened into a comparative category in which all religious traditions are being treated alike.

See also. Christian; Faith; Truth; Knowledge; Worship.

365 Primary text: II.6, II.17, III.45, III.99. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Remembrance

remembrance; remember — keeping or bringing a benefit before the mind[366]

The word. Remembrance is active mental presence: a past gift or an absent good is recalled so that it can affect present understanding and conduct.

In Traherne. Traherne's memory is not confined to the recovery of his own childhood. The reader is asked to remember the dignity of creation and the estate from which humanity has fallen. Such remembrance makes repentance more exact, because it measures failure against an originally glorious calling rather than against mere social disapproval.

It is also a defence against a misleading present impression. In the lonely field, the visible scene seems empty and threatening; remembered joys, friendship, cities, and providential care restore the invisible connections that the eye has lost. Remembrance supplies neither fantasy nor denial of solitude. It corrects the narrowness of the moment by keeping real but absent goods available to the understanding.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.78** Remembrance of created glory deepens penitence and humility. (Edition p. 49.)
- **II.5** Remembering the lost estate teaches the value of redemption. (Edition p. 68.)
- **III.23** The remembered joys of life counter the apparent emptiness of a lonely landscape. (Edition p. 144.)

In this edition. The headword denotes an act, while Memory elsewhere names a power or repository. "Recollection" is a useful modern equivalent here, not a separate technical term attributed to Traherne.

See also. Memory; Repentance; Presence; Innocence; Providence.

366 Primary text: I.78, II.5, III.23. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Repentance

repentance; repent; penitence; contrition — turning from sin with sorrow for it[367]

The word. Repentance joins an altered direction of life to the acknowledgment of wrong. Contrition emphasizes the broken or wounded heart within that turning.

In Traherne. The recovery of felicity includes penitence rather than dispensing with it. To remember original dignity is to discover both what has been lost and how grievously love has been offended. Repentance is thus sharpened by the knowledge of goodness; it is not generated only by terror.

In the reading of the Psalms, a contrite heart becomes a sacrifice more precious than material offerings. Its groan expresses a returning friend's grief, and prepares the person for praise. The sequence gives sorrow a relational purpose: the heart turns back toward the one it has injured. Elsewhere the fruits of repentance belong among the virtues that the world provides opportunities to practise, so inward sorrow must issue in a changed life.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.5** The command to remember and repent is applied to humanity's lost inheritance. (Edition p. 68.)
- **III.43** Faith and repentance are named as conditions of the covenant of grace. (Edition p. 158.)
- **III.83** Contrition is interpreted as a returning lover's sacrifice. (Edition p. 187.)
- **IV.39** The world offers occasions for the fruits of repentance. (Edition p. 221.)

In this edition. Penitent, contrite, and repentant overlap without being identical. Preserve the passage's emphasis on sorrow, return, or resulting conduct instead of treating all three as a single emotional state.

See also. Sin; Remembrance; Sacrifice; Forgiveness; Conversion.

367 Primary text: II.5, III.43, III.83, IV.39. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Repose

repose; rest; resting — settled ease or undisturbed enjoyment[368]

The word. Repose is rest from agitation or disturbance. It can describe bodily refreshment, the security of friendship, or the settled satisfaction of a mind rightly placed.

In Traherne. Traherne promises to guide his friend by ease and repose rather than the violence associated with worldly advancement. This is a claim about the character of divine generosity and teaching, not permission for an inactive soul. Repose becomes possible when the objects of desire are rightly understood and enjoyed.

The term also retains its ordinary bodily setting: night makes the sweetness of rest possible, which an unvarying noon would destroy. At another level, the discovery that created things stand well in their places seats the mind in rest and redirects its effort toward its own amendment. Repose therefore coexists with disciplined thought, charity, and praise. It is freedom from restless misvaluation rather than cessation of every act.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.4** The promised instruction follows gentle paths of ease and repose. (Edition p. 5.)
- **II.9** Night and day permit the sweetness of bodily rest. (Edition p. 70.)
- **III.60** Right apprehension of the world produces repose while requiring self-amendment. (Edition p. 169.)
- **V.9** Divine omnipresence is figured as a castle of repose. (Edition p. 271.)

In this edition. Rest should not automatically be rendered as sleep: the central contemplative uses describe lucid enjoyment. The Latin saying in III.60 is presented with Traherne's attribution to Plato, not independently authenticated here.

See also. Contentment; Peace; Action and activity; Day; Enjoyment.

368 Primary text: I.4, II.9, III.60, V.9. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Resentment

resentments; Divine resentments[369]

The word. Resentments are deep feelings, inward responses, or a person's felt apprehension of things. The noun here does not carry its usual modern restriction to grievance or bitterness.

In Traherne. To enter the resentments of souls in other ages is to share their worship and joy rather than remain confined to one's immediate business. Divine resentments likewise mean adopting a sense of things consonant with God's, so that nations appear within an enlarged vision. Understanding David's resentments requires knowing the excellence of the objects that move him. The word thus joins feeling to judgment: the emotional depth is intelligible through what is valued and loved. Reducing it to displeasure would reverse the direction of these invitations to communion.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.85** Others' resentments help enlarge the reader across kingdoms and ages. (Edition p. 54.)
- **III.84** Divine resentments make the world a valley of vision. (Edition p. 188.)
- **III.92** David's deep responses become intelligible through shared knowledge. (Edition p. 191.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to III.92 reports Dobell's historical gloss and distinguishes the word from indignation. The edition's explanation should not be mistaken for a new feeling attributed to David.

See also. Affection; David; Fellowship; Sense.

369 Primary text: I.85, III.84, III.92; historical gloss: 2026 edition notes to III.84 and III.92.

Resurrection

resurrection; rising again — Christ's rising and the future raising of the body[370]

The word. Resurrection is rising from death. Traherne uses the doctrinal word for Christ and for the promised human future, rather than merely for a renewed state of mind.

In Traherne. Christ's resurrection belongs to the sequence of saving actions whose value becomes visible when the reader understands redemption's end. It is considered with incarnation, death, ascension, and intercession, within a single history of love. The sequence prevents a reading of the Centuries in which present delight absorbs the whole Christian hope.

In the survey of divinity, the resurrection of the body is distinguished from the condition of separate souls and placed with judgment and everlasting life. Communion will embrace these events as well as creation and present providence. The soul's existing power to contemplate eternity consequently does not make bodily resurrection redundant; intellectual presence and the future state remain distinguishable dimensions of fulfillment.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.5** Christ's resurrection is valued within the recovered understanding of redemption. (Edition p. 68.)
- **III.43** Resurrection of the body is distinguished from the state of separate souls. (Edition p. 158.)
- **III.100** Communion includes Christ's resurrection and the future judgment. (Edition p. 197.)

In this edition. Do not silently substitute "spiritual awakening" for the explicit bodily doctrine in III.43. Metaphorical rising elsewhere does not exhaust this headword's principal use.

See also. Christ; Body; Death; Immortality; Salvation.

370 Primary text: II.5, III.43, III.100. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Return

return; returning; render — giving back or responding to what is received[371]

The word. Return can mean movement back to a source or a responsive offering. Traherne's theology of gifts makes these senses especially close.

In Traherne. The created world reaches a further fulfillment when it is knowingly received and offered back in love. The world in the soul is a returning offering: its material existence becomes an act of understanding, gratitude, and obedience. Praise likewise transforms benefits into a response appropriate to their giver.

This is not the cancellation of the original gift. The creature's answer has its own reality and freedom, which is why a merely mechanical reflection is inadequate. God's generosity makes possible a response that he delights to receive, and the soul is enriched by giving it. Return therefore unites reception and communication, but does not reduce charity to the repayment of a financial debt.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.90** The mentally apprehended world is offered back to its giver. (Edition p. 118.)
- **II.94** Praises are described as returning benefits. (Edition p. 121.)
- **III.82** Thanksgiving rises as the final tribute of creation. (Edition p. 186.)
- **IV.85** The soul's distinct love is the return or recompense God desires. (Edition p. 253.)

In this edition. Render in prayers asks what response can be made to benefits. Its fiscal overtones matter, but praise and love are not represented as settling an account after which obligation ends.

See also. Gift; Thanksgiving; Reflection; Communication; Love.

371 Primary text: II.90, II.94, III.82, IV.85. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Revelation

revelation; revelations; revealed — disclosure, and the biblical Apocalypse[372]

The word. Revelation means a making known of what was concealed. The same English word names the biblical book whose visions supply many of Traherne's descriptions of heavenly life.

In Traherne. God's disclosure is not restricted to an exceptional apparition. Traherne argues that the visible world manifests divine perfections as fully as a material medium can, while knowledge of the truth of things is needed to understand the authority of revealed religion. The desired private book from heaven gives way to the recognition that Scripture and its historical transmission are a richer gift.

The Apocalypse supplies a distinct set of images: multitudes, songs, robes, crowns, and a shared throne. These make heavenly joy social and participatory. Reading revelation therefore involves both discerning what creation discloses and entering the scriptural scenes that articulate redemption's promised end. Neither sense should erase the other.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.20** The visibility of creation is considered as a manner of divine disclosure. (Edition p. 75.)
- **II.74** Scenes from Revelation present the redeemed multitude as the reader's joy. (Edition p. 107.)
- **III.34** The actual history of the Bible surpasses the imagined gift of a private heavenly book. (Edition p. 153.)
- **IV.71** The promise of sitting in God's throne is attributed to Revelation. (Edition p. 241.)

In this edition. Revelation or Revelations may designate the Apocalypse rather than a general mystical experience. The plural form in IV.71 is a historical book-title usage, not evidence of several separate works.

See also. Scripture; Invisible; World; Vision; Truth.

372 Primary text: II.20, II.74, III.34, IV.71. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Reverence

reverence; reverenced; veneration — attentive honour toward perceived excellence[373]

The word. Reverence is deep respect expressed in regard or conduct. Its object and grounds determine whether that regard is well directed.

In Traherne. Reverence accompanies love in prayer to Christ, whose suffering discloses rather than extinguishes majesty. It also extends to human beings: those who understand redemption and the soul's dignity must honour persons as more precious than the visible world they inherit. Such esteem is meant to transform ordinary relations.

Yet reverence is not automatically wise. In the account of lost childhood perception, the child reverences adult authority and follows a corrupt scale of values. The contrast is instructive. Reverence becomes holy when it answers real excellence; detached from understanding, it can perpetuate custom and error. Traherne therefore asks for awakened judgment as well as humility before what is greater than oneself.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.62** Reverence joins ardour, humility, and thanksgiving before Christ. (Edition p. 38.)
- **II.93** Knowledge of God and the human inheritance requires mutual honour. (Edition p. 120.)
- **III.7** The child's reverence for adult authority assists the loss of innocent perception. (Edition p. 134.)
- **IV.70** God wills that the perfected creature of love be reverenced. (Edition p. 241.)

In this edition. Reverence need not mean fear or ceremonial deference alone. The childhood passage deliberately shows its susceptibility to a mistaken object, while the devotional passages join it to joy.

See also. Honour; Humility; Christ; Authority; Dignity.

373 Primary text: I.62, II.93, III.7, IV.70. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Reward

reward; rewarded; rewards — the good answering to faithful love and conduct[374]

The word. A reward is a benefit answering to action or service. In Traherne it may be future recompense, but can also be the joy intrinsic to loving rightly.

In Traherne. Love's reward is not merely something added after love has done its work. To love another person makes that person's happiness available as one's own joy; increased charity thereby enlarges the range of enjoyment. God is more fully enjoyed through likeness to his goodness. This explains why love can be called the crown of rewards.

Traherne nevertheless retains the distinction between present trial and future reward. Earthly love acts amid need, uncertainty, and sacrifice, whereas heavenly love flows without those impediments. Its difficulty here gives its exercise a distinctive glory. The reward therefore does not make present suffering unreal, nor does hope of reward by itself invalidate a generous act.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.62** Love is called the crown of rewards and the soul of worldly enjoyment. (Edition p. 101.)
- **IV.57** Love of others is rewarded through participation in their joys. (Edition p. 233.)
- **IV.60** Present trial and heavenly reward are distinguished without severing the two lives. (Edition p. 234.)
- **III.100** The rewarding of God's friends forms part of eternal communion. (Edition p. 197.)

In this edition. Where rewarded describes love's enlargement of joy, do not force the word into a wages-only model. Elsewhere its future and judicial sense remains explicit.

See also. Love; Desert and merit; Affliction; Felicity; Charity.

374 Primary text: II.62, IV.57, IV.60, III.100. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Riches

riches; rich; wealth — resources or possessions capable of enriching life[375]

The word. Riches are abundant possessions or valuable goods. Traherne makes their identification a central dispute: what is conventionally priced may impoverish, while what is freely given may be inexhaustible wealth.

In Traherne. The contrast between riches of darkness and riches of light is a contrast between rival economies of desire. Scarce, movable possessions invite exclusion and contention when treated as the whole of happiness. God's works are common, necessary, and available for shared enjoyment. Souls and bodies, their powers, and the created world therefore precede money as the riches of nature.

Traherne does not consistently say that money is intrinsically evil. The later account judges riches by their relation to felicity. Possessions are desirable when they help it and cease to function as riches when they obstruct it. Poverty and abundance can each provide occasions of virtue. This discrimination is stronger than a simple reversal in which possessing little automatically proves holiness.

Nor should true riches be compressed into private inward contentment. Their objects are distributed throughout creation and among other persons. An enlarged soul finds itself at home in many places because its goods are not confined to a chest, a house, or even a kingdom.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.33** Devised riches produce false scarcity, contention, and burdensome wants. (Edition p. 20.)
- **I.35** The riches of light are freely given works that support mutual enjoyment. (Edition p. 21.)
- **II.77** True satisfaction requires treasures dispersed throughout all places. (Edition p. 109.)
- **III.9** Natural riches are distinguished from the riches of invention. (Edition p. 135.)
- **IV.89** Neither coveting nor hating material riches replaces gratitude and the preference for virtue. (Edition p. 256.)

375 Primary text: I.33, I.35, II.77, III.9, IV.89. No 2026 editorial notes used.

In this edition. Riches commonly takes a plural verb and covers more than financial wealth. Keep the qualifiers true, false, natural, or invented: they often carry the argument that the bare noun cannot.

See also. Treasure; Common things; Poverty; Gold and silver; Value; Enjoyment.

Righteousness

righteousness; righteous; right wise — right dealing and conformity to divine goodness[376]

The word. Righteousness is moral rightness, including giving what is due. Traherne also exploits "right wise" to join just conduct to wisdom about the object of love.

In Traherne. To esteem things according to their value is already a matter of justice. The reader has an office toward gifts and giver, and misvaluation is more than an intellectual slip. Divine righteousness is likewise explained through love's fitting action: it cherishes the beloved, protects its welfare, and opposes injury.

This account does not remove the saving role of Christ's righteousness. Traherne insists that fallen humanity requires more than created merit, and prays to be clothed in Christ's righteousness. The devotional and ethical registers cooperate: righteousness received through redemption should issue in a will conformed to Christ and in right regard for all his gifts. It is neither bare correctness of belief nor a self-generated substitute for grace.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.12** Right esteem is made a duty of righteousness. (Edition p. 9.)
- **II.25** Love's dealings are repeatedly called right wise. (Edition p. 82.)
- **II.27** The protection of the beloved explains righteousness and judgment. (Edition p. 83.)
- **II.35** Created righteousness cannot repair fallen humanity. (Edition p. 88.)
- **I.93** The speaker asks to be clothed in Christ's righteousness. (Edition p. 59.)

376 Primary text: I.12, II.25, II.27, II.35, I.93. No 2026 editorial notes used.

In this edition. The repeated "right wise" in II.25 is Traherne's explanatory wordplay. Present it as his way of joining wisdom and rightness, not as an independently established etymological derivation.

See also. Justice; Love; Wisdom; Redemption; Esteem.

River

river; rivers; streams — flowing water and communicated abundance[377]

The word. A river is a continuous flowing body of water. Scriptural and figurative uses extend its refreshment and movement to pleasure, grace, and affection.

In Traherne. A river can be one of the smallest examples needed to begin contemplation: God sees relations and excellencies in it beyond human knowledge. Its ordinary place in creation is already sufficient to make it treasure. Traherne also reads the scriptural river of pleasures as divine attributes made delightful to understanding, and the river of God's city as a figure of consoling grace.

In the account of the soul, rivers of affection flow outward from an invisible source. The image stresses communication rather than enclosed possession. These uses share abundance and refreshment, but their referents differ: an actual river, a psalmic promise, and the soul's love should not be collapsed into a single fixed allegory.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.67** A river illustrates the infinite relations and excellencies of an ordinary creature. (Edition p. 104.)
- **III.76** The river of pleasures is interpreted through God's attributes. (Edition p. 182.)
- **III.78** The river of the divine city figures the consolations of grace. (Edition p. 183.)
- **IV.81** The soul is a source of abundant rivers of affection. (Edition p. 250.)

In this edition. The river in III.76 and the river in III.78 enter through different psalmic passages. Identify their immediate scriptural functions before combining them as a general water symbol.

377 Primary text: II.67, III.76, III.78, IV.81. No 2026 editorial notes used.

See also. Water; Fountain; Communication; Pleasure; Soul.

Room

room; narrow room; infinite room — available scope or capacity[378]

The word. Room means space available for something, not only a chamber in a house. It readily joins spatial extent to a capacity for thought, gifts, or enjoyment.

In Traherne. Infinite love requires room for its expression, yet its gifts must also be receivable within the finite-seeming centre of a person. Traherne makes the soul an infinite sphere in a centre: the vocabulary does not simply compare a large external container with a smaller internal one.

The Fifth Century presses the question further. Space appears to leave no room for anything else, but duration supplies another region in which every moment and age can be present. Room thus becomes a way of asking how divine abundance exceeds the limits first imagined for it. It names the welcome given to further treasure as much as sheer empty extension.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.80** Infinite love is expressed both beyond finite room and within the soul's centre. (Edition p. 111.)
- **V.3** Infinity provides room for imagination, desire, and treasures. (Edition p. 266.)
- **V.4** Divine power and bounty require an adequate scope for expression. (Edition p. 267.)
- **V.6** Eternal duration is another room of joys beyond the present spatial expanse. (Edition p. 269.)

In this edition. Read "besides" in V.6 as introducing an additional consideration of duration, not merely more space beyond a distant boundary. The meditation explicitly distinguishes beyond from besides.

See also. Space; Capacity; Infinity; Eternity; Soul.

378 Primary text: II.80, V.3, V.4, V.6. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Sabbath

Sabbath; Sabbaths — consecrated rest and recurring holy celebration[379]

The word. The Sabbath is sacred rest, and in the plural can designate appointed holy days. Traherne also extends its pattern to an entire life of delighted communion.

In Traherne. In the recollection of infancy, all time appears as a perpetual Sabbath. The phrase belongs to a world seen as pure gift, before the child knows exaction, sickness, and social contention. It characterizes the quality of apprehension, not a claim that the ordinary calendar had disappeared.

The poem about a life of Sabbaths deliberately tests this ideal against a world where sin, tears, and temptation remain. Earthly bliss includes overcoming, and each tear can acquire a future significance that is not yet apparent. Meanwhile actual sabbaths retain a place among the institutions of the covenant of grace. The expansive metaphor grows from religious observance rather than dismissing it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.2** Infant perception is figured as eternity and a perpetual Sabbath. (Edition p. 128.)
- **III.43** Sabbaths belong to the means and institutions of the state of grace. (Edition p. 158.)
- **III.47** A life of Sabbaths is reconciled with struggle, tears, and future joy. (Edition p. 161.)

In this edition. The plural Sabbaths in the poem is an intentional enlargement of sacred rest. Do not equate it with the absence of effort: the poem explicitly commends conquest of inward lusts.

See also. Repose; Time; Innocence; Worship; Temptation.

379 Primary text: III.2, III.43, III.47. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Sacrifice

sacrifice; sacrifices; offering; oblation — an act or gift offered to God[380]

The word. Sacrifice names a religious offering and, by extension, the surrender of oneself. The particular thing offered remains essential to the word's meaning.

In Traherne. Traherne moves among Christ's sacrifice, the scriptural sacrifices that prefigure it, and the responsive offerings of the faithful. These are connected but not interchangeable. Christ's person gives his offering a significance that no created being can supply; the reader's living sacrifice is an answer to that love.

The Psalms teach why praise and contrition can surpass animal offerings. A groan or a thanksgiving proceeds from a conscious, affectionate soul and bears the reality of friendship. Charity toward Christ's poor members similarly becomes an offering to him. The argument is not that material life is worthless, but that its highest purpose is realized in free and rightly directed personal acts.

The order of Melchisedec

II.33 brings Christ's priesthood into the account of his willing sacrifice. The quoted appointment to the order of Melchisedec comes through Hebrews 5:4–6, as the edition explains. The older biblical figure is the king of Salem and priest who blesses Abraham; Traherne's immediate purpose is the divine calling and honour of the Son's office. Calling and consent cooperate in the argument: the dignity is bestowed, while the suffering is freely undertaken.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.37** Christ's offering is made in time through the eternal Spirit. (Edition p. 89.)
- **III.81** The psalmic rejection of merely material offering introduces thanksgiving. (Edition p. 184.)
- **III.83** Christ and the contrite heart are distinguished from their sacrificial figures. (Edition p. 187.)

380 Primary text: II.37, III.81, III.83, I.81, I.91. No 2026 editorial notes used. For the priestly quotation, see II.33; biblical identification follows the 2026 note to II.33.

- **I.81** Care for Christ's members is described as sacrifice. (Edition p. 51.)
- **I.91** The speaker asks that the soul become a living sacrifice. (Edition p. 58.)
- **II.33** The priestly appointment supplies part of the argument for the Son's honoured and voluntary sacrifice. (Edition p. 86.)

In this edition. Types and figures in III.83 describes the preparatory status of earlier sacrifices in Traherne's Christian reading. It is his interpretive claim, not a neutral description of every sacrificial tradition.

See also. Cross; Thanksgiving; Repentance; Charity; Redemption.

Saint

saint; saints; Saints Triumphant — holy persons in earthly or heavenly communion[381]

The word. A saint is a holy person belonging to God. The word can designate the faithful collectively rather than only a formally recognized exemplary individual.

In Traherne. Saints are among the riches bestowed upon the reader, yet that language immediately creates practical obligations. Christ identifies himself with his apparently insignificant members; delight in the saints therefore requires tender service, almsgiving, and readiness to help. Their value cannot be measured by worldly visibility or status.

The circle extends through all ages. Patriarchs, apostles, martyrs, and the heavenly multitude can be present to thought, while the holiness of living neighbours is cultivated through ordinary virtues. Enjoying saints is consequently more demanding than admiring remote religious heroes. It asks the reader to become a person others can enjoy and to recognize holiness under poverty and disguise.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.54** Saints of different ages are present within the soul's contemplative company. (Edition p. 33.)
- **I.80** Enjoying nearby saints requires virtues that make oneself amiable. (Edition p. 50.)

381 Primary text: I.54, I.80, I.81, II.74. No 2026 editorial notes used.

- **I.81** Delight in the saints becomes practical service to Christ's members. (Edition p. 51.)
- **II.74** The redeemed multitude supplies a vision of heavenly company. (Edition p. 107.)

In this edition. The capitalized Saints does not by itself restrict the reference to canonized persons. Earthly and triumphant communities must be distinguished from context.

See also. Church; Communion; Charity; Person; Heaven.

Salvation

salvation; saved; save — deliverance into life with God[382]

The word. Salvation names rescue from the powers that destroy life and the resulting condition of safety and blessedness. Christian usage includes both Christ's saving action and its fulfillment in the saved.

In Traherne. Traherne's prayers call Christ the captain of salvation and ask to be made alive, cleansed, enlightened, and united to his will. Salvation reaches the whole person's relation to God; it is not merely escape from future punishment. The Spirit enables the present enjoyment of the gifts secured through Christ.

The word also enters through biblical songs in which divine deliverance becomes public praise. The heavenly multitude's salvation is a common joy, while the true possessor of the world becomes zealous for the salvation of all. This universal concern is a demand upon love; it should not be treated as a detailed prediction that every individual must ultimately be saved.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.93** Prayer for salvation includes renewed perception and conformity of will. (Edition p. 59.)
- **I.95** Christ's saving work and the Spirit's enabling presence are joined. (Edition p. 61.)
- **II.74** The redeemed multitude attributes salvation to God and the Lamb. (Edition p. 107.)

382 Primary text: I.93, I.95, II.74, II.98. No 2026 editorial notes used.

- **II.98** Enjoyment of the world awakens zeal for the salvation of all. (Edition p. 124.)

In this edition. The universal object of zeal in II.98 describes the reach of charity. Preserve the distinction between desiring everyone's salvation and making a universalist doctrinal assertion.

See also. Redemption; Christ; Holy Spirit; Heaven; Love.

Sand

a sand; every sand; smallest sand; grain of sand[383]

The word. A sand means a single grain of sand. This small, ordinarily disregarded object lets Traherne test how worth differs from bulk and how a finite thing can disclose relations extending far beyond its visible dimensions.

In Traherne. I.27 makes understanding a grain's witness to divine wisdom and power a condition of enjoying the world rightly. II.67 develops the relational basis of its worth: God sees more excellencies in it than the human observer does, including its origin in love, its place among other creatures, and its service to good ends. Appreciating the grain therefore involves more than admiring its surface.

III.20 adds a deliberately startling argument for boundedness. A grain is better fitted to its place than an infinitely large material object would be. Infinite worth need not mean infinite bulk; proportion and limitation can make a thing more serviceable and excellent.

The later uses concern the knowing soul. IV.73 takes a grain as the smallest example of an object shaping conception, before proceeding to the heavens and divine infinity. IV.97 contrasts smallness with immense public and divine subjects, arguing that spiritual attention need not be overwhelmed as bodily strength is by weight. Sand consequently supports several linked distinctions: size from value, material magnitude from intelligible scope, and the object seen from the relations truly understood in it.

383 Primary text: I.27, II.67, III.20, IV.73, IV.97. Supplied 2026 editorial note 135 explains a sand and cautions that the Blake comparison is not evidence of borrowing.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.27** A single grain manifests wisdom and power when spiritually considered. (Edition p. 17.)
- **II.67** Its relations to giver, recipients, and ends explain its extraordinary worth. (Edition p. 104.)
- **III.20** Finite bulk can serve infinite worth better than material boundlessness. (Edition p. 142.)
- **IV.73** The grain begins a scale of objects shaping conception. (Edition p. 243.)
- **IV.97** The soul can consider immense matters as well as the smallest grain. (Edition p. 261.)

In this edition. The 2026 note compares Blake's grain-of-sand image only as a parallel. It does not establish influence: the Centuries was not publicly available to Blake.

See also. Common things; Value; Infinity; Dust; Object.

School

school; schools; tutor; learning — institutions of instruction and patterns of discipleship[384]

The word. School can mean a place of teaching or a learned tradition with recognized maxims. Figuratively, an object or event can become a school through the lessons it supplies.

In Traherne. The opening challenge to a maxim of the schools establishes an important method: inherited propositions must be tested against the actual life of desire. Elsewhere conventional learning can neglect the very end that should organize it, the attainment of felicity. Traherne nevertheless values the knowledge that education awakens and does not dismiss reasoned inquiry.

The Cross is the exemplary school of virtues. Its suffering teaches patience, charity, courage, and the right use of the whole world. This instruction differs from the burdensome school remembered in the account of alienation because its relation to life's end is visible. Learning

384 Primary text: I.2, I.58, III.14, III.37, III.20. No 2026 editorial notes used.

becomes fruitful when its objects are received as one's own concern rather than as material for display.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.2** Experience of unknown goods qualifies a maxim attributed to the schools. (Edition p. 4.)
- **I.58** The Cross is a school of virtues. (Edition p. 36.)
- **III.14** School is remembered as a burden during the period of false valuation. (Edition p. 138.)
- **III.37** University learning is criticized for failing to teach felicity as its end. (Edition p. 154.)

In this edition. The schools in I.2 and III.20 means received learned doctrine, not necessarily one identifiable classroom or institution. The autobiographical uses are more literal.

See also. Education; Learning; Study; Cross; Wisdom.

Science

science; sciences — ordered knowledge or a field of learned inquiry[385]

The word. Science can name an organized body of knowledge. Its historical scope is broader than the modern category of experimental natural science.

In Traherne. Felicity is called the mistress of all other sciences because it supplies the end by which their value and manner of study should be judged. The complaint is not that the university taught too much, but that it did not teach its subjects as the student's own enjoyments. Knowledge without an understood purpose remains deficient.

Natural philosophy illustrates the breadth available to a science. In its usual restricted sense it studies corporeal causes and effects; extended according to Traherne's interpretation of its name, it considers all natures, including actions, affections, angels, and God. Even the restricted science serves the highest ends by preparing the enjoyer to see the riches of creation.

385 Primary text: III.37, III.44. No 2026 editorial notes used.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.37** Felicity is named the mistress of the sciences omitted from formal instruction. (Edition p. 154.)
- **III.44** Natural philosophy is distinguished in a restricted and an enlarged sense. (Edition p. 159.)

In this edition. Retain science's broad historical sense. The description in III.44 does not establish a modern boundary between science and religion; it explicitly traverses that boundary.

See also. Knowledge; Philosophy; Nature; Study; Felicity.

Scripture

Scripture; Scriptures; Bible; God's Word — the biblical writings[386]

The word. Scripture names writings received as sacred, here the Christian Bible. Traherne treats them both as authoritative testimony and as matter to be understood and enjoyed.

In Traherne. The imagined private book sent from heaven is surpassed by the actual Bible. Its long history fills many ages with prophets, holy persons, and divine acts; what seemed less extraordinary than a personal miracle proves more abundant. Scripture's reception is itself part of the world's communicative wealth.

Understanding matters as much as possession of the text. The truths of creation and human dignity open Scripture's glory, while an implicit faith ought to grow toward intelligent assurance. The friend who cites a biblical saying also delights in giving its reason. This is not a programme of replacing Scripture with unaided speculation. It is the insistence that testimony should become a clear and active perception of what is testified.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.2** Misunderstanding the world's first gifts obscures the glory of Scripture. (Edition p. 66.)
- **III.34** The Bible's historical transmission is preferred to an isolated miraculous delivery. (Edition p. 153.)

386 Primary text: II.2, III.34, III.43, IV.6, IV.31. No 2026 editorial notes used.

- **III.43** Scriptures belong among the provisions of the covenant of grace. (Edition p. 158.)
- **IV.6** Assurance grows through understanding what faith receives. (Edition p. 201.)
- **IV.31** A scriptural claim is accompanied by an account of its reason. (Edition p. 217.)

In this edition. Biblical quotation, Traherne's exposition, and the 2026 editor's annotations are distinct layers. The comments in this entry concern the first two and do not attribute modern source notes to Traherne.

See also. Word; Revelation; David; Truth; Faith; Understanding.

Sea

sea; seas; ocean — the waters of the world and figures of amplitude[387]

The word. The sea is a created body of water, useful as well as beautiful. Its vastness also lends itself to figurative accounts of love, understanding, and divine plenitude.

In Traherne. The sea's value becomes apparent when the reader imagines its absence. Without it, ordinary processes supporting life and beauty would fail; its familiar availability should therefore intensify gratitude rather than diminish esteem. One need not stand in the sea to receive its services, and its usefulness is increased by its place in a world shared with others.

The figurative sea preserves that expansive force. The reader is asked to receive the sea into the veins, and God's immense goodness makes the visible sea seem a single drop. Such language describes the soul's intimate appropriation of a common gift and its responsive abundance of affection. It does not grant exclusive ownership of the physical waters.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.29** The sea flowing in the veins images inward appropriation of the world. (Edition p. 18.)
- **I.46** Imagining a dry sea exposes the value of a familiar necessity. (Edition p. 28.)

387 Primary text: I.29, I.46, II.13, II.14. No 2026 editorial notes used.

- **II.13** The sea serves best in its proper place, without exclusive possession. (Edition p. 72.)
- **II.14** The sea as a drop of goodness calls forth seas of affection. (Edition p. 73.)

In this edition. The injunction in I.29 is deliberately figurative. In II.13, "more yours" belongs to shared enjoyment and service, not a claim to territorial dominion over an ocean.

See also. Water; River; Use; Possession; Common things.

Secret

secret; secrets; hidden — concealed or insufficiently apprehended reality[388]

The word. A secret is something hidden from ordinary knowledge. Concealment may arise from the object's invisibility or from the observer's failure to understand what is already before the eyes.

In Traherne. The book promises disclosure of mysteries that are strange and yet common. Its characteristic secret is not a rare possession withheld from everyone else, but the unnoticed richness of universal gifts. Even unknown goods influence desire before they become clearly identified.

Other secrets require trained inquiry: learning opens the inward glories of nature, and exercise discloses powers of the soul that cannot be confidently measured beforehand. This makes secrecy a temporary relation between object and knower, not necessarily an invitation to esotericism. Traherne wants hidden goods communicated and enjoyed. His delight in secrets should therefore be read beside his insistence on plain explanation, common inheritance, and active understanding.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.2** Unknown goods exert a secret influence on desire. (Edition p. 4.)
- **I.3** The promised disclosure concerns an inheritance hidden in familiar creation. (Edition p. 5.)
- **III.36** Education opens previously unsuspected secrets and persons. (Edition p. 154.)

388 Primary text: I.2, I.3, III.36, IV.97. No 2026 editorial notes used.

- **IV.97** The soul's secret strength is discovered through exercise and experience. (Edition p. 261.)

In this edition. Secret does not by itself signal an occult doctrine or an exclusive initiate's teaching. Often the obstacle is customary inattention to publicly available gifts.

See also. Mystery; Knowledge; Invisible; Learning; Consideration.

Self

self; yourself; true self — the person as conscious, willing, and capable of love[389]

The word. Self marks the person considered as the subject of thought, affection, and action. Traherne's "true self" is also a normative expression: it names what a person becomes when native capacities are rightly exercised.

In Traherne. The self is not best known by inventorying private possessions or identifying the boundary of the body. Traherne asks the reader to consider the soul's reach: its understanding can attend to distant places and ages, its affections can embrace persons it has never physically encountered, and its delight can increase through their happiness. To live by this power is to become one's true self. The expansion does not simply add more objects to an unchanged owner. It changes the character of the person who enjoys them.

This is why the language of self-possession can coexist with an injunction to go out of oneself. Inward knowledge discloses capacities whose exercise is outward and communicative. The self impoverishes itself when it shuts those capacities within a merely private interest. Conversely, to acknowledge oneself as a receiver of gifts is a necessary beginning, because a person incapable of caring about his own good could not be moved by benefits or gratitude.

Traherne's fullest statement identifies the true self with love in act rather than merely in power. Love here is not a passing feeling appended to a stable inner substance. It is the person's powers realized in fitting relation to God, creatures, and other persons. Its range includes the past and the future because the objects of understanding and affection are not

389 Primary text: II.92, II.100, IV.55, IV.67, IV.85. No 2026 editorial notes used.

limited to the living company immediately present. The historical persons of Scripture can consequently become genuine objects of concern.

The claim is not that the individual is absorbed into an impersonal whole. Souls remain distinct sources of response, and another person's happiness enriches mine precisely because it is another's. Divine likeness increases the capacity for communion without making a creature identical with its creator. The considerable self-regard of these meditations therefore needs to be read through their social demand: the reader is to be treasured, but must also become a treasure to others.

Finally, the present self is corrigible. Its capacity may be obscured by false custom, its desire misdirected, and its love confined. The invitation to greatness is inseparable from the work of re-education. "True" does not mean whatever the speaker happens to feel most strongly; it means the person whose understanding, value, and love have come into accord with their proper objects.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.92** The reader becomes the true self by living through the soul's comprehensive greatness. (Edition p. 120.)
- **II.100** The self is included among the real objects of felicity, without inward self-sufficiency being made its whole. (Edition p. 126.)
- **IV.55** Self-love is a necessary basis that becomes dishonourable when isolated. (Edition p. 231.)
- **IV.67** The true self is identified with love realized in act. (Edition p. 239.)
- **IV.85** The soul's distinct acts of love establish its reality as a fountain. (Edition p. 253.)

In this edition. Self and soul overlap here but are not mechanical substitutes. "Your true self" in II.92 and IV.67 is an evaluative claim about fulfilled personhood; it should not be modernized into a slogan about spontaneous authenticity.

See also. Soul; Self-love; Person; Love; Communion; Capacity.

Self-endedness

self-endedness; self-ended; own glory; own ends[390]

The word. To be self-ended is to make oneself the end or purpose of an action. The term often condemns mercenary self-concern, but Traherne deliberately complicates that sense when the self's delight consists in another's good. Its meaning depends on where love finally rests.

In Traherne. IV.55 supplies the first essential distinction. Self-love is dishonourable when it exists alone, and self-endedness is mercenary when it ends in oneself. A self that receives enough to overflow can turn toward its benefactor and extend love to other people. The pool must fill before it can overflow: the image makes fulfilled self-concern a basis for generous relationship, rather than treating indifference to one's own existence as the ideal.

II.54 puts the difficulty more sharply. Love does everything for its object yet is called the most self-ended thing because it cannot endure to be displeased. This belongs to a catalogue of paradoxes: love's excess is its moderation, its activity its rest, and its generosity coexists with a kind of covetousness. The sentence does not casually retract the book's praise of charity. It asks how a love entirely directed toward another can nonetheless seek its own fulfilment with complete intensity.

IV.63 develops the theological stakes. If all action for one's own glory is base, how can God seek his glory? Does every apparent generosity, including Christ's undertaking, reduce to disguised self-interest? Traherne presents this as a question to be resolved, not a doctrine to adopt. IV.64–65 answer by identifying true glory with loving the beloved for the beloved's own sake. God's delight in himself as love is therefore inseparable from delight in creatures' welfare. The desire for true glory intensifies rather than competes with their happiness.

The reader's task is to imitate that pattern. Self-endedness becomes vicious when the end is a private self sealed against others; the positive paradox becomes intelligible when the self's end is fulfilled through generous communion. This is not a claim that harmful conduct becomes

390 Primary text: II.54, IV.55, IV.63–65. The article distinguishes Traherne's question from his ensuing answer; it does not require the editorial notes' proposed contemporary parallels.

good whenever its agent enjoys it. The nature of the enjoyment and the genuine welfare of its object govern the distinction.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.54** Calls love self-ended within a series of paradoxes about its complete devotion to its object. (Edition p. 97.)
- **IV.55** Distinguishes self-love that remains alone from satisfaction that overflows toward others. (Edition p. 231.)
- **IV.63** States the apparent conflict between condemned self-interest and divine pursuit of glory. (Edition p. 236.)
- **IV.64** Defines true glory through the beloved's happiness. (Edition p. 237.)
- **IV.65** Identifies divine self-love with love for creatures and asks the reader to imitate it. (Edition p. 237.)

In this edition. Do not flatten the term into selfishness at every occurrence. IV.63 poses a riddle whose solution follows. The account above follows that primary sequence without assigning the unnamed opponents to a particular modern philosophical school.

See also. Self-love; End and means; Love; Glory; Self.

Self-love

self-love; self love; self-endedness — concern for one's own good[391]

The word. Self-love is love directed toward oneself. Self-endedness is the narrower condition in which one's action terminates in oneself and does not pass into love of a benefactor or neighbour.

In Traherne. Traherne refuses to condemn self-love simply. It is a condition of receiving anything as good and of being moved by gratitude. God's generosity satisfies that concern and opens it outward: the recipient comes to delight in the benefactor's goodness and then in the happiness of others. The pool must be filled if it is to overflow.

This is an account of transformation, not permission for unlimited self-preference. Self-love alone is dishonourable; perfected charity may love another more than oneself. Heaven completes the movement by removing the necessities and distractions that divide earthly concern.

391 Primary text: IV.49, IV.55, IV.57, IV.60, IV.65. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Divine self-love provides the exemplary unity: God loves himself as the lover of others, so his glory and their welfare coincide.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.49** Gratitude allows self-love to issue in love of God beyond self. (Edition p. 227.)
- **IV.55** Self-love is distinguished from isolated and mercenary self-endedness. (Edition p. 231.)
- **IV.57** Love of others makes their joys available to oneself. (Edition p. 233.)
- **IV.60** Earthly need complicates the unity perfected in heaven. (Edition p. 234.)
- **IV.65** Divine self-love is explained through love of the beloved. (Edition p. 237.)

In this edition. The hyphenated headword follows the attested form. Do not translate every self-love as selfishness: the distinction from self-endedness is the very point of IV.55.

See also. Self; Love; Gratitude; Charity; Felicity.

Seneca

Seneca; Deus me dedit[392]

The word. Seneca is the Roman philosopher named as the source of a maxim about the reciprocal gift of self and world. The attribution is part of Traherne's text, but its precise provenance is uncertain.

In Traherne. Traherne invokes the saying after declaring each person the end and enjoyer of the world. Other persons do not reduce that inheritance; they enrich it as further treasures and fellow enjoyers. The maxim makes the relation reciprocal: the person is given to the whole while the whole is given to the person. Its function is therefore more demanding than flattering private ownership. A self fully enjoying the gift also belongs within the world it receives. Traherne's approval of this statement does not amount to approval of every version of philosophical self-sufficiency, which he sharply criticizes elsewhere when it deprives happiness of objects.

392 Primary text: I.15, II.100; attribution caution and philosophical comparison: 2026 edition notes to I.15 and II.100.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.15** The maxim closes an account of every soul's undiminished inheritance. (Edition p. 10.)
- **II.100** The critique of objectless self-sufficiency limits any indiscriminate assimilation to ancient moral philosophy. (Edition p. 126.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to I.15 says the Latin sentence has not been traced in Seneca's surviving works, while identifying related thoughts. Quote it as Traherne's attribution, not a verified Senecan sentence.

See also. Felicity; Heir and inheritance; Possession; Sufficiency.

Sense

sense; senses; sensible — sensation, awareness, and felt apprehension[393]

The word. Sense can name a bodily faculty or the vivid apprehension of a fact. To be sensible of a benefit is to perceive and feel its reality, not merely to assent to its existence.

In Traherne. Bodily senses already establish a mode of participation in the world: beauty reaches the eye and air sustains the body without purchase or exclusion. They provide an initial schooling in gratitude. Yet Traherne also speaks of a sense of greatness, want, and happiness that belongs to the soul's intelligent awareness.

The difference between having and enjoying turns on this fuller sense. Unvalued gifts are as though absent, and the person who does not prize them is described as asleep or dead. Divine perfection supplies the highest model: wants and their satisfactions are both vividly present without disturbing blessedness. Sense consequently bridges receptive perception and appreciative consciousness, while never making bodily sensation adequate to every divine object.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.21** The right of the senses is an immediate title to enjoyment of creation. (Edition p. 14.)

393 Primary text: I.21, I.44, I.49, II.92. No 2026 editorial notes used.

- **I.44** God's sense of wants gives perpetual value to their satisfaction. (Edition p. 27.)
- **I.49** Failure to prize existing gifts is figured as sleeping senses. (Edition p. 29.)
- **II.92** A glorious sense of the world must be accompanied by awareness of the soul's greatness. (Edition p. 120.)

In this edition. Sensible commonly means aware or perceptibly affected, not merely prudent or reasonable. Attend also to the shift between plural bodily senses and singular sense of a spiritual reality.

See also. Sight; Body; Apprehension; Blindness; Enjoyment.

Sensible and sensibles

sensible; sensible of; sensibles[394]

The word. Sensible can mean aware or capable of feeling, and can also mean perceptible to the senses. The plural noun sensibles at IV.80 means beings that feel. Modern practical good sense is not the chief meaning.

In Traherne. Being sensible of wants and gifts means feeling their reality and value, not merely holding an abstract proposition about them. Such awareness makes enjoyment possible. The adjective takes the other direction when sensible and visible things are contrasted with the invisible soul: there it describes objects available to sensation. The noun sensibles returns to the sensing subject when Love is called most quick and tender among them. Distinguishing perceiver from perceived prevents these nearby uses from becoming a single confused doctrine of sensation.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.45** Awareness of wants makes awareness of treasures possible. (Edition p. 27.)
- **IV.80** Sensibles are feeling beings, with Love pre-eminent in responsiveness. (Edition p. 249.)
- **IV.81** Sensible things are perceptible objects to which people confine attention. (Edition p. 250.)

394 Primary text: I.45, IV.80–81; historical noun gloss: 2026 edition note to IV.80.

In this edition. The 2026 note to IV.80 supplies the unusual plural's sense. Its gloss cannot be transferred unchanged to "sensible and visible things" in the next meditation.

See also. Body; Blindness; Quick and quicken; Sense.

Service

service; services; serve; serviceableness — beneficial operation directed toward another[395]

The word. Service is action or operation that benefits someone. It includes personal ministry, but Traherne also applies it to the ordinary workings of creatures.

In Traherne. The world serves bodily life, perception, knowledge of God, and praise. Its spiritual services do not abolish material ones; they disclose a further significance in what already sustains us. Wine can quench bodily thirst without reflection, but understood as a gift of love it also nourishes a public and angelic delight in the good it does to others.

Human service completes this pattern by conscious participation. The reader asks how to spend life, time, and estate for the good of all, while another person's praise becomes a service to everyone who loves God. Service therefore need not transfer a scarce object or relieve an immediate lack. It can communicate delight, honour a beloved person, or make a common good more fully understood.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.27** Material benefit becomes spiritual service when received as love and shared good. (Edition p. 17.)
- **I.79** Prayer asks how to spend one's resources in service for all. (Edition p. 49.)
- **II.1** The world's services lead from bodily preservation to communion. (Edition p. 66.)
- **III.81** Another person's praise of the Creator is a service to the lover of God. (Edition p. 184.)

In this edition. Serve does not always imply conscious intention in the serving object. The sea and air serve through their appointed

395 Primary text: I.27, I.79, II.1, III.81. No 2026 editorial notes used.

operation; persons can knowingly imitate the generosity those operations disclose.

See also. Use; Benefit; Charity; Work; Thanksgiving.

Shadow

shadow; shades; shadows — obscuring cover, insubstantial appearance, or protection[396]

The word. A shadow can obscure light, resemble something without its full substance, or shelter a person. Traherne's uses preserve these different possibilities.

In Traherne. The false life of socially manufactured values is a life among shadows. Its apparent goods fail to yield the substantial enjoyment they promise. Yet a shadow is not invariably evil: the psalmic shadow of divine wings names protective nearness.

At the Cross, visible flesh is called a shade or cloud because bodily eyes cannot by themselves reveal the inward excellence of Christ's mind and love. Removing the flesh would not solve that problem: inward excellence must be apprehended by the corresponding inward power. The passage consequently uses shadow to mark a limitation of bodily vision, not to declare the body unreal. Elsewhere the likenesses produced by an artist are shadows beside the reality of God's creatures.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.14** Mistaken values leave the speaker living among shadows. (Edition p. 138.)
- **I.88** Christ's visible flesh conceals an inward glory requiring inward apprehension. (Edition p. 55.)
- **III.76** The shadow of God's wings provides an image of trust and shelter. (Edition p. 182.)
- **V.5** Painted shadows are contrasted with the greater reality of divine works. (Edition p. 268.)

In this edition. The word's negative force in III.14 must not be transferred to the sheltering biblical use in III.76. The edition's visible

396 Primary text: III.14, I.88, III.76, V.5. No 2026 editorial notes used.

deletions of "dreams" also caution against treating every nearby image as a single finalized formula.

See also. Darkness; Image; Body; Sight; Trust.

Sight

sight; see; seeing — visual apprehension and the soul's intelligent presence[397]

The word. Sight means bodily vision and, by extension, the apprehension of understanding. Traherne often strengthens the latter from a loose metaphor into an account of how the soul is present to its object.

In Traherne. To see a distant or past object in thought is to become present with it in a mode unavailable to the feet. Scriptural history can therefore be visited through contemplation. This does not make the bodily event recur; it makes its excellence accessible to a living act of understanding and affection.

The Cross tests the relation between the two kinds of sight. One may look on wounds with bodily eyes while failing to perceive the love they express. The soul must meet Christ's understanding with its own and read love through love. Sight becomes transformative when it apprehends value: a sight of happiness can itself be happiness. Mere exposure to a beautiful object, especially when custom has dulled attention, does not guarantee that result.

The condition of the eye

III.5 compares acquired habits and conceits to grit in the eye or yellow jaundice. The comparison makes the observer's condition part of the explanation of mistaken sight: putting an object before someone does not guarantee that it will appear truly. The 2026 note explains the period belief that a jaundiced observer saw things yellow. Traherne uses that inherited example to make the moral work of clearing perception imaginable.

397 Primary text: I.55, I.57, I.88, III.60. No 2026 editorial notes used. For the eye analogy, see III.5; the period belief about jaundice is explained in the 2026 note to III.5.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.55** The soul's sight is described as its presence with distant ages. (Edition p. 33.)
- **I.57** The Cross is available to the soul's sight as the brazen serpent was to bodily eyes. (Edition p. 35.)
- **I.88** Bodily sight must be joined to the understanding of Christ's inward love. (Edition p. 55.)
- **III.60** A sight of happiness transforms the soul and brings repose. (Edition p. 169.)
- **III.5** Grit and jaundice illustrate how the perceiver's condition obstructs true sight. (Edition p. 132.)

In this edition. Distinguish "fleshly eyes" from the "eye of our mind" where Traherne does. His strong claims for spiritual sight do not make every use of see a report of a visual apparition.

See also. Vision; Understanding; Eye; Presence; Beholding.

Silence

silence; silent — absence of speech, response, or audible company[398]

The word. Silence is not assigned one stable spiritual value. It can reveal desolation, invite attentive contemplation, or protect an enjoyment that boasting would spoil.

In Traherne. The silent landscape frightens the child because it seems empty of persons and care. Its deficiency is not simply acoustic: no living exchange answers the observer's need for fellowship. At the Cross, silence belongs instead to the terrible spectacle of death and provokes the lover's grief.

A deliberately quiet enjoyment can also be wise. Traherne warns that happiness need not be publicly advertised in a world prone to envy and ostentation. The distinction is between possessing joy without display and lacking the personal communion that makes joy complete. Silence is therefore neither automatically mystical nor merely negative; its meaning depends on what is present, absent, or withheld within it.

398 Primary text: III.23, I.89, IV.12. No 2026 editorial notes used.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.23** The field's silence initially appears as desolation. (Edition p. 144.)
- **I.89** Christ's dead body is described through misery and silence. (Edition p. 56.)
- **IV.12** Unadvertised enjoyment is preferable to ostentation and needless envy. (Edition p. 207.)

In this edition. The verse about the silent crow in IV.12 supports discretion, not a universal rule against speaking of happiness. The meditation contrasts earthly risks with heavenly happiness openly shared. Tacitus at the beginning of the Latin crow quotation in IV.12 is the adjective silent, not the name of a historian.

See also. Solitude; Repose; Society; Contemplation; Pride.

Simplicity

simplicity; simple — freedom from mixture, artifice, or corrupt complication[399]

The word. Simplicity can mean uncontrived plainness or the absence of division. Traherne applies it both to human life and to the unity of divine love.

In Traherne. Childlike simplicity is one part of the return to innocence, but Traherne explicitly refuses to stop at mild passions or easy dependence. The soul must be cleared of false customs and habits that distort perception. Simplicity is therefore a demanding intellectual and moral purification, not mere lack of learning.

In the critique of European luxury, simple wealth belongs to lives closer to natural provision than to manufactured prestige. The theological use is different and stronger: divine love of self and of others are one, making God's simplicity visible through the coincidence of his glory and the beloved's welfare. The human analogy lies in becoming less divided between rival ends, not in pretending that a creature possesses divine simplicity outright.

399 Primary text: III.5, III.12, IV.65. No 2026 editorial notes used.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.5** Childlike simplicity must deepen into purity of perception and freedom from corrupt habits. (Edition p. 132.)
- **III.12** Simple wealth is contrasted with European fashions and artificial esteem. (Edition p. 137.)
- **IV.65** The unity of God's self-love and love of others displays divine simplicity. (Edition p. 237.)

In this edition. The derogatory ethnic language of III.12 belongs to Traherne's polemic and historical setting. His reversal of European claims to civility does not make that vocabulary neutral.

See also. Purity; Child and childhood; Unity; Nature; Self-love.

Sin

sin; sins; sinful — a wrong against God, one's nature, and other persons[400]

The word. Sin is moral and religious wrongdoing, not simply pain, limitation, or an unpleasant experience. Its deformity is understood against the goodness of the order it violates.

In Traherne. Traherne's praise of creation is compatible with an uncompromising account of sin because the two judgments concern different things. The world's created beauty persists; rapacity, envy, and oppression corrupt the relations through which it should be enjoyed. Sin makes misery by opposing the true good of the person who commits it and of the persons injured.

Clear apprehension of happiness tends toward holiness, but earthly vision is dim and the possibility of sin remains. Study, prayer, and watchfulness therefore matter. The poem addressing sin voices horror at its capacity to destroy inward enjoyment, while the practical meditations prescribe pity and remedial love toward offenders. To call the world disordered is not to relinquish its inhabitants. Christ's redemption and the imitation of his charity answer the damage that perception alone cannot simply dismiss.

400 Primary text: III.49, II.97, IV.24, IV.20, III.43. No 2026 editorial notes used.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.49** The poem presents sin as the destroyer of enjoyment and repose. (Edition p. 162.)
- **II.97** Earthly freedom and dim vision leave open the possibility of sin. (Edition p. 124.)
- **IV.24** Vice, rather than the created stars or seas, disfigures the world. (Edition p. 214.)
- **IV.20** Life among offenders requires pity and the healing practice of love. (Edition p. 211.)

In this edition. Original and actual sin are distinguished in the curriculum of III.43. Keep sin distinct from mere finitude; Traherne repeatedly praises finite creatures in their appointed places.

See also. Original sin; Vice; Wickedness; Repentance; Redemption; Holiness.

Skill

skilled; skill — acquired competence in an art or occupation[401]

The word. Skill is practical or informed competence. The relevant passage uses skilled of the detailed knowledge people readily acquire in ordinary trades.

In Traherne. Traherne's comparison makes worldly expertise a rebuke to spiritual negligence. People devote time to clothes, land, and money, then regard sustained study of God and happiness as excessive. The charge is unequal diligence, not an assertion that practical ability is itself corrupt.

His imagined mine of gold gives the argument a concrete edge: readers who would willingly dig for wealth should not dismiss the labour required for wisdom. Skill thus enters as evidence that disciplined learning is already familiar to them. Their difficulty is choosing an end worthy of the effort they know how to make.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.7** Expertise in trades exposes the inconsistency of neglecting the study of happiness. (Edition p. 202.)

401 Primary text: IV.7. No 2026 editorial notes used.

In this edition. The attested form is skilled; the abstract headword gathers its sense. This is a minor lexical entry, not a claim that Traherne offers a separate theory of professional expertise.

See also. Art and artifice; Study; Trade; Diligence; Wisdom.

Society

society; company; social communion — the presence and exchange of persons[402]

The word. Society can mean companionship or association, not only the total structure of a nation. Traherne often emphasizes the immediate good of persons being present to one another.

In Traherne. Company increases happiness because other persons can both give and receive. Each brings a distinct world of understanding and affection; through love the happiness of one becomes a gift to another. Society is thus not merely relief from loneliness or an audience for private achievement. It supplies goods no collection of lifeless objects could furnish.

Earthly company is also unstable. People can withhold affection, misunderstand, or injure one another. The reader should not let their refusal destroy the happiness already given by God. The maxim that it is good to be happy alone and better in company preserves both truths: human communion is genuinely enriching, while its failures do not remove the more secure foundation of divine friendship.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.14** Happiness alone is defended without denying the superiority of happy company. (Edition p. 208.)
- **IV.18** Giving and receiving make persons the greatest social treasures. (Edition p. 210.)
- **IV.19** Mutual enjoyment is set beside the instability of earthly friendships. (Edition p. 211.)
- **III.43** Society with angels belongs to the promised state of glory. (Edition p. 158.)

402 Primary text: IV.14, IV.18, IV.19, III.43. No 2026 editorial notes used.

In this edition. "Advantage of their society" in IV.14 means the benefit of their company. Rendering society only as a modern institutional abstraction would miss the passage's personal force.

See also. Conversation; Friendship; Solitude; Communion; Person.

Socinians

Socinians; enemies of our Saviour's Deity[403]

The word. Socinians were adherents of the anti-Trinitarian theological tradition associated with Fausto Sozzini. The supplied edition identifies their denial of Christ's deity and rejection of satisfaction for sin as the particular positions at issue here. Traherne's hostile description belongs to his argument, not to a neutral definition.

In Traherne. The name appears in the discussion of why the Son, rather than an angel, undertakes redemption. Traherne knows that punishing someone else for an offender's wrongdoing raises a question of equity. His answer turns on Christ's voluntary undertaking, ability to accomplish it, and exaltation through it. An unwilling substitute would suffer injustice; an incapable substitute would make the arrangement foolish; the substitute's ultimate harm would make it cruel. Traherne claims that none of those conditions applies to Christ.

This is a tightly focused response to an objection, rather than an exposition of all Socinian beliefs. The meditation combines the dignity of Christ's priesthood with the honour of suffering for God and the worth of the people for whom he suffers. Its polemical edge therefore serves a devotional purpose: the reader is to recognize both divine justice and the astonishing value placed on humanity. The following meditation draws out that consequence by urging the redeemed person to recognize an inheritance in the world.

Calling the opponents blind or enemies of Christ's deity expresses Traherne's confessional judgment. Readers can understand why he joins the justice of substitution to divine personhood without adopting his characterization of those who disagree.

403 Primary text: II.33–34. Supplied 2026 editorial note 114 to II.33 identifies Sozzini, Socinian teaching, and the objection to satisfaction.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.33** Names the Socinians and answers the charge of injustice through the Son's willingness, capacity, and benefit. (Edition p. 86.)
- **II.34** Turns redemption into an argument for human dignity and universal inheritance. (Edition p. 88.)

In this edition. Historical identification comes from the supplied 2026 note. The primary meditation gives Traherne's rebuttal, not the opponents' own words; it should not be cited as a balanced account of their theology.

See also. Christ; Redemption; Justice; Hypostatic union.

Socrates

Socrates; Exchange at Athens[404]

The word. Socrates is the Athenian philosopher represented as discovering how many goods for sale he does not need. Traherne uses the familiar moral anecdote but also revises the account of happiness it might support.

In Traherne. The market scene exposes the gap between an abundance of merchandise and genuine need. Traherne accepts freedom from dependency on trivial additions, yet refuses to make absolute needlessness the final ideal. We need the freely given heavens, earth, souls, bodies, and riches of divine likeness. Right enjoyment can therefore make us independent of pomp while fully receptive to creation. The closing qualification about what the pagan philosopher may not have known is important: goods proceed from God and return through human enjoyment and acknowledgment. Socrates becomes both a useful witness against luxury and a point beyond which Christian understanding must move.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.40** The market anecdote moves from needing few artificial goods to receiving all true gifts. (Edition p. 24.)

In this edition. The 2026 note identifies parallels in Xenophon and Diogenes Laertius and explains the London colouring of the Exchange

404 Primary text: I.40; classical sources and historical setting of the language: 2026 edition note to I.40.

and shopkeepers' cry. Traherne's scene is a retelling, not a transcript of ancient Athens.

See also. Contemn; Pomp; Sufficiency; Want.

Solitude

solitude; alone; retirement — separation from immediate human company[405]

The word. Solitude is being alone, whether chosen or imposed. Retirement is a withdrawal that can create space for thought and devotion.

In Traherne. Solitude has a preparatory and protective value. A person may recover attention away from misleading social standards, and can enjoy divine gifts even when others refuse fellowship. David's solitary contemplation is represented as intensely populated by divine works and praise. Physical aloneness need not mean inward emptiness.

Yet solitude is not Traherne's highest social ideal. The principles of communication are more excellent than those of retirement, because giving and receiving complete one another. The frightening childhood field discloses the misery of imagining oneself wholly alone in existence. The successful solitary therefore remains related to persons, history, and God; withdrawal is valuable when it enables richer communion rather than when it seals the soul against all company.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.99** Solitude and communion with all are reconciled within a comprehensive account of happiness. (Edition p. 125.)
- **III.69** David's solitudes are filled with contemplation, joy, and song. (Edition p. 175.)
- **IV.14** One can remain happy when company is withheld. (Edition p. 208.)
- **IV.18** Principles of communication are preferred to those of solitude. (Edition p. 210.)

405 Primary text: II.99, III.69, IV.14, IV.18. No 2026 editorial notes used.

In this edition. The word does not consistently mean an ascetic vocation or permanent isolation. Read the comparative judgment of IV.18 alongside the defence of being happy alone.

See also. Society; Silence; Contemplation; Friendship; Repose.

Soul

soul; souls — the living, understanding, and loving person in spiritual capacity[406]

The word. The soul is the principle of the person's life and spiritual activity. Traherne particularly attends to understanding and affection: what they can receive, where they can be present, and how they become active.

In Traherne. The soul's greatness cannot be measured by the bodily room it occupies. It can understand a hemisphere, attend to ages before its birth, and love persons at a distance. Traherne accordingly describes its capacity as infinite, but the descriptions concern several related claims: unbounded scope, inexhaustible depth, and the ability to receive God's gifts. They should not be flattened into the single notion of an infinitely large body.

The language of presence is especially strong. An act of understanding is the presence of the soul with its object. Objects are not simply stored as dead pieces of information; their apprehension gives the soul form, beauty, and employment. As light becomes manifest upon what it illuminates, the powers of the soul become known in their exercise. An empty extension through space is insufficient: the world's actual beings and the love directed toward them complete the soul's living stature.

Other souls introduce an extraordinary multiplication. One soul can consider another whose powers are also vast, and can follow its relations to still others. This makes communion more than the sharing of a limited stock. Persons enrich one another through distinct acts of knowing and loving, and every additional person provides further objects and witnesses of joy. The claim is difficult and deliberately presented as a wonder; its force lies in the power of spiritual participation that ordinary measures fail to exhaust.

406 Primary text: II.70, II.76, II.78, IV.85, IV.100. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Traherne also safeguards agency. The soul is not merely a mirror in which divine action happens without a creaturely answer. Its ability to love irregularly proves that its acts are genuinely its own; rightly directed love is therefore a real return to God. The soul can be a fountain, freely communicating what its created power makes possible. Reception and activity must be held together.

This exalted account remains an account of a creature. The soul is made, depends upon God, and requires enlightenment and redemption. Calling it a temple of omnipresence does not mean that it becomes a second independent deity. Its perfected end is indwelling communion: God known and loved within it, and itself present with the treasures and persons God loves. The resulting grandeur demands conduct proportionate to it. A great capacity left unused is not yet the full life for which that capacity was given.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.70** The soul's understanding and love exceed bodily measures, while other persons complete its communion. (Edition p. 105.)
- **II.76** An act of understanding is defined as the soul's presence. (Edition p. 109.)
- **II.78** Objects disclose, employ, and give form to the soul's powers. (Edition p. 110.)
- **IV.85** The soul's distinct acts of love make it more than a passive mirror. (Edition p. 253.)
- **IV.100** Infinite understanding and affection culminate in mutual indwelling and communion. (Edition p. 263.)

In this edition. Capital Soul is often emphatic, not a new technical entity. Distinguish actual exercise from capacity, and metaphorical dimensions from bodily extension; Traherne's own claims are stronger than a casual figure of speech but do not make the soul material.

See also. Self; Mind; Understanding; Love; Infinity; Communion.

Space

space; spaces; infinite space — extension and the scope of presence[407]

The word. Space is the room in which bodies are situated and move. Traherne also considers its apprehension within the soul and its relation to divine immensity.

In Traherne. The argument begins with a thought experiment. Remove heaven and earth in imagination and the place where they stood still remains. Finite boundaries are learned through encounters with particular things; unbounded scope, Traherne argues, is more immediately felt by the soul. He therefore treats infinite space as something more fundamental than a very large collection of visible objects. This is a philosophical claim about apprehension, not a measurement performed by astronomy.

Its inward and outward aspects are deliberately connected. Outside, space is a chamber for treasures; within understanding, it is the capacity to receive them. The soul's scope and the world's extent answer one another. Yet an empty expanse does not constitute felicity. The objects that fill it, their relations, and the affections they call forth supply the beauty and life that mere room would lack.

The Fifth Century takes this connection into an explicit theology of infinity. Divine bounty requires a scope adequate to its expression, and infinite space becomes a field of gifts, an eternal dwelling, and the bosom of God. The language closely identifies space, divine presence, and enjoyment. It would soften the text too much to treat every such statement as ornamental language; it would also misdescribe it to substitute the assumptions of a modern physical theory. The meditation is concerned with what divine power and love make available to a creature.

The account then distinguishes space present in a moment from the duration in which all moments are held. Even an endless spatial field is not the whole of abundance: eternity is another room of joys. This is the point of the repeated questions about room "besides" space. The meditation is not merely extending an already infinite region farther outward. It introduces the complete presence of ages and events as an additional dimension of enjoyment.

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407 Primary text: II.21, II.81, II.84, V.3, V.6. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Finally, imagined boundlessness must not be confused with a settled assertion about the size of the material universe. Elsewhere Traherne expressly leaves open whether the visible world is infinite. What matters across the passages is the soul's refusal to be confined to a private corner, and its capacity to meet the range of divine generosity through understanding and love. Space provides scope for communion; it is never an adequate substitute for the beings with whom communion occurs.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.21** The material world's exact extent is left undetermined. (Edition p. 77.)
- **II.81** The imagined removal of the world leaves space and supports the priority of infinity. (Edition p. 112.)
- **II.84** Empty space must be furnished with the ideas of actual objects. (Edition p. 114.)
- **V.3** Infinite extent is joined to the soul's freedom and divine presence. (Edition p. 266.)
- **V.6** Eternal duration supplies another region beyond the consideration of present space. (Edition p. 269.)

In this edition. Do not equate space with matter or assume that infinite space proves an infinite material cosmos. "Besides" and "beyond" in V.6 mark a carefully posed distinction; this edition retains the meditation's questions rather than resolving them through later physics.

See also. Room; Infinity; Eternity; Soul; Place.

Spectacle

spectacle; spectator — a scene offered to sight, and the one who beholds it[408]

The word. A spectacle is something beheld, especially a striking or affecting scene. Its older sense is broader than entertainment provided for passive consumption.

In Traherne. The Cross is a woeful spectacle whose power depends on the love the viewer apprehends within suffering. Its visible disfigurement raises the question of how such a sight can be joy.

408 Primary text: I.57, I.89, III.60, II.90. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Traherne answers through fidelity and compassion: to stay with the beloved matters more than the splendour of princes.

A spectacle of divine felicity works differently, bringing the observer to repose and self-amendment. In both cases seeing is meant to change the soul's relation to its object. The spectator belongs within the purpose of creation because gifts require conscious enjoyers, but must become more than a detached observer. Spectacle is therefore an entrance into participation, ethical response, and communion.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.57** The woeful spectacle draws pity and attentive approach to the Cross. (Edition p. 35.)
- **I.89** The disfigured body poses and transforms the question of pleasurable sight. (Edition p. 56.)
- **III.60** The spectacle of happiness changes the soul and calls it to amendment. (Edition p. 169.)
- **II.90** The spectator's understanding belongs to the purpose of the created world. (Edition p. 118.)

In this edition. A spectacle in I.89 is not something offered as light amusement. Preserve the passage's disturbing question rather than replacing the crucified body with an uncomplicated emblem of beauty.

See also. Sight; Theatre; Cross; Compassion; Enjoyment.

Spirit

spirit; spirits; spiritual — incorporeal life, active disposition, or divine presence[409]

The word. Spirit may name the Holy Spirit, a created soul, or an animating disposition. Context is necessary: the same word does not identify the same agent in every passage.

In Traherne. Spiritual being is capable of a presence that exceeds bodily location. Traherne describes understanding as a living act and insists that spiritual strength can engage objects too great for physical strength. The adjective thus carries a positive claim about activity, reach, and value, not merely the negation of matter.

409 Primary text: I.94, I.95, II.76, IV.98. No 2026 editorial notes used.

In prayer, however, the Spirit is also the divine comforter who enlightens and quickens the human soul. That relation must not disappear when the reader encounters the strong language of likeness between created and divine minds. A soul can be made like God in knowledge and love while receiving the power to do so. Spirit's several senses articulate the possibility of communion, but they do not make every human impulse the action of the Holy Ghost.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.94** Christ's will and Spirit ground the prayer for human conformity. (Edition p. 60.)
- **I.95** The Holy Spirit is invoked as quickener and enlightener. (Edition p. 61.)
- **II.76** The soul is described as a living act and pure spirit. (Edition p. 109.)
- **IV.98** Spiritual strength is defended against measures drawn from bodily force. (Edition p. 262.)

In this edition. Capitalization assists but does not settle reference. Where the person of the Holy Spirit is plainly invoked, preserve that specificity; where a human spirit is meant, do not import it.

See also. Holy Spirit; Soul; Mind; Power; Body.

Stars

stars; starry heavens — luminous heavenly bodies, signs and gifts of creation[410]

The word. Stars belong to the visible heavens. Traherne treats their beauty, their supposed influences, and their availability to common sight as distinct sources of significance.

In Traherne. Stars become the reader's jewels without being removed from their places. The image reverses the ordinary preference for rare ornaments: a shared celestial splendour can enrich more people, more deeply, than a privately held stone. Their apparent remoteness also exercises the mind's capacity to reach beyond its bodily station.

410 Primary text: I.30, III.18, III.69, III.71. No 2026 editorial notes used.

David provides a model of this valuation. Royal magnificence does not prevent him from preferring the heavens to precious stones, and the moon and stars become occasions for recognizing human dignity and divine care. Traherne's astronomical language remains historically situated. He can connect the stars with influences and terrestrial service without supplying a technical theory of how every such effect occurs.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.30** The stars are claimed as jewels within an enlarged enjoyment of the world. (Edition p. 18.)
- **III.18** Thought reaches above the stars while asking about the limits of the heavens. (Edition p. 140.)
- **III.69** David prefers stars and divine works to royal precious stones. (Edition p. 175.)
- **III.71** The moon and stars introduce the psalmic meditation on human dignity. (Edition p. 178.)

In this edition. Influences is a historical natural-philosophical term where it occurs. Do not silently translate it into a verified modern physical mechanism or assume that the passage is giving an astrological horoscope.

See also. Sun; Heaven; Light; Common things; David.

Straitened and bowels

straitened; straitening; bowels[411]

The word. To be straitened is to be narrowed, cramped, or confined. Bowels can name the inward seat of feeling and affection. Together the words describe emotional restriction, not simply bodily anatomy.

In Traherne. Traherne uses the scriptural complaint about being straitened in one's own bowels to explain delayed happiness. The obstruction is not a shortage in what God gives but a contracted willingness to receive and enjoy it now. The spatial verb also describes love hindered by earthly necessities, where providing for the body can divide attention. In the Fifth Century the same imagery expands to divine power, which requires room proportionate to its fullness. The

411 Primary text: IV.9, IV.60, V.4; biblical and historical gloss: 2026 edition note to IV.9.

contrast between cramping and enlargement carries the reader from personal affection toward cosmic amplitude.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.9** Constricted affections explain the postponement of present felicity. (Edition p. 204.)
- **IV.60** Love is pinched and straitened by bodily wants. (Edition p. 234.)
- **V.4** Infinite room prevents power from being imagined as cramped. (Edition p. 267.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to IV.9 identifies 2 Corinthians 6:12 and explains the bodily idiom. Traherne places Paul's words in God's address to the reader.

See also. Affection; Capacity; Enlargement; Room.

Strangeness

strange; stranger; strangers — unfamiliarity capable of wonder or estrangement[412]

The word. Strange can mean unfamiliar, remarkable, or foreign. A stranger may lack habitual assumptions and therefore see vividly, but may also be vulnerable to isolation and mistaken authority.

In Traherne. The child enters the world as a little stranger surrounded by delights. Unfamiliarity allows the ordinary to appear rare and glorious before social valuation dulls it. The adult is asked to recover a comparable estrangement from corrupt customs, becoming a stranger to the opinions that make divine gifts seem negligible.

Traherne also gives the word an ethical direction. In the charitable household, an arriving stranger is welcomed as joyfully as the sun. The unfamiliar person is not excluded from the shared inheritance; charity makes kinship visible where ordinary acquaintance is absent. Strangeness therefore moves between perception and hospitality: it can release objects from habit and release neighbours from the limits of private familiarity.

412 Primary text: III.2, III.5, III.7, IV.22. No 2026 editorial notes used.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.2** The infant is a little stranger among newly perceived delights. (Edition p. 128.)
- **III.5** Renewal requires becoming strangers to corrupt customary opinions. (Edition p. 132.)
- **III.7** The child's unfamiliarity helps explain submission to adult authority. (Edition p. 134.)
- **IV.22** The stranger is welcomed within a household governed by universal charity. (Edition p. 213.)

In this edition. Strangeness is this lexicon's organizing noun; the passages use strange and stranger. Foreignness, novelty, and spiritual detachment should not be assumed to mean the same thing in each occurrence.

See also. Child and childhood; Custom; Wonder; Person; Charity.

Study

study; studying; studious — sustained inquiry directed toward an end[413]

The word. Study is deliberate, continued attention to a subject. It may acquire knowledge, but its proper direction is determined by the end for which the knowledge is sought.

In Traherne. Traherne's complaint against his education is that things were studied as alien to the student's enjoyment. The remedy is to examine them under the double consideration of interest and treasure: how they concern the knower and why they are good. This makes study answerable to divine glory and human happiness at once.

The same subject can yield radically different fruit according to intention. To know politics merely for advancement differs from seeing providence and opportunities of service within it. Yet the reader must not remain indefinitely at the stage of inquiry. Having sought happiness, one should spend still more time possessing it. Study reaches its end in lived and active understanding; ostentation and idle curiosity are failures of direction, not evidence that thinking itself is sterile.

413 Primary text: III.37, III.40, III.41, IV.11. No 2026 editorial notes used.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.37** Study without a known end leaves its manner defective. (Edition p. 154.)
- **III.40** Interest and treasure supply the right double orientation. (Edition p. 156.)
- **III.41** Different ends transform the value and delight of identical subjects. (Edition p. 156.)
- **IV.11** The time spent seeking happiness must lead to time spent enjoying it. (Edition p. 206.)

In this edition. Interest in III.40 means personal concern or participation, not mere curiosity and not only financial advantage. That distinction is essential to Traherne's recommended manner of study.

See also. Knowledge; Learning; Science; Interest; Treasure; Wisdom.

Stupid

stupid; stupidness[414]

The word. Stupid in this passage means unperceiving, insensible, or lacking the activity of awareness. It describes a condition within a historical hierarchy of living powers, not the modern casual insult about intelligence.

In Traherne. Traherne explains Pico's transformations by distinguishing inward operation from outward appearance. Bark does not define the plant as decisively as its unperceiving nature; skin does not make an animal, nor bodily separation alone an angel. Applied to human life, the comparison asks which powers a person cultivates. The passage's claim is ethical and spiritual: inward disposition gives life its character. It is not a medical classification of cognitive ability, and the text supplies no warrant for applying the label to contemporary people or groups.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.78** The gloss on Pico places stupidness beside sensuality and angelic intelligence as contrasting inward conditions. (Edition p. 248.)

In this edition. Keep the word within this specific plant–animal–angel comparison. The 2026 note identifies Pico's wording and

414 Primary text: IV.78; textual comparison: 2026 edition note to IV.78.

Traherne's altered sequence; neither establishes a modern biological or psychological taxonomy.

See also. Choice; Pico della Mirandola; Sense; Soul.

Subsistence

subsist; subsistence; Subsistences; manner of substance[415]

The word. Subsistence is a manner of existing or subsisting. In the theological vocabulary used here it distinguishes a personal mode within unity of essence. It has nothing to do with earning a subsistence, and it should not be treated as a synonym for a separate material substance.

In Traherne. Traherne employs the term first to explain a threefold relation within love and then to describe the loving soul. II.40 distinguishes love in the lover, love communicated, and love dwelling in the beloved object. These are one love considered in different manners of subsisting. The distinction matters because communication neither detaches a portion from the lover nor produces an inferior copy: the love received is the love that remains in its source. II.41 accordingly insists that fountain and stream are the same love and equally glorious.

This analysis forms part of Traherne's attempt to apprehend the Trinity through love. The preceding meditation identifies God as pure, uncompounded love and speaks of the Son as begotten through loving. The vocabulary of begetting and proceeding consequently carries more than an ornamental three-part pattern. Yet the reader should preserve the author's argument as he develops it rather than substitute a complete doctrinal system for these few meditations. The supplied notes observe that his initial naming of the Son as Love has a distinctive emphasis within the Christian tradition.

II.56 transfers the pattern to the soul. Before loving, its powers lie confused and unexercised; in loving, it abides within itself, flows outward, and lives in its object. Traherne calls these three subsistences. The sun and its spreading beams illustrate how outgoing activity makes an inward life manifest. The soul's extension into another is therefore a fulfilment of its own life, not its abolition. It can now contemplate what

415 Primary text: II.39, II.40, II.41, II.56. Supplied 2026 editorial notes 118–119 and 130 explain the theological vocabulary and Augustinian comparisons.

it is both in itself and for its beloved, enjoying communion with itself through this enlarged activity.

The analogy should not be literalized into three human persons or a human acquisition of divine personhood. Its immediate explanatory work is to hold unity and communication together. Subsistence names distinguishable relations within a life that remains one; it helps Traherne explain how love genuinely reaches another without ceasing to belong to its source.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.39** Presents divine love as uncompounded and the Son as begotten through loving. (Edition p. 90.)
- **II.40** Distinguishes three manners of subsisting within the same love. (Edition p. 91.)
- **II.41** Insists on the equality of love in its fountain and stream. (Edition p. 91.)
- **II.56** The loving soul gains a threefold inward, outgoing, and object-directed life. (Edition p. 99.)

In this edition. The supplied 2026 notes explain the technical theological sense and compare Augustine's accounts of love and the mind. Those comparisons are background supplied by the edition; neither passage claims that an ordinary human soul becomes the Trinity.

See also. Trinity; Person; Accident and substance; Love; Communication.

Sufficiency

sufficiency; self sufficiency; self-sufficiency; all sufficiency[416]

The word. Sufficiency is adequacy of provision or power: having enough, or being able, for a particular end. Self-sufficiency can instead imply an inward independence whose value Traherne subjects to scrutiny.

In Traherne. He rejects a supposed happiness confined to the self and deprived of objects. Contentment must arise from real treasures perceived and enjoyed. Yet the soul possesses a secret sufficiency for

416 Primary text: II.100, IV.97, I.35; biblical association: 2026 edition note to IV.97.

apprehending great and even infinite objects, discovered only in exercise. There is no contradiction if the reader asks what the power is sufficient for: its adequacy consists in receiving and managing goods, not in making them unnecessary. Likewise, the sufficiency of common treasures supports peace and mutual service rather than competitive scarcity.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.100** Mistaken self-sufficiency wrongly deprives happiness of its objects. (Edition p. 126.)
- **IV.97** The soul discovers its capacity for great objects through practice. (Edition p. 261.)
- **I.35** Sufficient treasures support contentment, unity, and charity. (Edition p. 21.)

In this edition. The 2026 note to IV.97 links the word with Pauline dependence upon God. Do not turn the soul's sufficiency into independence from its giver.

See also. Capacity; Contentment; Enjoyment; Socrates.

Sun

sun; sunbeams; beams — the visible luminary and an image of communicated life[417]

The word. The sun is a created source of light and warmth. Its beams make it an especially flexible image of presence, generosity, understanding, and love.

In Traherne. The sun's excellence depends on its relations and services, not simply on dazzling size. Its light enables sight, fruitfulness, and the enjoyment of the world. Imagining its absence exposes a value that familiarity has hidden. The ordinary sun is therefore more useful to the argument than an imaginary infinitely large one.

Optical comparisons then describe spiritual life. The soul's rays become manifest in objects, while the sun held in understanding illuminates inward life as the physical sun illuminates a hemisphere. This is an analogy of reception and activity, not a claim that human knowing consists literally of emitted light. At the Cross, the Sun of Righteousness

417 Primary text: I.46, III.55, II.78, II.90, I.88. No 2026 editorial notes used.

is eclipsed: the same familiar image can articulate glory hidden within suffering.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.46** The hypothetical extinguishing of the sun exposes its immeasurable value. (Edition p. 28.)
- **III.55** The sun's excellence is explicated through its relations and uses. (Edition p. 166.)
- **II.78** Sunbeams and reflection model the soul's active apprehension. (Edition p. 110.)
- **II.90** The sun in understanding is distinguished from the sun in the heavens. (Edition p. 118.)
- **I.88** The eclipsed Sun of Righteousness figures Christ crucified. (Edition p. 55.)

In this edition. Keep the literal sun, its mental apprehension, and Christ's scriptural title distinct. The repeated imagery connects them without licensing a single physical or theological identification.

See also. Light; Stars; Reflection; Soul; Sight; Service.

Superstition

superstition — fearful misapprehension of divine power without delight in goodness[418]

The word. Superstition is religious apprehension distorted by ignorance or misplaced fear. Traherne gives it an unusually pointed definition through a saying he attributes to Plutarch.

In Traherne. Knowledge of God must disclose goodness and the beauty of generous love. A consciousness of divine power that produces only dread misses the character of the being apprehended. Traherne calls that deficient knowledge superstition: power has been detached from the goodness governing its exercise.

The argument does not deny judgment elsewhere in the Centuries. It establishes what must animate a true apprehension of God and why bare terror cannot fulfill the purpose of religious knowledge. The reader is invited to see a giver delighting in the beloved's happiness, so that

418 Primary text: I.17. No 2026 editorial notes used.

knowledge becomes love and enjoyment rather than anxious awareness of superior force.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.17** Knowledge of goodness is contrasted with an ignorant dread of divine power. (Edition p. 11.)

In this edition. The definition is explicitly attributed by Traherne to Plutarch. This entry reports that attribution without supplying an unverified ancient passage or treating his English as a checked literal translation.

See also. Fear; God; Goodness; Religion; Knowledge.

Sweetness

sweetness; sweet; sweeter — pleasing quality apprehended in sense and affection[419]

The word. Sweetness begins in taste but readily names gentleness, delight, and the felt goodness of a relation. Traherne retains the sensory vividness while extending its objects.

In Traherne. The sweetness of repose and of morning belongs to the world's ordered changes. No uniform splendour can replace all these differentiated pleasures. Spiritual sweetness similarly depends on intelligent appreciation: corrupt fashions can make people unable to taste the nobility of nature, while grace alters the palate by which praise is received.

The word often describes love's communicated quality rather than an isolated pleasurable sensation. To know oneself loved, to remember divine friendship while walking or eating, and to share another person's joy are sweet because they unite benefit with the recognition of its source. Sweetness is thus a mode of experienced value, not a guarantee that whatever immediately gratifies appetite is good.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.9** Daily changes make different sweetnesses possible. (Edition p. 70.)

419 Primary text: II.9, III.13, III.81, IV.90. No 2026 editorial notes used.

- **III.13** Corrupt invention prevents the tasting of nature's sweetness. (Edition p. 138.)
- **III.81** Grace corrects the palate that undervalues praise. (Edition p. 184.)
- **IV.90** The remembrance of divine friendship sweetens ordinary activity. (Edition p. 257.)

In this edition. The adjective need not indicate sugary taste, softness, or lack of seriousness. Its figurative uses can describe demanding fidelity and the deep pleasure of recognizing love.

See also. Taste; Pleasure; Delight; Love; Repose.

Sympathy

sympathy — a responsive affinity or agreement of affection[420]

The word. Sympathy is a correspondence of feeling or inclination. It can be directed toward goodness itself, not only toward another person's suffering.

In Traherne. In the survey of human powers, sympathy appears beside love to virtue, while tenderness and compassion are separately named as capacities uniting a person to others. The distinction matters. Sympathy here is part of the soul's native responsiveness to excellence, rather than a synonym that absorbs every form of fellow-feeling.

The larger argument asks why God gave these inclinations. Each fits a person for particular objects and forms of enjoyment: compassion for persons, emulation for examples, admiration for divine beauty. Sympathy belongs to that purposeful equipment. Properly directed, the soul does not contemplate virtue as an indifferent spectator but finds itself disposed to approve and love it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.42** Sympathy and love to virtue are included among the soul's purposive inclinations. (Edition p. 157.)

In this edition. The single explicit occurrence does not establish a technical theory of universal natural sympathy. Read it with its stated object, virtue, and distinguish it from the separately named compassion.

420 Primary text: III.42. No 2026 editorial notes used.

See also. Affection; Compassion; Inclination; Virtue; Man and mankind.

Table

table; painter's table — a familiar furnishing or prepared surface for painting[421]

The word. Table may mean an ordinary household furnishing, but a painter's table is a prepared panel or ground upon which a picture is made.

In Traherne. The familiar walk and table establish a measure of intimacy: the reader ought to know God's ways through all ages as readily as the objects of daily life. The comparison enlarges familiarity rather than supplying a theory of domestic furnishings.

The Fifth Century uses a different sense. Infinite space is a painter's table adequate to the scope of the intended picture. The analogy stresses the fitting relation between field, intention, and completed work; an unfilled or unfinished surface would suggest a defect in the artist. God's works exceed painted representations in reality and glory, and their further excellence is that the spectator enjoys them as his own possessions.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.30** The ordinary table supplies a standard of familiar acquaintance. (Edition p. 18.)
- **V.5** The painter's table figures the field prepared for divine works. (Edition p. 268.)

In this edition. Table in V.5 means the painter's prepared support, not a dining table or a tabulation of information. The two cited uses should be distinguished rather than forced into one allegory.

See also. Picture; Limner and pencil; Art and artifice; Space; Habit.

421 Primary text: I.30, V.5. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Taste

taste; tasteth; palate — sensory relish and discriminating enjoyment[422]

The word. Taste names bodily perception of flavour and the capacity to relish or judge an excellence. Palate extends the same analogy to habits of study and devotion.

In Traherne. To study a subject is not necessarily to taste it. The end sought determines the quality of intellectual enjoyment: information gathered for prestige differs from knowledge that opens divine ways and the world's value. Traherne's taste is consequently trained by purpose, not simply by accumulating facts.

Corrupt custom can destroy relish for common blessings, while grace corrects the perversity that undervalues spiritual goods once they are known. Tasting therefore joins understanding to affection. The closing insistence that the soul must think, taste, and see makes enjoyment an exercise, not a possession acquired once for all. It remains possible to be surrounded by beauty while living in desolation because no active response answers it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.13** Corrupt social values prevent a taste for natural excellence. (Edition p. 138.)
- **III.41** The palate of study varies with the learner's purpose. (Edition p. 156.)
- **III.81** Grace corrects the taste that undervalues divine mysteries. (Edition p. 184.)
- **IV.95** Thinking, tasting, and seeing are necessary exercises of the soul. (Edition p. 260.)

In this edition. Taste and tincture in III.36 describes an initial experience and colouring of education, not necessarily a fully developed critical judgment. Elsewhere palate deliberately keeps the bodily analogy vivid.

See also. Sweetness; Sense; Study; Enjoyment; Habit.

422 Primary text: III.13, III.41, III.81, IV.95, III.36. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Tears

tears; weep; weeping — visible grief, contrition, or compassionate affection[423]

The word. Tears can express many kinds of sorrow. Traherne distinguishes their causes through the devotional situation rather than treating weeping itself as either failure or holiness.

In Traherne. Tears are absent from the child's first apprehension of an innocent world, but they belong to the recovery of communion in a world where sin remains. The poem on earthly Sabbaths makes weeping part of the struggle against inward lust and envisages each tear becoming a pearl in the life to come. Its hope does not deny the present labour.

In the account of sacrifice, the tears of an offending and returning friend move the beloved because they disclose contrition within a relationship. In charity, the memory of Mary washing Christ's feet with tears is redirected toward care for his living members. Thus grief can become action and restoration; tears are valuable for the love and truth they express, not as an independent spiritual currency.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.2** The child initially knows a world without tears or quarrels. (Edition p. 128.)
- **III.47** Earthly struggle is figured through tears that will become pearls. (Edition p. 161.)
- **III.83** The returning friend's tears disclose contrition. (Edition p. 187.)
- **I.81** Mary's tears prompt practical ministry to Christ's members. (Edition p. 51.)

In this edition. The tear-to-pearl image in III.47 belongs to a poem about future transvaluation of suffering. It is not a promise that grief becomes visibly pleasant at once.

See also. Grief; Repentance; Compassion; Sacrifice; Charity.

423 Primary text: III.2, III.47, III.83, I.81. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Temple

temple; temples; Holy Temple — a consecrated place of presence and praise[424]

The word. A temple is a place set apart for divine worship. Traherne extends its architecture to the world, the soul, and divine omnipresence without losing the force of consecrated dwelling.

In Traherne. The world is a temple because it makes God's gifts and attributes available to acknowledgment and praise. It is not merely a neutral container in which religious activity happens: its beings supply the matter and occasions of worship. The soul is likewise a living temple, capable of receiving the Trinity through knowledge and love.

These enlarged senses remain connected to scriptural worship. Traherne reads the Psalms as bringing visible works into the tabernacle, so that their apprehended goodness becomes the richness of God's house. In the final meditations, omnipresence itself is a transparent temple. The succession does not simply discard buildings for metaphors; it teaches the reader to recognize how worship, created gifts, inward life, and divine presence belong together.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.1** The world is a temple and visible entrance into eternity. (Edition p. 66.)
- **II.92** The soul is a living temple and throne of the Trinity. (Edition p. 120.)
- **III.86** The visible works of God are brought into the psalmic temple. (Edition p. 188.)
- **V.9** Omnipresence is figured as a transparent temple of infinite lustre. (Edition p. 271.)

In this edition. The Holy Temple in a quoted psalm and the soul as temple occupy different levels of reference. Traherne's exposition links them; it does not make every literal building disappear from the text.

See also. Worship; Church; Soul; World; Omnipresence; Praise.

424 Primary text: II.1, II.92, III.86, V.9. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Temptation

temptation; temptations; tempter — enticement that tests or misdirects freedom[425]

The word. Temptation is an inducement toward wrong and, through that inducement, a trial of faithfulness. It differs from the completed act of sin.

In Traherne. The reader's present world is valuable partly because it is a place where faithful action remains possible under difficulty. Happiness is not yet seen with the clarity of glory; danger and temptation can therefore mislead. Traherne's assurance about the attractiveness of goodness does not mean that a passing perception has made every person incapable of falling.

His prayer asks the Spirit for courage and constancy through the disclosure of real treasures. The poem of earthly Sabbaths similarly makes inward conflict part of the life of joy. Resistance is not a merely negative exercise. To conquer the desire that spoils communion allows love and enjoyment to become more vigorous, and gives present fidelity a distinct worth.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.98** The Spirit's disclosure of enduring treasures strengthens the soul against temptations. (Edition p. 63.)
- **II.97** Dim earthly apprehension is contrasted with the clarity that excludes falling in glory. (Edition p. 124.)
- **III.47** Temptations and inward lusts remain within the poem's account of earthly bliss. (Edition p. 161.)

In this edition. The impossibility of sinning in II.97 belongs to the Kingdom of Glory and to clear sight of happiness. Do not generalize it into a claim that the earthly contemplative is already impeccable.

See also. Sin; Freedom; Holy Spirit; Courage; Virtue.

425 Primary text: I.98, II.97, III.47. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Tendering

tendering the life of his enemies[426]

The word. Tendering means cherishing, regarding with care, or treating as precious. It does not here mean formally offering something for acceptance, as in tendering a payment or resignation.

In Traherne. David's tendering of enemies' lives belongs to a sequence of outward acts that express an inward relation to God. Care crosses the boundary of hostility: the psalmist's own safety or advantage does not exhaust his concern. The following references to mourning others' sickness and showing mercy reinforce the active, protective sense. This small historical verb thus bears part of the book's larger claim that another person can remain a treasure even when affection is difficult. The practical model complements the universal sympathy developed through contemplation elsewhere.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.93** Tendering enemies' lives forms part of David's exemplary outward conduct. (Edition p. 193.)

In this edition. The 2026 note glosses cherishing and connects the phrase with David's sparing Saul. That identification explains the allusion; Traherne does not retell those episodes here.

See also. David; Enemy; Mercy; Precedent.

Thanksgiving

thanksgiving; thanksgivings; render thanks — grateful acknowledgment of benefits[427]

The word. Thanksgiving is gratitude expressed toward a giver. It includes speech and praise, but depends on the prior apprehension that something valuable has actually been given.

In Traherne. Benefits become thanksgiving when they are known and prized. Traherne repeatedly joins ignorance of the world's gifts to the silence of ungrateful lips: one cannot knowingly return more than one

426 Primary text: III.93; historical gloss and scriptural identification: 2026 edition note to III.93.

427 Primary text: I.35, II.94, III.82, IV.49. No 2026 editorial notes used.

has received as good. Thanksgiving is therefore an intellectual and affective act before it is a verbal performance.

Its importance reaches into the purpose of creation. A material creature can serve life, but a thankful person consciously acknowledges the love expressed in that service. Such acknowledgment becomes an offering God can delight in. The act also enlarges the recipient, turning self-concern into love of the benefactor and fellowship with everyone who praises him. Thanksgiving completes reception without exhausting the gift or ending the relation.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.35** Freely given common goods cause gratitude and overflowing thanksgiving. (Edition p. 21.)
- **II.94** Praises return benefits that have first been apprehended. (Edition p. 121.)
- **III.82** Thanksgiving is an oblation of the soul and delight to divine love. (Edition p. 186.)
- **IV.49** Grateful principles turn self-love toward love of God. (Edition p. 227.)

In this edition. Thanksgiving is not interchangeable with complacency in III.82: knowledge, delight, and grateful response are distinguishable components of praise. Keep their sequence and cooperation visible.

See also. Gratitude; Praise; Return; Gift; Sacrifice; Self-love.

Theatre

theatre — a place of display, action, and attentive beholding[428]

The word. A theatre is a space in which something is presented or enacted before spectators. The figure can organize the world's relation to action, manifestation, and enjoyment.

In Traherne. The world is a theatre of love because it sustains persons and objects among which love can act. It is also a theatre of virtues: courage, fidelity, prudence, and repentance require situations and

428 Primary text: I.58, II.65, IV.39, V.4. No 2026 editorial notes used.

neighbours toward whom they may be exercised. The figure therefore implies participation as well as observation.

The Cross concentrates this double character. It is at once a theatre of joys and a place of sorrows, where the reader beholds love's action and learns to imitate it. At the widest scale, infinity supplies a theatre adequate to divine power. Across these uses, a scene becomes meaningful through what occurs within it and through the understanding of those who behold it.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.58** The Cross is a theatre of joys together with a place of sorrows. (Edition p. 36.)
- **II.65** The world sustains the objects and exercise of love. (Edition p. 103.)
- **IV.39** The world is a theatre in which virtues can be practised. (Edition p. 221.)
- **V.4** Infinity offers a scope adequate to divine power's manifestation. (Edition p. 267.)

In this edition. Theatre is not necessarily a reference to a playhouse or fictional performance. The acted virtues and displayed divine works are real within the argument, not merely roles put on for effect.

See also. Spectacle; World; Action and activity; Love; Virtue.

Thirst

thirst; thirsty; thirsted after — bodily need and ardent desire for fulfillment[429]

The word. Thirst is a bodily need whose urgency makes it an image of desire. The image retains the relation between an appetite and the good that can satisfy it.

In Traherne. Wine quenches bodily thirst whether or not its drinker understands it, but contemplated as a gift of love it answers a spiritual thirst too. Desire becomes more comprehensive as the reader learns to delight in the good a gift does to everyone. The ordinary act of drinking becomes a model for intelligent participation.

429 Primary text: I.27, III.25, III.46, III.86. No 2026 editorial notes used.

The autobiographical thirst for happiness likewise refuses substitute satisfactions. News, discoveries, and disciplines are examined for the good they promise, until the speaker deliberately gives his time to the search. Scriptural thirst directs the same appetite toward God's manifested power and goodness. Its eventual satisfaction is not the abolition of desire, but desire meeting its adequate object.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.27** Bodily and spiritual drinking disclose two levels of satisfaction. (Edition p. 17.)
- **III.25** The thirst for news expresses an expectation of hidden happiness. (Edition p. 146.)
- **III.46** The burning thirst for happiness governs the speaker's choice of life. (Edition p. 160.)
- **III.86** The psalmic thirst for God is connected to the apprehension of his works. (Edition p. 188.)

In this edition. Thirst is often affirmative in these passages, unlike inordinate appetite. Do not assume that an intense desire is a fault before considering its object and direction.

See also. Desire; Want; Appetite; Food; Felicity.

Thomas à Kempis

Thomas à Kempis; Give all for all[430]

The word. Thomas à Kempis is the devotional writer cited for the exchange of all for all. The 2026 edition identifies the saying with The Imitation of Christ III.37.

In Traherne. Traherne places this call to renunciation at the point where he distinguishes two worlds. One is the beautiful creation given by God; the other is the humanly manufactured system of vain and scarce treasures. Giving up the second allows enjoyment of the first. The quotation therefore preserves the intensity of renunciation while specifying its target. It is not a casual inconsistency in a book devoted to worldly enjoyment. Rather, the passage redefines what must be relinquished and what total possession can mean. The brief named citation becomes a compact example of Traherne's way with inherited

430 Primary text: I.7; author and source identification: 2026 edition note to I.7.

devotional language: he receives it, sharpens the distinctions around it, and makes it serve felicity.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.7** The maxim closes the distinction between God's world and the world of invented vanities. (Edition p. 7.)

In this edition. The source identification and account of the older contempt-of-the-world tradition belong to the 2026 note. The entry does not assume that the cited work as a whole teaches rejection of every created good.

See also. Contemn; Enjoyment; Vanity; World.

Thought

thought; thoughts; thinking — the mind's act and the object inwardly apprehended[431]

The word. Thought can name an act of thinking or the conception formed through it. Traherne exploits the relation between these senses: the world within thought is an activity of the living soul.

In Traherne. Thinking is easy in its bare occurrence and difficult in its right direction. Habit has made good thought seem laborious, although fitting thoughts are intrinsically delightful. Their rightness is measured by value: to think as God does is to esteem objects according to their actual excellence.

The world in a thought is therefore more than a pale duplicate of the material world. It is the world knowingly received, enjoyed, and offered back to its giver. Its greater excellence in this respect follows from its being the end for which external things are provided. This does not deny their independent reality or licence arbitrary invention. A thought that misvalues them would fail precisely at the act that makes thought so important.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.8** The difficulty of thinking well is traced to bad habit rather than nature. (Edition p. 7.)
- **I.13** Right thought prizes objects as God prizes them. (Edition p. 9.)

431 Primary text: I.8, I.13, III.18, II.90. No 2026 editorial notes used.

- **III.18** Thought ranges beyond visible boundaries and asks after creation's beginning. (Edition p. 140.)
- **II.90** The world in thought is a spiritual act and returning offering. (Edition p. 118.)

In this edition. "World in a Thought" in II.90 concerns apprehension and response. It is not a claim that private thought manufactures the external earth or determines truth by wishing.

See also. Mind; Understanding; Meditation; Image; Esteem; Return.

Throne

Throne of God; our Throne; reign[432]

The word. A throne signifies the seat and exercise of sovereignty. Traherne explicitly interprets the spiritual throne promised to the faithful as divine omnipresence and eternity. Its scope is measured by the life of a spirit, rather than by the dimensions of a bodily chair.

In Traherne. IV.71 introduces sitting in God's throne as the highest estate available to a creature and observes how little the promise is understood. IV.72 explains it through indwelling, knowledge, delight, and the union of wills. To reign is to be pleased in divine works as if one possessed their sovereign disposal. The qualifying comparison matters: participation in God's delight does not make the creature an independent rival governor.

The argument depends on fitting the throne to the sitter. Bodily persons use bodily thrones; spirits require an invisible scope. God's omnipresence and eternity provide the appropriate field, bounded not by walls but by the divine love encountered everywhere. Christ already sits there, and the scriptural language of his glory and the Church's fulness permits believers to understand their participation.

The image therefore joins royal dignity with receptive communion. Reigning consists in a will conformed to divine goodness and in enjoyment of an inheritance too great for a private enclosure. It is neither literal spatial furniture nor permission to dominate other people. Its

432 Primary text: IV.71–72. Supplied 2026 editorial notes 311–312 identify the promise in Revelation and the subsequent scriptural allusions.

strongest claim is that enjoyment in Christ can exceed what an isolated self could possess in itself.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.71** Introduces the promise of sharing God's throne as a supreme creaturely estate. (Edition p. 241.)
- **IV.72** Defines the throne through omnipresence and eternity, and reigning through shared delight and united will. (Edition p. 242.)

In this edition. The 2026 notes identify Revelation 3:21 and the further scriptural chain. Traherne himself supplies the interpretation; the royal image should be read through his definitions of spiritual participation.

See also. King and kingdom; Omnipresence; Eternity; Union; Glory.

Time

time; times; ages; moments — successive duration and the occasions of creaturely life[433]

The word. Time names the succession through which created events occur. It also names the limited portion of life available for action, study, and enjoyment.

In Traherne. Traherne distinguishes temporal succession from eternity without treating temporal events as worthless. Creatures begin and end, but their moments are permanently present to God. Eternity holds the particulars of their service, not merely a generalized memory after the particulars have vanished. The smallest thought can therefore possess a significance exceeding its brief occurrence.

The distinction is developed spatially. An endless expanse considered at this moment is not yet the whole of what can be enjoyed. Duration provides another region in which all moments and occurrences appear together. Eternity is described as immovable duration containing moving durations, while ages are the successions corresponding to its parts. The text itself allows a question about how far these are commensurate. Its imagery should preserve the difficulty instead of pretending to offer a fully resolved physical model.

433 Primary text: III.46, IV.93, V.6, V.7, V.8. No 2026 editorial notes used.

The ship passing a standing shore makes creaturely succession vivid. We move through events, yet understanding can anticipate what lies ahead and contemplate what lies behind. The mental presence is real within Traherne's account, though it differs from the body's successive location. The power to be concerned with other ages opens a broader life than the present instant's sensations alone.

Time is also urgently practical. The autobiographical speaker chooses modest means rather than an estate that would consume his days in care. What he seeks is not empty leisure but the freedom to study happiness. The later rule is equally important: after time spent seeking, there must be time spent enjoying. Knowledge of eternal goods should change the present use of hours.

The most striking valuation makes this earthly life the precious season on which eternity depends. Some acts can be done only now, amid faith, danger, and imperfect sight. Heavenly clarity will not reproduce their exact conditions. Eternal perspective thus intensifies the value of temporal opportunity instead of dissolving it. The reader is asked to inhabit time as a part of eternity: finite in its occasions, lasting in the significance of the love and fidelity exercised there.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.46** The speaker values command of his time above a burdensome wealthy estate. (Edition p. 160.)
- **IV.93** Present life offers uniquely precious occasions for faithful action. (Edition p. 259.)
- **V.6** The region of all moments is distinguished from space at one moment. (Edition p. 269.)
- **V.7** Moving durations are considered within immovable eternity. (Edition p. 269.)
- **V.8** The passing ship illustrates succession within eternally retained events. (Edition p. 270.)

In this edition. Times and ages are not always merely calendar units; they may be the lives and events that fill successive periods. Do not turn the spatial language of V.6–8 into an assertion that bodies literally travel through a physical landscape of years.

See also. Eternity; Age and ages; Presence; Study; Action and activity.

Trade

trade; trades; occupations; tradesmen — organized work and exchange[434]

The word. Trade can mean a craft or occupation as well as buying and selling. The plural often gathers the ordinary arts by which a social world is furnished.

In Traherne. The early critique associates trades with ambitions and invented riches learned after the loss of innocence. In that setting work belongs to a false system of valuation that keeps people from their common inheritance. Elsewhere expertise in trades exposes how readily people labour for ends less important than happiness.

The later account qualifies any simple hostility to productive work. Under universal charity, occupations would remain as innocent recreations and pleasant ornaments, supplying cities, palaces, and temples. Traherne's target is consequently not every making or exchange, but the passions and exclusive ends that govern them. The same human arts can help adorn shared life when freed from rapacity and rivalry.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.5** Trades appear among the acquired preoccupations from which innocent perception must be freed. (Edition p. 132.)
- **III.36** Arts, trades, and mechanisms can be understood as pertaining to felicity. (Edition p. 154.)
- **IV.7** Labour spent learning trades rebukes neglect of wisdom. (Edition p. 202.)
- **IV.24** Charity would transform occupations into innocent recreations. (Edition p. 214.)

In this edition. Trades in III.36 and IV.24 should not be reduced to commerce alone. The surrounding arts, mechanisms, and buildings give the word its broader occupational sense.

See also. Work; Recreation; Art and artifice; Riches.

434 Primary text: III.5, III.36, IV.7, IV.24. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Treasure

treasure; treasures; precious things — goods recognized and enjoyed as enriching[435]

The word. A treasure is something precious, possessed or available for possession. Traherne gives the word a relational force: its excellence must be understood, loved, and received in the manner appropriate to it.

In Traherne. The central question is not how many valuable things one can accumulate, but what truly counts as valuable and how it becomes one's own. Money and rare ornaments are obvious candidates because society teaches their price. Traherne redirects attention toward necessities, common beauty, the powers of the body and soul, and the persons whose happiness can be shared. A gift's abundance and availability can increase its worth rather than devalue it through familiarity.

The decisive rule is the divine image. Human beings are made to enjoy God's treasures after God's manner. His own perfections and his creatures are therefore the objects of their felicity, and intelligent, generous delight is its form. This joins the inventory of goods to an account of the enjoyer. Correct objects cannot produce happiness if they are ignored, and ardent desire cannot create a true treasure merely by choosing a false one.

Love is indispensable. An object can be present, useful, or conventionally prized without being a treasure in the living sense if the soul takes no pleasure in it. Conversely, another person's good becomes enriching when love makes it one's concern. This does not make treasure wholly subjective. God's works possess excellencies and relations that appreciation is responsible for discovering; the soul's response should be fitted to them.

Want gives the word a further paradoxical depth. A need allows a supply to be significant, and a remembered need preserves the sweetness of a gift already received. Traherne therefore calls want itself a treasure, especially when considering the divine desire for communication that is eternally satisfied. Human gratitude similarly depends on sensing what it would mean to lack existence, companionship, or a giver. The point is

435 Primary text: I.41, II.65, III.58, III.59, IV.95. No 2026 editorial notes used.

not to multiply misery for its own sake, but to recover the felt value of goods dulled by possession.

Finally, treasures are not self-executing. The soul must think, taste, see, and act. Its own free operation then becomes treasure to God, answering divine generosity with a creaturely gift. The vocabulary moves from receipt through understanding to return. In this complete circuit, to call something a treasure is also to name a task: learn its place, discover its benefit, love it rightly, and let its enjoyment enlarge rather than imprison the self.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.41** Want becomes a condition and even a treasure of felicitous enjoyment. (Edition p. 25.)
- **II.65** Objects become living treasures through love and delight. (Edition p. 103.)
- **III.58** The divine image identifies God's treasures as human treasures. (Edition p. 168.)
- **III.59** Felicity requires enjoying those treasures after God's manner. (Edition p. 169.)
- **IV.95** The soul's active exercise is necessary and itself becomes treasure to God. (Edition p. 260.)

In this edition. Treasure is broader than accumulated valuables, but should not be treated as a vague compliment. Ask what the passage identifies as precious, to whom, and through what relation or act of enjoyment.

See also. Riches; Want; Value; Love; Enjoyment; Gift.

Tree

tree; trees; Tree of Life — a living plant and a figure of fruitful life[436]

The word. A tree is a created living thing. Scriptural figures use its rootedness, growth, and fruitfulness to speak of desire, salvation, and the development of powers.

In Traherne. The tree can remain an ordinary object: understanding one gives the soul the form of what it apprehends, while a seed suggests

436 Primary text: I.43, I.55, I.60, IV.73. No 2026 editorial notes used.

the mature life latent in a capacity. Such uses depend on the integrity of natural growth rather than on a code in which every tree means the same thing.

The Tree of Life belongs to the scriptural and devotional register. Desire satisfied is interpreted through that image, and the Cross becomes the Tree of Life at the centre of paradise. Fruition joins the two: the gift is not a dead possession but a source of living enjoyment. The Cross can also be described as a tree aflame with invisible love, its light teaching the right possession of heaven and earth.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.43** Satisfied desire is expounded through the Tree of Life. (Edition p. 26.)
- **I.55** The Cross is the Tree of Life in the divine paradise. (Edition p. 33.)
- **I.60** The Cross is a tree illuminated by the invisible flame of love. (Edition p. 37.)
- **IV.73** The apprehended tree illustrates the soul's conformity to an object. (Edition p. 243.)

In this edition. Capitalized Tree of Life signals a scriptural image; an ordinary tree in IV.73 is an example in an argument about understanding. Preserve the difference before drawing connections.

See also. Fruit; Cross; Garden; Desire; Understanding.

Trinity

Trinity; three persons; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost — divine unity with personal distinction[437]

The word. Trinity names the Christian confession of one God in three persons. Traherne explores how love may disclose unity without erasing distinction.

In Traherne. The account of love distinguishes its fountain in the lover, its communication, and its presence in the beloved. These are presented as one love subsisting in different manners. The analogy enables Traherne to contemplate Trinitarian unity through a relation

437 Primary text: II.40, II.45, III.43, III.100. No 2026 editorial notes used.

already fundamental to the Centuries: giving and receiving need not divide or diminish what is communicated.

He also describes the world as a mirror of the Trinity, because its gifts show that God is love and allow that love to dwell knowingly within the soul. Communion embraces the Son's generation, the Spirit's procession, and the divine life as well as creation and redemption. These claims belong to devotional theology; the analogy should not be expanded into an independent definition of every distinction within God.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.40** One love is considered as begetting, begotten, and proceeding. (Edition p. 91.)
- **II.45** The world is a mirror in which unity and Trinity are contemplated. (Edition p. 92.)
- **III.43** Divinity includes unity of essence and trinity of persons. (Edition p. 158.)
- **III.100** Communion encompasses the eternal relations of the Trinity. (Edition p. 197.)

In this edition. The three manners of love in II.40 are Traherne's analogy. Do not replace Father, Son, and Spirit with merely psychological states, or imply that the analogy exhausts his doctrinal commitments.

See also. God; Love; Father; Christ; Holy Spirit; Unity.

Trust

trust; confidence; confide — reliance upon a person or supposed source of security[438]

The word. Trust is reliance placed in something expected to sustain or protect. Its wisdom depends on the reliability of that object.

In Traherne. Traherne sets trust in divine loving-kindness beside the folly of trusting accumulated wealth. The difference is not simply that one object is invisible and another visible. Wealth cannot ransom a soul or prevent death, whereas God's goodness is the foundation through which all gifts become secure and meaningful.

438 Primary text: III.76, III.80, III.93, IV.88. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Trust also has a practical form. David remains confident among enemies while keeping promises and caring for others. The later meditation on frustrated benefits distinguishes a benefactor's intention from external success: the knowledge that God truly intended good sustains confidence even when malice or one's own perverseness blocks enjoyment. Trust therefore supports fidelity amid uncertainty without requiring the pretence that every intended benefit has already been received.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.76** Trust is figured as shelter under divine wings. (Edition p. 182.)
- **III.80** The psalm exposes the failure of wealth as ultimate security. (Edition p. 184.)
- **III.93** Trust in God accompanies David's public and charitable conduct. (Edition p. 193.)
- **IV.88** Divine intention grounds confidence despite impediments to receipt. (Edition p. 255.)

In this edition. Confidence here is principally reliance on a benefactor, not self-assurance. The argument of IV.88 deliberately distinguishes intended good from successful outward delivery.

See also. Faith; Hope; Providence; Riches; Friendship.

Truth

truth; truths; true — reality rightly apprehended and faithfully declared[439]

The word. Truth can name a true proposition, the reality disclosed by it, or fidelity to what is. Traherne often moves from words about things to the things' own evident excellence.

In Traherne. The opening promise is to communicate truths the friend already loves without clearly knowing them. Their attraction precedes their formulation, but teaching should make their beauty intelligible. Truth is therefore both communicable content and an object of desire.

439 Primary text: I.1, I.13, III.45, I.98. No 2026 editorial notes used.

The later claim that religion requires a clear sight into the truth of things gives this programme its strongest statement. Verbal testimony or astonishing appearances cannot replace understanding of what they announce. Right knowledge should disclose how things genuinely relate to God and to happiness. The prayer to the Spirit of Truth joins such disclosure to inward transformation, courage, and love; truth received as a living presence has practical effects rather than remaining a stock of correct sentences.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.1** The book promises to communicate enriching truths already obscurely loved. (Edition p. 4.)
- **I.13** True estimation requires thoughts fitted to actual value. (Edition p. 9.)
- **III.45** The truth of things grounds intelligent certainty about religion. (Edition p. 160.)
- **I.98** The Spirit of Truth reveals gifts and enables steadfast love. (Edition p. 63.)

In this edition. The personified Truth in the opening address is a rhetorical figure; Spirit of Truth in I.98 is a divine title. Similar capitalization does not make the references equivalent.

See also. Knowledge; Religion; Word; Understanding; Holy Spirit.

Understanding

understanding; understand; intelligent apprehension — the power and act of knowing[440]

The word. Understanding names a mental power and its exercised apprehension of things. It can also mean the clear knowledge that an argument or disciplined attention produces.

In Traherne. Understanding is not merely an inward report about an absent world. An act of it is described as the soul's presence with its object, allowing the person to participate in distant creatures and events. Its activity gives the soul form and employment; capacities become perceptible through what they know.

440 Primary text: I.55, II.76, II.84, IV.6. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Traherne therefore makes mature understanding necessary to assured enjoyment. A person may receive beliefs through implicit faith while not yet seeing the glory of the things believed. The aim is not to discard belief but to deepen it into a perception as compelling as familiar light. The understanding must also discern value and relation: knowledge that leaves the knower indifferent has not reached the form of communion the book seeks.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.55** The presence of understanding reaches beyond bodily place and present age. (Edition p. 33.)
- **II.76** An act of understanding is the soul's presence with its objects. (Edition p. 109.)
- **II.84** The perfected soul becomes an act of knowledge and wisdom. (Edition p. 114.)
- **IV.6** Mature understanding grounds assurance and full enjoyment. (Edition p. 201.)

In this edition. Understanding can be singular as a faculty or as its activity. "Full assurance" in IV.6 is argued through apprehended excellencies, not offered as a synonym for unexamined certainty.

See also. Mind; Soul; Knowledge; Sight; Thought; Wisdom.

Union

union; united; made one — joining through shared knowledge, will, and love[441]

The word. Union is a joining of what can be distinguished. Traherne specifies its mode through communion, conformity, and mutual indwelling rather than treating it as simple numerical identity.

In Traherne. The human will is united to God's by willing what God wills and delighting in the reasons that make his works good. Such union extends concern toward the welfare of persons and kingdoms; it cannot be confined to an inward feeling detached from its objects. Christ's will provides the pattern and enabling relation for this conformity.

441 Primary text: I.53, I.93, IV.49, IV.72, IV.100. No 2026 editorial notes used.

The union of love also preserves reciprocity. God delights in a creature's free answer, and the creature delights in divine goodness as the benefactor's own. The two wills can be one in agreement without the creature ceasing to be an acting subject. At its fullest, union means the soul dwelling in God and God in the soul, with an exact correspondence between capacities and the treasures offered to them.

The distinction from uniformity matters. Communion becomes richer because other persons remain distinct and can contribute their own affection. A reading that makes union the disappearance of all difference would remove the freedom and exchange by which Traherne describes its delight.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.53** Union requires sharing God's will for the happiness of his creatures. (Edition p. 31.)
- **I.93** The speaker prays for the will to be conformed to Christ's. (Edition p. 59.)
- **IV.49** Gratitude creates a reciprocal delight called infinite union. (Edition p. 227.)
- **IV.72** Indwelling is explained through shared knowledge and will. (Edition p. 242.)
- **IV.100** The fullness of union includes fitted capacities and mutual indwelling. (Edition p. 263.)

In this edition. Phrases such as made one describe the stated agreement of wills and life in communion. They should not be expanded into an assertion that human and divine essences become indistinguishable.

See also. Communion; Unity; Will; Love; Christ; Soul.

Unity

unity; one; individually one — undividedness and concord within multiplicity[442]

The word. Unity can mean oneness of being or agreement among several persons. The referent determines whether Traherne is discussing divine essence, personal inwardness, or a common life of joy.

In Traherne. The divine unity is not threatened by the distinctions of Trinitarian love. In human communion, unity is displayed through the happiness of each becoming an enrichment to all. The shared object is not diminished by many enjoyers; its value is multiplied through their relations.

The soul's own unity also supplies a centre from which its apparently limitless acts proceed. In the passages drawing on Pico, withdrawal into that centre enables an account of likeness to God. This inward unification does not cancel the outward reach of affection. It concentrates the person whose love can embrace the whole, while the unity of the community depends on the living variety of its members.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.74** Many persons are knit in unity through mutual happiness. (Edition p. 46.)
- **II.45** Trinity and unity are contemplated through divine love. (Edition p. 92.)
- **IV.65** Divine love of self and of others is individually one. (Edition p. 237.)
- **IV.81** The soul's centre of unity is considered within the discussion following Pico. (Edition p. 250.)

In this edition. Individually in IV.65 bears the force of undividedly, rather than "separately for each individual." The Pico-related argument should be identified as an appropriated source, not silently made an unqualified autobiographical declaration.

See also. Union; Trinity; Communion; Centre and circumference; Variety.

442 Primary text: I.74, II.45, IV.65, IV.81. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Universe

universe — the comprehensive order of created things[443]

The word. The universe names the whole created order considered together. Its scope may exceed the immediate visible scene without carrying a fixed modern astronomical definition.

In Traherne. Traherne's most forceful use makes the universe depend for its fulfilled purpose upon love. Without a person able to receive and enjoy its objects, visible splendour becomes a silent wilderness. The claim concerns the end of creation rather than a denial that bodies could exist without a human observer.

The relation also reverses apparent scale. The inheriting person can be called greater than the universe, as a householder is greater in kind and purpose than a house. At the Cross one enters its heart, while divine omnipresence is called its life and soul. These expressions make the whole intelligible through relation, presence, and love rather than through the mere addition of its physical parts.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.56** The Cross is the heart of the universe within the contemplative journey. (Edition p. 34.)
- **II.65** Failure to love makes the universe vain to its enjoyer. (Edition p. 103.)
- **II.93** The person's dignity exceeds the inherited universe as the householder exceeds the house. (Edition p. 120.)
- **V.9** Divine omnipresence is described as the life and soul of the universe. (Edition p. 271.)

In this edition. The word is not a warrant for attributing a modern cosmological system to Traherne. Compare the explicit uncertainty about the material world's infinity in II.21.

See also. World; Whole; Creation; Love; Space.

443 Primary text: I.56, II.65, II.93, V.9, II.21. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Unsuppose

unsuppose[444]

The word. To unsuppose is to suppose something away, imagining that it does not exist. The rare verb names a deliberate thought experiment rather than a failure to make an assumption.

In Traherne. Traherne asks the reader to remove heaven, earth, and the world in imagination. Their place remains: empty space cannot be removed by the same act. This perceived asymmetry supports his claim that infinity is encountered before finite boundaries and that space is inseparable from the soul's apprehension of its situation. The experiment works through the operations and limits of imagination, not through an observed physical disappearance. Its place in the argument also matters: the apparently empty remainder is soon a chamber for treasures and an inward capacity to receive them.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.81** The world can be mentally removed, while its space cannot be unsupposed. (Edition p. 112.)

In this edition. The 2026 note supplies the gloss and a comparison with Henry More. More is editorial background here, not an authority named in the meditation itself.

See also. Annihilation; Imagination; Infinity; Space.

Use

use; useful; usefulness — fitting employment and the realization of benefit[445]

The word. Use is what something does or how it is employed toward an end. Its range is broader than immediate practical convenience or economic productivity.

In Traherne. An object's excellence becomes clear through its relations and operations. The sun's use includes bodily benefits, the disclosure of divine goodness, and the soul's capacity to enjoy that

444 Primary text: II.81; historical gloss and philosophical comparison: 2026 edition note to II.81.

445 Primary text: III.55, IV.15, IV.11, IV.47. No 2026 editorial notes used.

disclosure. Spiritual uses are therefore not decorative extras attached to a merely practical world; they help explain why its practical benefits matter.

Right use requires right apprehension. Mistaking a saw for a knife prevents even ordinary work; mistaking the world or the soul has graver consequences because it blocks enjoyment. Yet the reader must move from an accurate account to exercise. Knowledge that is never used resembles a supposedly possessed treasure that yields nothing.

The human being also must become useful. Traherne calls a person glorious when that person becomes a blessing and delight to others. Use consequently includes freely communicated affection and praise, which cannot be adequately measured by material output alone.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.55** A creature's value is disclosed through its relations and operations. (Edition p. 166.)
- **IV.15** The saw and knife illustrate why right apprehension is necessary to use. (Edition p. 209.)
- **IV.11** Discovered happiness must be used rather than left merely studied. (Edition p. 206.)
- **IV.47** A person's usefulness consists in becoming a blessing and delight. (Edition p. 226.)

In this edition. Useful is not opposed to beautiful or contemplative here. The synonym utility is supplied as an index aid; Traherne's actual language should not be turned into a later utilitarian ethical theory.

See also. Service; Value; Enjoyment; Action and activity; Benefit.

Value

value; valued; prize; esteem — worth apprehended through fitting judgment[446]

The word. Value is worth, and to value something is to estimate or esteem it. Traherne distinguishes true excellence from the price or prestige assigned by social convention.

446 Primary text: I.12, I.46, II.12, III.55. No 2026 editorial notes used.

In Traherne. Right valuation is a moral duty because creatures and benefactors deserve an answer proportionate to their goodness. The world's familiar gifts often suffer the greatest injustice: what is necessary and freely available is despised, while scarcity lends artificial glamour to comparatively poor goods. Imagining the loss of sun or sea corrects that judgment.

Value is also relational. Gold cannot be assessed without its bearing on food, clothes, exchange, and the owner; the sun's excellence appears through its service to the world. A thing abstracted from those relations may seem inexplicable or worthless. Yet relations do not mean mere usefulness to a private whim. The fullest valuation situates each creature within God's intention and the good of all.

The act of valuing thus changes the recipient as well as the object's place in experience. To prize rightly is to receive a gift knowingly, become grateful, and acquire an incentive to act in accordance with its goodness.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.12** Prizing according to value is an office and duty. (Edition p. 9.)
- **I.46** Imagined deprivation reveals the immense value of common necessities. (Edition p. 28.)
- **II.12** Firm earth and living air surpass hypothetical masses of gold and jewels. (Edition p. 72.)
- **III.55** Relations and operations are necessary to the judgment of value. (Edition p. 166.)

In this edition. Value and price are not interchangeable. Where Traherne appeals to the price one would pay for a lost necessity, the hypothetical exchange exposes worth that ordinary markets and habits overlook.

See also. Worth; Esteem; Treasure; Use; Common things; Riches.

Vanity

vanity; vain; vanities — emptiness, futility, or falsely promised satisfaction[447]

The word. Vanity can mean emptiness and futility, not only excessive pride in appearance. A vain pursuit fails to yield the good for which it is undertaken.

In Traherne. The conventional economy of rare possessions is vain because it breeds discontent and contention while neglecting freely given riches. Even earnest activity can be empty when the object has been mistaken. The criticism is not restricted to idleness or obvious frivolity.

Nor does a correct inventory of beautiful things by itself remove vanity. To possess worlds while being unable to give oneself or become delightful to another would remain desolate. Traherne's strongest test therefore reaches beyond material ambition to any isolated enjoyment. True good requires living relations. The psalmic critique of wealth adds mortality: houses and names cannot secure a permanence that their owners do not possess.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.33** Invented riches lead to discontent, contention, and vanity. (Edition p. 20.)
- **I.50** Busy pursuit of display is vain when received blessings remain unprized. (Edition p. 30.)
- **III.80** Trust in continuing wealth and household fame is exposed as folly. (Edition p. 184.)
- **IV.45** Even possession of all worlds is vanity without communicative personal life. (Edition p. 224.)

In this edition. Vanity in these places is often closer to futility or hollowness than to self-admiration. The latter may be present, but it is not the word's whole semantic range.

See also. Folly; Riches; Pride; Society; Enjoyment.

447 Primary text: I.33, I.50, III.80, IV.45. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Variety

variety; varieties; diversities — a plurality of differing forms or goods[448]

The word. Variety is difference within an abundance. It can enrich a whole when the differing parts fit one another and serve a common enjoyment.

In Traherne. A merely uniform display would poorly express divine bounty. The world gives many kinds of beauty and service, matching the manifold powers of a living enjoyer. Its variety is not random accumulation: sea, air, earth, stars, and creatures contribute differently to the goodness of the whole.

Human nature answers this outward abundance with a variety of apprehensions and affections. No single sensation or desire exhausts the soul's possible relations. This fitted plurality helps explain why a static ornament or isolated private possession cannot fulfill happiness. Variety becomes a treasury when knowledge discovers the order of its differences and love receives the many goods together.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.18** The world is an illimited field of variety and beauty. (Edition p. 12.)
- **II.20** Visible beauty is discussed through differing figures and colours. (Edition p. 75.)
- **II.21** Divine goodness is manifested through profitable varieties and numerous joys. (Edition p. 77.)
- **III.42** Many apprehensions and affections fit the soul to enjoy many objects. (Edition p. 157.)

In this edition. Variety should not be read as novelty for its own sake. The passages repeatedly connect difference with fitting use, beauty, and the capacities of the enjoyer.

See also. Unity; Beauty; Order; Abundance; Capacity.

448 Primary text: I.18, II.20, II.21, III.42. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Varro

Varro; 288 opinions; opinions of philosophers[449]

The word. Marcus Terentius Varro (116–27 BC) was a Roman scholar. Here his name introduces a calculation of philosophical positions concerning the supreme good. Traherne's report of 288 opinions is the starting point for a reconciliation of apparently rival accounts of happiness.

In Traherne. II.99 begins by finding blindness and disagreement in the philosophers, but it does not simply discard their answers. Traherne compares their opinions to rivers converging in the sea. Riches and contempt of riches, honour and pleasure, wisdom and stability, empire and love, contemplation and action, rest and suffering can enter one comprehensive enjoyment. The account's ambition is to show how opposed formulations become compatible when their proper goods are understood.

This agreement requires a changed relation to the goods named. Victory is victory over lust; riches, honours, and pleasures are discerned through wisdom and enjoyed through love. Solitude can coexist with communion, and sufferings can lead into possession and rest. Traherne does not say that every school's detailed doctrines are interchangeable. He gathers selected ends into the Christian felicity he has been describing.

The meditation concludes with a scriptural assurance that created powers cannot separate the believer from God's love in Christ. The philosophical catalogue therefore culminates in a Christian account of secure enjoyment, rather than a detached classification of ancient schools.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.99** Turns Varro's reported multiplicity into a synthesis of philosophical goods, ending with assurance of divine love. (Edition p. 125.)

In this edition. The supplied note traces the number to Augustine's report of Varro's lost De Philosophia in City of God XIX.1: 288 possible positions, not necessarily 288 established historical sects. This does not

449 Primary text: II.99. Supplied 2026 editorial notes 162 and 164 identify Varro, Augustine's account of the calculation, and the concluding adaptation of Romans 8:38–39.

prove that Traherne consulted the lost work, or identify his immediate source.

See also. Philosophy; Felicity; Happiness; Contemplation; Action and activity.

Vice

vice; vices — a habitual moral fault or corrupt disposition[450]

The word. Vice is a settled or characteristic form of wrongdoing. Traherne names particular vices to show how social misery grows from disordered desire and conduct.

In Traherne. The account of the world's injuries lists rapacity, covetousness, envy, oppression, luxury, ambition, and pride. These are not flaws in stars or seas; they are forms of human relation that turn an ordered creation into a scene of conflict. A philosophical life must therefore subdue vices and govern passions rather than merely contemplate happiness.

Other people's vices also test the reader's charity. They can become occasions for patience, courage, and beneficence, as thorns become the material of a crown in the imitation of Christ. This does not make the wrongdoing virtuous in itself. The transformation concerns the response of the injured person, who refuses to let another's fault dictate the character of his own action.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.24** Specific vices are identified as causes of the world's social disfigurement. (Edition p. 214.)
- **IV.8** The philosopher's life requires mastery of vice and passion. (Edition p. 203.)
- **I.84** Others' vices can occasion virtues in the charitable response. (Edition p. 53.)

In this edition. The limiting words "to you" in I.84 are essential. The passage does not excuse the offender or convert the wrongful act itself into goodness; it describes the injured person's virtuous response.

See also. Sin; Virtue; Wickedness; Charity; Passion.

450 Primary text: IV.24, IV.8, I.84. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Virtue

virtue; virtues; virtuous — moral excellence and, in some contexts, effective power[451]

The word. Virtue ordinarily names an excellence of character or action. Historically it can also mean an operative efficacy, as when the virtue of Christ's passion is felt.

In Traherne. The moral virtues are the active form of felicity. Ethics teaches how affections and conduct may become honourable, useful, and happy; philosophy is realized in governing one's life by the truth discovered. Virtue is therefore neither a decorative accomplishment nor a list of prohibitions detached from positive goods.

Its superiority to money is made practical in the discussion of changing fortunes. Patience, faith, and courage can be acquired or displayed when wealth is absent, while wealth itself can be used well if rightly received. The reader must learn to prize a virtue above a chest of money without supposing that poverty mechanically creates excellence.

Christ's Cross is the school in which virtues take their fullest pattern. Injuries then become occasions for steadfast charity, but the response must remain vigorous and helpful rather than indifferent. Enjoyment reaches outward as conduct that makes another person's good its concern.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.58** The Cross is a school of virtues. (Edition p. 36.)
- **I.84** Virtuous response to injury combines meek correction and continued beneficence. (Edition p. 53.)
- **III.45** Ethics directs passions and virtues toward honourable and happy life. (Edition p. 160.)
- **IV.89** Virtue is to be prized above money through both poverty and abundance. (Edition p. 256.)
- **I.88** Virtue of the passion uses the distinct sense of effective power. (Edition p. 55.)

451 Primary text: I.58, I.84, III.45, IV.89, I.88. No 2026 editorial notes used.

In this edition. In I.88, virtue means efficacy or active power, not one item of moral character. Keep that sense separate from the ethical plurals elsewhere.

See also. Holiness; Wisdom; Vice; Cross; Action and activity.

Vision

vision; beatific vision; sight — a seen disclosure or fulfilled apprehension[452]

The word. Vision may name a prophetic scene, ordinary seeing, or the blessed apprehension associated with heaven. The objects and conditions of seeing determine its force.

In Traherne. Traherne's discussion of Ezekiel considers how visible forms might express divine beauty, while refusing to make a body an adequate measure of infinity and eternity. Other visions arrive through Scripture as scenes the reader can contemplatively enter. The word need not imply a new private apparition granted to the author.

The beatific vision is related to present understanding without being simply identical to it. A sight of happiness can already transform the soul, and the world can become a valley where blessings and praises are seen in their mutual movement. Yet present vision remains capable of dimness and error. The promised clarity of glory supplies a standard and end toward which earthly apprehension works.

The recollection of Christ transfigured on Tabor sharpens the contrast with his disfigured body on the Cross. That particular Gospel event should not be confused with every inward transformation the book describes.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.20** Ezekiel's vision enters the question of visible representation of divine beauty. (Edition p. 75.)
- **II.94** The world becomes a valley of vision filled with blessing and praise. (Edition p. 121.)
- **III.60** The transforming sight of happiness is called a great part of beatific vision. (Edition p. 169.)

452 Primary text: II.20, II.94, III.60, II.97, I.89. No 2026 editorial notes used.

- **II.97** Present dim apprehension is distinguished from the clarity of glory. (Edition p. 124.)
- **I.89** The crucified body is contrasted with Christ transfigured on Tabor. (Edition p. 56.)

In this edition. Beatific vision is a theological phrase, while vision of a visible scene may be ordinary language. The lexical overlap does not license calling every vivid perception an extraordinary mystical event.

See also. Sight; Beholding; Heaven; Revelation; Understanding.

Want

want; wants; wanting; need — absence, felt need, and the desire for supply[453]

The word. Want can name a lack, the felt need arising from it, or an active desire. Traherne deliberately moves among these senses and makes their distinctions central to his account of felicity.

In Traherne. The governing paradox is that want can itself be treasure. Without any need, a supply would mean nothing to its recipient; its goodness becomes manifest through the difference it makes. This does not make every deprivation good or instruct a person to seek pain. It explains why the capacity to need, desire, and appreciate belongs within the possibility of enjoyment. A creature entirely closed to benefits could neither receive a gift nor become grateful for it.

Traherne extends the claim to God with exceptional boldness. God wants worlds, companions, and the communication of divine goodness, yet is never deprived of them: the wants are eternally satisfied. The argument depends on holding desire and fulfillment together. These are "perfective needs," not an affliction that creatures unexpectedly repair. Divine plenitude includes the living desire for the good enjoyed, so possession never becomes satiety or dead indifference.

The reader is asked to learn an analogous awareness. A benefit already possessed should be felt as necessary and precious as it would be if removed. Imagining the absence of sun, sea, existence, or companionship makes this exercise concrete. The point is to know a gift's value while

453 Primary text: I.41, I.42, I.44, I.45, I.51. No 2026 editorial notes used.

having it, rather than waking to its worth only after loss. Remembered or contemplated want gives continuing freshness to gratitude.

Want also binds persons. To receive what one needs establishes obligation toward a benefactor and opens the possibility of delighting in that benefactor's goodness. Traherne calls these needs the bonds between God and the soul. The dependency is not merely humiliating; it is an avenue into communion. The desire to give and the capacity to receive fit one another.

Yet the book also distinguishes real wants from the manufactured wants of corrupt custom. Scarce ornaments, status, and exclusive possessions can create a cycle of felt insufficiency in the midst of abundant natural riches. That cycle is not the divine want praised in these meditations. Proper need has an adequate object and can become grateful enjoyment; false valuation endlessly misidentifies what would satisfy. The reader must therefore examine both the intensity of a want and the truth of the good toward which it is directed.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.41** Want and supply are made jointly necessary to felicity. (Edition p. 25.)
- **I.42** God's wants are named perfective and eternally satisfied. (Edition p. 26.)
- **I.44** Divine wants and enjoyments remain simultaneously present without disturbance. (Edition p. 27.)
- **I.45** The reader is taught to keep the value-disclosing sense of want present. (Edition p. 27.)
- **I.51** Needs establish obligation and communion between giver and receiver. (Edition p. 30.)

In this edition. "God should want" is intentionally paradoxical. Preserve the qualifications that the needs are always satisfied and never afflict him. The ordinary sense of deprivation alone would reverse the argument.

See also. Desire; Necessity; Treasure; Gratitude; Capacity; Gift.

War

war; wars; blood; conflict — organized violence and its moral consequences[454]

The word. War retains its literal sense of armed conflict even where the language of struggle is extended to the resistance of sin. Historical and figurative uses must be distinguished.

In Traherne. The opening promise rejects advancement through bloody war and the dethroning of kings in favour of the gentle methods of love. This announces the manner of instruction and the kind of glory sought. Elsewhere war is one of the social miseries produced by rapacity, ambition, and pride, which universal charity would remove.

The account of David is more historically differentiated. His wars and martial offices are acknowledged, but the poem places his deeper delight in divine works, contemplation, and song rather than in royal splendour. The practical question is how to remain charitable and happy in a world where injury and bloodshed occur. Traherne's contemplative peace is thus tested by violent conditions, not based on their nonexistence.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.4** The proposed path to glory contrasts peace and love with bloody advancement. (Edition p. 5.)
- **III.69** David's military life is subordinated to his delight in divine works. (Edition p. 175.)
- **IV.24** Wars are among the effects of destructive vices. (Edition p. 214.)
- **IV.20** Wisdom must sustain charity amid blood and injury. (Edition p. 211.)

In this edition. These passages do not by themselves supply a systematic judgment on every war. Do not convert a devotional contrast into an unqualified political programme, or make David's battles merely figurative.

See also. Peace; Charity; David; Courage.

454 Primary text: I.4, III.69, IV.24, IV.20. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Water

water; waters; cold water — ordinary sustenance and a figure of refreshment[455]

The word. Water is a common necessity whose availability can hide its worth. Its refreshing and diffusive properties also supply images of spiritual benefit.

In Traherne. A drop of water can reveal relations reaching to God and other persons. Its smallness does not prevent it from becoming an occasion of great understanding. A cup given to a disciple likewise matters through the person served and Christ's identification with that person; its value exceeds its market price.

The autobiographical willingness to live on bread and water separates sufficient bodily provision from the ambitions that devour time. Figurative waters of love then communicate refreshment and comfort, while a drop spreading through a larger body of water illustrates the reach of divine presence. These distinct uses are held together by water's capacity to sustain, convey, and make an influence felt.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.67** A drop of water supplies an example of a creature's immeasurable relations. (Edition p. 104.)
- **I.81** A cup of cold water becomes charity offered to Christ. (Edition p. 51.)
- **III.46** Bread and water express the preference for free time over costly status. (Edition p. 160.)
- **IV.82** Love's communications are figured as refreshing celestial waters. (Edition p. 251.)

In this edition. Ordinary water need not be a concealed baptismal reference. The literal service and the explicitly figurative waters of IV.82 should each be allowed their local force.

See also. Sea; River; Fountain; Charity; Common things.

455 Primary text: II.67, I.81, III.46, IV.82. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Whole

whole; wholly; all together — completeness without division or remainder[456]

The word. Whole names something in its completeness. Wholly may describe the completeness of giving or presence, even where the good is enjoyed by more than one person.

In Traherne. The whole world can be given to every person because enjoyment is not modeled as cutting one material stock into exclusive shares. Another enjoyer can enlarge rather than reduce the gift, since that person and that person's happiness become further treasures. The whole is therefore relationally richer than a sum of isolated possessions.

Traherne's accounts of love and spiritual presence intensify the point. Love can be wholly directed toward its object without losing the power to embrace other objects, and the soul can attend to another soul whose range is itself vast. Such claims do not apply indiscriminately to physical consumption. They describe goods whose communication can increase participation instead of exhausting the source.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.15** The whole world is given to each, while additional persons enrich the inheritance. (Edition p. 10.)
- **I.74** Giving wholly to all multiplies happiness through mutual enjoyment. (Edition p. 46.)
- **II.70** The soul can dwell fully with others through knowledge and affection. (Edition p. 105.)
- **IV.59** Love's whole being and felicity are directed toward its beloved. (Edition p. 234.)

In this edition. Wholly is stronger than partly but does not always mean exclusively. The apparent conflict between whole gifts to many recipients is deliberate and resolved through the mode of enjoyment.

See also. All and everything; World; Communion; Possession; Love.

456 Primary text: I.15, I.74, II.70, IV.59. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Wickedness

wickedness; wicked; perverseness — morally corrupt action or disposition[457]

The word. Wickedness is a strong name for moral evil. It may characterize an act, a settled disposition, or the disordered social condition within which one must live.

In Traherne. The world lying in wickedness is the world of ingratitude, injury, and retaliation. Traherne's prescription is not withdrawal into a fantasy that such people do not exist. He asks the reader to regard sufferers from moral blindness as patients requiring pity and healing love.

The capacity to love also remains morally ambiguous until rightly directed. A soul can love a wicked person wickedly and reinforce the wrongdoing. This proves the reality of creaturely agency but does not justify its misuse. To love persons universally therefore requires judgment about how they are loved. Charity seeks their good, whereas complicity cherishes the very corruption from which they need release.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **IV.20** Wicked social conditions require remedial pity rather than retaliatory likeness. (Edition p. 211.)
- **IV.85** Irregular love can attach itself to a wicked person's wickedness. (Edition p. 253.)
- **IV.88** Others' wickedness can obstruct intended benefits without cancelling divine goodwill. (Edition p. 255.)

In this edition. The distinction between loving a wicked person and loving that person wickedly is essential in IV.85. Universal charity does not authorize approval of every object of attachment.

See also. Sin; Vice; Love; Judgment; Compassion.

457 Primary text: IV.20, IV.85, IV.88. No 2026 editorial notes used.

Will

will; willing; willeth — the power and act of choosing or desiring an end[458]

The word. Will names a person's directed desire or choice, and the power by which it is exercised. The verb can express deliberate affirmation as well as a future intention.

In Traherne. The will becomes great by extending toward the goods God wills: the happiness of persons, the order of kingdoms, and redemption. Divine friendship requires more than appreciating those goods after they happen; the reader should share the reasons for desiring them. To will the same ends is an active mode of communion.

The prayers to Christ make conformity of will a gift to be sought. The human will does not acquire divine goodness merely by asserting its own desires. It needs a pattern, illumination, and transformation. Yet this dependence does not erase freedom: God gives the creature a power whose use can honour or dishonour the giver.

At the fullest point, divine and human will are said to be one. The context explains oneness through agreement, delight, and mutual presence. The creature remains the one who responds. Traherne's ideal is a freely enacted harmony of love, not the replacement of a human agent by an irresistible external force.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.53** Sharing God's will extends the reader's concern to the good of all. (Edition p. 31.)
- **I.93** The speaker asks for the form of Christ's will to be imprinted upon his own. (Edition p. 59.)
- **IV.52** The gift of freedom obliges its recipient to noble and faithful use. (Edition p. 229.)
- **IV.72** The oneness of wills is explained through communion in God's works. (Edition p. 242.)

In this edition. Many occurrences of will are ordinary future auxiliaries, not instances of the faculty of willing. This entry concerns the substantive and deliberate verbal uses in the cited passages.

458 Primary text: I.53, I.93, IV.52, IV.72. No 2026 editorial notes used.

See also. Freedom; Choice; Union; Desire; Obedience; Love.

Wine

wine[459]

The word. Wine is both a bodily refreshment and an image through which invisible relations become intelligible. Traherne uses its moisture and its diffusion for different purposes.

In Traherne. The first comparison distinguishes physical benefit from understood generosity. Wine quenches thirst without reflection, but recognizing the giver's love makes drinking spiritual enjoyment. Delight then reaches outward to everyone who benefits: the public mind rejoices in the gift's distribution. In the Fifth Century, a drop of wine spreading through water illustrates the diffusion of actions, words, and thoughts within God's omnipresence. Their being everywhere known enlarges the reach of praise and joy. The examples move from an ordinary drink to conscious gratitude, and from a small visible mixture to the immense visibility of a person's life before God.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.27** Wine's bodily service becomes spiritual refreshment through consideration of divine love and others' benefit. (Edition p. 17.)
- **V.9** Wine diffusing in water figures the reach of human actions within divine omnipresence. (Edition p. 271.)

In this edition. Neither passage explicitly identifies its wine with the Eucharist; follow the particular comparison each meditation develops.

See also. Water; Thirst; Food; Omnipresence.

Wisdom

wisdom; wise; wisely — knowledge rightly directed and exercised toward the highest good[460]

The word. Wisdom is more than possession of information. Traherne defines its work through discerning the way to happiness and acting according to the excellence discerned.

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459 Primary text: I.27, V.9.

460 Primary text: III.42, II.21, IV.4, IV.7, IV.31, II.25. No 2026 editorial notes used.

In Traherne. The study of human nature supplies a starting point. What does a person really need, what are the soul's powers and desires, and what objects can fulfill them? Wisdom finds a path to happiness by answering these questions together. An account of human beings that ignores their highest capacities would provide the wrong end; an account of lofty ends without a fitting way to reach them would remain ineffective.

Divine wisdom appears in the correspondence between powers, objects, and uses. The world's parts are so ordered that they sustain bodily life, disclose goodness, and invite communion. Their finite places and differing operations are not embarrassments to infinite power. Fittingness can make a bounded creature better than a vast but useless alternative. Wisdom therefore judges proportion and end, rather than confusing greatness with mere bulk.

Human learning should imitate this intelligent order. The sciences furnish knowledge, but felicity must govern their direction. Traherne protests against the disproportion between energetic study of trades and negligent study of God and the self. If people would dig for a mine of gold, they cannot reasonably despise sustained inquiry into a good that governs every other possession. The labour has value because its object is worth possessing, not because difficulty is holy in itself.

Nor can wisdom remain speculative. The friend's principle makes holiness and wisdom one in effect: knowledge of excellent actions is incomplete if it does not issue in doing them. The demand does not require that every meditation produce a new external undertaking. Prizing gifts, directing love, praising, forgiving, and enjoying rightly are themselves acts. The contrast is between exercised understanding and an idle claim to possess it.

Finally, wisdom is Christian in its object and exemplar. Christ is the Father's wisdom, and the knowledge of divine works, human dignity, and the promised communion is presented as a divine philosophy. Traherne does not use wisdom to set a purely secular intelligence against faith. He asks faith to become mature enough to see and live the good it professes. Its fruit is courage, charity, and present participation in felicity, rather than indefinite postponement of all enjoyment to another life.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.42** Wisdom seeks perfect happiness through knowledge of human wants and desires. (Edition p. 157.)
- **II.21** Divine wisdom is disclosed in the fitting and serviceable order of creation. (Edition p. 77.)
- **IV.4** Christ and the truths of Christian life define divine philosophy. (Edition p. 200.)
- **IV.7** The pursuit of wisdom is compared with labour willingly spent seeking gold. (Edition p. 202.)
- **IV.31** Wisdom and holiness coincide in the performance of known excellent acts. (Edition p. 217.)

In this edition. Wise is not synonymous with clever, learned, or socially successful. The compound "right wise" in II.25 reinforces the convergence of truth and goodness, while the passages selected here explain the practical end of wisdom.

See also. Knowledge; Philosophy; Understanding; Holiness; Study; Felicity.

Wist

wist it not[461]

The word. Wist is an old past-tense form meaning knew. In the phrase "I wist it not," the speaker acknowledges a reality that was present before he became aware of it.

In Traherne. Traherne quotes Jacob's awakening at the close of his account of the world as temple, paradise, and gate of heaven. The failure lies in human recognition: beauty and divine presence do not begin only when noticed. The obsolete verb gives a particularly concise form to this difference between possession and awareness. It also helps connect the biblical event with the reader's own possible awakening. Understanding the single word therefore clarifies the meditation's whole movement from an unregarded gift to a world consciously received.

461 Primary text: I.31; historical gloss and biblical comparison: 2026 edition note to I.31.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.31** Jacob recognizes that God was present while he remained unaware. (Edition p. 19.)

In this edition. The 2026 note identifies Genesis 28:16–17 and observes Traherne's variation from the Authorised Version. Do not silently replace his wording with that version's "knew."

See also. Awakening; Dreadful; Presence; Temple.

Witness

witness; witnesses; faithful witness — one who beholds or bears testimony[462]

The word. A witness can be someone who sees a reality or someone whose testimony makes it known. The act of beholding and the function of attestation are related but distinct.

In Traherne. Companions are witnesses of the glory that a solitary creature could not share with anyone but God. Their presence makes recognition and communicated delight possible. This is not merely a desire for applause; it follows the claim that love's gifts become more abundant through additional enjoyers.

The faithful witness also belongs to scriptural language. Christ bears the title in the account of the divine throne, while enduring universal love is compared to a stable witness in heaven. The uses connect trustworthy manifestation with personal presence, but they should not all be reduced to courtroom evidence or to the emotional need to be watched.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.68** Other persons are witnesses and spectators of the creature's glory. (Edition p. 42.)
- **IV.69** Comprehensive love is compared to a faithful heavenly witness. (Edition p. 240.)
- **IV.72** Faithful witness appears among Christ's scriptural titles. (Edition p. 242.)

462 Primary text: I.68, IV.69, IV.72. No 2026 editorial notes used.

In this edition. Witness in I.68 emphasizes beholding; in IV.72 it is a title of Christ with biblical resonance. Keep the difference rather than assuming a single technical doctrine of testimony.

See also. Spectacle; Society; Glory; Christ; Truth.

Wonder

wonder; wonders; wonderful; admire — astonished attention to unexpected excellence[463]

The word. Wonder is both astonishment and the remarkable thing that provokes it. In Traherne it can begin inquiry and survive the understanding that inquiry brings.

In Traherne. Common things become wonders when habit no longer hides their significance. The child's first apprehension discloses a world whose familiarity has not yet dulled its gifts, while mature reasoning returns to those gifts with a fuller account of their relations. Wonder is therefore not confined to ignorance or novelty.

The soul itself becomes one of the greatest wonders. Its ability to consider other souls and their objects defeats the expectation that equal capacities would simply exhaust one another. Traherne openly marks the difficulty rather than disguising it as an obvious commonplace. A further movement of wonder attends divine patience: the retrospective poem marvels not only at childhood illumination but at love that continued through years of rejection and finally brought conversion.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.1** The book proposes to fill an empty volume with profitable wonders. (Edition p. 4.)
- **III.2** First perception receives ordinary creation as rare and delightful. (Edition p. 128.)
- **III.4** Wonder deepens through recollection of persistent divine love. (Edition p. 130.)
- **II.71** The soul's capacity to comprehend other souls is identified as a profound wonder. (Edition p. 106.)

463 Primary text: I.1, III.2, III.4, II.71. No 2026 editorial notes used.

In this edition. Profitable wonder is intended to enrich understanding and life, not merely entertain curiosity. Wonderful can retain the strong sense of provoking astonishment where modern usage would make it a casual compliment.

See also. Admiration; Strangeness; Child and childhood; Soul; Knowledge.

Word

word; words; Word of God — speech, scriptural testimony, and creative divine expression[464]

The word. Word can mean ordinary speech or a meaningful expression, while the Word of God can designate Scripture or the divine agency of creation. Its theological force must be read from context.

In Traherne. Traherne is attentive both to the power and the limits of words. Religious language requires an apprehension of the truth it declares; verbal statement alone cannot communicate the full certainty or enjoyment of a reality. Yet Scripture supplies testimony, forms of prayer, and histories that make communion across ages possible.

The creative Word belongs to another register. In the cited account of divine goodness, what God thinks is wrought by the Word and fulfilled by the Spirit. The painter's analogy calls the Word the pencil through which divine works appear. These images associate expression with effective creation, rather than with speech that merely describes a world already made.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.45** Language alone cannot replace insight into the truth of religious objects. (Edition p. 160.)
- **III.65** In the quotation attributed to Nazianzen, divine thought is wrought by the Word. (Edition p. 172.)
- **III.75** The psalmic Word of the Lord makes the heavens. (Edition p. 181.)
- **V.5** The Word is the pencil in the analogy of divine painting. (Edition p. 268.)

464 Primary text: III.45, III.65, III.75, V.5, IV.6. No 2026 editorial notes used.

In this edition. The capitalized Word in the creative passages should not automatically be replaced with Bible. Conversely, "the scriptures are God's Word" in IV.6 refers specifically to the biblical writings.

See also. Scripture; Language; Creation; Christ; Holy Spirit; Picture.

Work

work; works; working — an act performed or the result of an act[465]

The word. Work names both activity and what activity produces. Traherne's divine works include creation and providence, while human works include inward acts as well as outward deeds.

In Traherne. The works of God are not merely evidence placed before an observer. They are the goods through which divine intention becomes available for enjoyment, knowledge, and praise. The scriptural account of human dominion accordingly makes the world an inheritance and an obligation to grateful perception.

A person's own works matter because gifts can be freely accepted or refused. The most consequential acts may be inward: esteeming, loving, receiving, and giving thanks. Traherne does not thereby make external service unnecessary. He identifies the active response without which even the greatest external abundance remains unreceived. The distinction between work as an achieved product and work as present operation helps explain why possession alone never completes happiness.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.71** God's works are given to human beings as a source of dignity and gratitude. (Edition p. 178.)
- **IV.46** Creaturely freedom makes possible works of obedience, imitation, and praise. (Edition p. 225.)
- **IV.48** The great work is rightly receiving and loving the divine gifts. (Edition p. 227.)
- **IV.95** The soul must remain in operation rather than letting treasures lie unused. (Edition p. 260.)

465 Primary text: III.71, IV.46, IV.48, IV.95. No 2026 editorial notes used.

In this edition. Works need not mean meritorious outward achievements in every context. In IV.48, "exterior works" are explicitly distinguished from the decisive inward acts under discussion.

See also. Action and activity; Creation; Service; Will; Thanksgiving.

World

world; World; worlds — creation, a human order, and the inheritance of the soul[466]

The word. World can name the visible heavens and earth, the more comprehensive created order, or the corrupt system of human customs. Traherne's movement among these senses is fundamental to the book.

In Traherne. The world is the primary gift whose true reception the Centuries seeks to teach. To possess it is not to acquire a legal title excluding other people. It is to recognize its services, apprehend its beauty, receive it as love, and participate in the happiness of its other enjoyers. Each additional person can enrich the gift rather than reduce a private share. The language of universal inheritance is therefore intelligible only through its mode of enjoyment.

The visible world is already astonishing, but it is not always the full extent of the term. Traherne insists that angels, celestial powers, and the enduring treasures beyond judgment also belong within the world's comprehensive meaning. Heaven and earth are a beginning, not an adequate boundary to divine bounty. At the same time, ordinary created things retain their importance: air, water, light, and living bodies are neither discarded as mere preliminaries nor replaced by abstract spiritual satisfactions.

The word also names what must be overcome. Customs teach people to neglect common gifts in favour of scarce and competitive possessions, and vice disfigures relations that should be charitable. To contemn this world and enjoy the world are consequently compatible injunctions when their objects are distinguished. The rejection concerns a false order of esteem, not a declaration that the created sea, earth, or sun has become intrinsically evil.

466 Primary text: I.18, I.33, I.35, II.90, IV.24. No 2026 editorial notes used.

The later account makes this distinction practical. Stars and sea retain their beauty; universal charity would change the world by removing oppression and rivalry. Trades and occupations could remain, supplying pleasant ornaments to shared life. This prevents the early polemic against invented riches from becoming an undifferentiated hostility to every human institution or artifact.

Finally, the world must be within the soul as well as around the body. Its idea in understanding is a living, voluntary act through which it is enjoyed and offered back to God. That inward world is more excellent in the particular respect that an end exceeds its means. The comparison does not make external reality imaginary. It shows what creation is for: a community of conscious, loving creatures who receive its goods, delight in the giver, and become goods for one another. World thus names an object to be understood and a relation to be learned, not a single inert background for devotional thought.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.18** The world includes heavenly and enduring treasures beyond the immediate visible order. (Edition p. 12.)
- **I.33** The manufactured economy of false riches disfigures common life. (Edition p. 20.)
- **I.35** God's freely given works support a shared inheritance and mutual joy. (Edition p. 21.)
- **II.90** The world in the soul is an act of enjoyment and returning offering. (Edition p. 118.)
- **IV.24** Vice rather than creation's physical beauty is identified as the source of misery. (Edition p. 214.)

In this edition. Do not force world into one meaning throughout. Capitalization can emphasize its grandeur but does not reliably settle its extent. Contrasts such as enjoying and contemning the world require attention to the good creation and the corrupt order of esteem.

See also. Universe; Creation; Enjoyment; Possession; Common things; Custom.

World-soul

Soul of the World; body of God; assumed body[467]

The word. World-soul is a conventional name for the conception of the cosmos as a living whole informed by soul. Traherne invokes ancient philosophers who considered God the soul of the world, then qualifies the corresponding description of the visible world as God's body.

In Traherne. The qualification is indispensable: the world is not God's natural body but a body he has assumed. Traherne's concern is how invisible divine excellence becomes manifest through visible creation. The opening discussion of beauty establishes the difficulty created by familiarity: the world would astonish someone who encountered it only once, but habitual sight dulls attention. The body analogy invites the reader to see that familiar appearance as an expressive manifestation of wisdom, goodness, power, and love.

The remainder of II.21 tests how this manifestation works. Spatial vastness suggests infinity, yet a merely endless wall would offer a poor and unprofitable representation. The world's intelligible variety, usefulness, and capacity to delight express more. Air allows both bodily life and vision across great distances; earthly fertility and the sun's activity sustain a richly fitted habitation. Goodness becomes evident in the services these things perform and in their capacity to awaken love for their giver.

The argument remains analogical even when its language is bold. Traherne does not identify every piece of matter with the divine essence. Nor does his use of visible vastness settle whether the physical universe is actually infinite: in this same meditation he explicitly leaves that question undecided. Similarly, the world's seeming to precede and outlast our individual lives helps explain why philosophers thought it eternal, without requiring the Christian author to endorse that conclusion.

The supplied edition records a manuscript cancellation of a more direct inference from God as world-soul to the world as God's body. The retained wording is therefore especially important. It permits creation to display divine qualities while marking the relation as an assumption rather than natural embodiment. Readers should attend to the

467 Primary text: II.21. Supplied 2026 editorial notes 102–105 provide ancient parallels, the manuscript cancellation, and background on infinity, eternity, and the unnamed biblical book.

distinction instead of attaching an unqualified label of pantheism to the passage.

The image also leads into the book's practical method. To collect divine excellencies from the world is to consider what things do, whom they serve, and what loving purposes their enjoyment reveals. Cosmological language becomes an invitation to grateful perception.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.21** Invokes the ancient conception, qualifies the body analogy, and shows how visible usefulness and beauty manifest invisible divine qualities. (Edition p. 77.)

In this edition. The 2026 notes supply ancient parallels and report the cancelled manuscript sentence. Traherne's retained qualification, "not His natural body," governs this article; the historical label world-soul is a convenient name for the problem he raises.

See also. Soul; Body; God; Universe; Amasis.

Worship

worship; worshipping; bow before — reverent acknowledgment expressed toward God[468]

The word. Worship is the expression of reverence and honour due to God. It includes enacted, spoken, and communal forms, while requiring the inward apprehension of the one honoured.

In Traherne. The prospect of all nations worshipping supplies a greater delight than a merely silent landscape, because persons knowingly answer the bounty that sustains them. Traherne's enjoyment of nature therefore moves toward a social and vocal fulfillment rather than ending with aesthetic solitude.

David provides the practical pattern. Praise in the congregation, fidelity to promises, mercy toward enemies, care for the poor, and the building and furnishing of a temple belong together. Worship is not narrowed to ceremonial performance, but neither are instruments, gatherings, and sacred places dismissed. They become appropriate expressions of the grateful friendship that seeks to make divine goodness known among others.

468 Primary text: III.73, III.87, III.93. No 2026 editorial notes used.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.73** The nations' worship is read as a source of David's delight. (Edition p. 180.)
- **III.87** A world of praising persons surpasses a merely silent prospect. (Edition p. 189.)
- **III.93** Public praise, charitable conduct, and the establishment of worship form one pattern of gratitude. (Edition p. 193.)

In this edition. The psalmic exhortations quoted here and Traherne's ensuing applications are distinct voices on the page. Attribute the universal worship scene to its scriptural setting before stating his interpretation.

See also. Praise; Thanksgiving; Temple; David; Reverence; Charity.

Worth

worth; worthy; worthiness; worthless — excellence deserving esteem or fitting a relation[469]

The word. Worth is excellence or value, while worthy can mean deserving regard or fit for a particular good. The relational sense is especially important when love makes its object worthy.

In Traherne. Human worth is disclosed by creation, divine love, and redemption rather than by rank or accumulated possessions. A person can exceed the visible universe in dignity because the universe is an inheritance intended for a knowing and loving enjoyer. That claim should lead to mutual reverence rather than a private superiority over neighbours.

Traherne makes a further distinction: love may find worth, but can also create the worth it seeks. The creature is made worthy of divine love, not discovered already independent and meritorious. In conduct, virtues are worth more than a stock of money because they make life rightly ordered and a person delightful to others. Worth consequently joins gift, fittingness, and ethical excellence; it is not a stable price attached to an isolated thing.

469 Primary text: II.93, IV.74, IV.89, III.55. No 2026 editorial notes used.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **II.93** Redemption and inheritance require every informed person to honour another. (Edition p. 120.)
- **IV.74** Love finds or makes its object worthy of itself. (Edition p. 243.)
- **IV.89** A virtue is preferred in worth to worldly money and splendour. (Edition p. 256.)
- **III.55** Worthlessness follows the imagined severing of things from their beneficial relations. (Edition p. 166.)

In this edition. Made worthy in IV.74 is the crucial qualification. It prevents the language of dignity from being read as a claim that creatures possess an antecedent claim upon God independent of his gift.

See also. Value; Dignity; Honour; Love; Virtue.

Youth

youth; early life — the period of developing desire and understanding[470]

The word. Youth names an early period of life after or alongside childhood. Its significance in the Centuries lies chiefly in the continuity of desire through changing education and circumstances.

In Traherne. The adult recalls a burning thirst for happiness that nature had kindled in youth. His later decision to devote time to the search therefore appears as a deliberate answer to a longstanding inclination. Youth is not simply a completed paradise from which mature thought falls away.

Education provides knowledge that the child did not possess, although its significance becomes clear only later. Traherne repeatedly distinguishes an early experience from the interpretation subsequently placed upon it. The life story joins continuity of desire to development of judgment: what was first sensed can be more fully understood, and the mature person can consciously choose the pursuit that earlier longing anticipated.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **III.46** The search for happiness answers a thirst remembered from youth. (Edition p. 160.)

470 Primary text: III.46, III.36, III.37. No 2026 editorial notes used.

- **III.36** University learning is retrospectively understood as pertaining to felicity. (Edition p. 154.)
- **III.37** Early study supplies seeds whose proper end is recognized later. (Edition p. 154.)

In this edition. The explicit noun youth occurs in III.46; the accompanying educational passages illuminate its narrative setting. Do not invent precise dates or a continuous chronology from these retrospective meditations.

See also. Child and childhood; Infancy; Education; Desire; Study.

Zeal

zeal; zealous; zealously — ardent and sustained devotion to a good[471]

The word. Zeal is fervent concern expressed in energetic pursuit. Its moral quality depends on the object pursued and the charity governing its expression.

In Traherne. At the Cross, zeal is learned together with patience, meekness, self-denial, and love. Its exemplar is Christ's comprehensive concern, not aggression in the name of a private cause. Knowledge of one's inheritance should awaken zeal for the salvation of all rather than contentment with exclusive security.

Traherne also translates zeal into faithful opportunities. Divine friendship calls for public honour of God, speech that makes goodness known, and a refusal to neglect even a small available act of service. Present life is especially precious because such fidelity occurs amid difficulty and incomplete sight. Zeal therefore measures sustained seriousness about love's ends, rather than the loudness of religious display or a merely excited state of feeling.

The places. Selected passages in the *Centuries*.

- **I.61** Zeal is learned at the Cross alongside gentleness and charity. (Edition p. 37.)
- **I.62** The prayer asks how ardour and thanksgiving can answer Christ's love. (Edition p. 38.)

471 Primary text: I.61, I.62, II.98, IV.93. No 2026 editorial notes used.

- **II.98** World-enjoyment makes the person zealous for the salvation of all. (Edition p. 124.)
- **IV.93** Zeal honours God through available acts in the present season. (Edition p. 259.)

In this edition. Do not import a uniformly pejorative sense of fanaticism. The cited combinations with patience, meekness, and universal concern specify the character of the zeal Traherne commends.

See also. Love; Devotion; Courage; Charity; Service; Christ.

Lexical forms and aliases

Alternate forms, older expressions and related lookup terms lead to the principal articles. A redirect does not assert that every use of the words is interchangeable.

288 opinions. Varro.

a Babel of Confusions. Babel.

a sand. Sand.

Abasement. Humility.

abundant. Abundance.

abundantly. Abundance.

accident. Accident and substance.

accidental. Accident and substance.

account. Account and reckoning.

accounted. Account and reckoning.

accounteth. Account and reckoning.

act. Action and activity.

action. Action and activity.

active. Action and activity.

activity. Action and activity; Motion.

Actus purus. Action and activity.

Adam in Eden. Eden.

Adequate. Adequate object.

admirable precedent. Precedent.

admire. Admiration; Wonder.

Adoption. Heir and inheritance.

adorations. Adoration.

adore. Adoration.

adorning. Ornament.

advantage. Benefit; Interest.

Adversity. Affliction.

affections. Affection; Passion.

afflictions. Affliction.
after death. Death.
age. Age and ages.
ages. Age and ages; Time.
aid. Help.
alchemists. Alchemy and philosopher's stone.
Alexander. Alexander the Great.
alive. Life.
all. All and everything.
all ages. Age and ages.
all in all. All and everything.
all sufficiency. Sufficiency.
all things. All and everything.
all together. Whole.
almighty power. Omnipotence.
alone. Solitude.
ambitious. Ambition.
Angels' food. Food.
angry. Anger.
annihilate. Annihilation.
annihilated. Annihilation.
Apostacy. Apostasy.
appetites. Appetite.
apprehend. Apprehension.
apprehensions. Apprehension.
Appropriation. Possession.
art. Art and artifice.
Artist. Art and artifice.
Asclepi. Hermes Trismegistus.
assurance. Belief; Faith; Implicit faith and assurance.
Atheism. Atheist.
Atheists. Atheist.

Attention. Consideration.
attract. Attraction and loadstone.
avaricious. Avarice and covetousness.
Avaricious humour. Humour.
awake. Awakening.
awaken. Awakening.
awaking. Awakening.
balance. Balance and proportion.
balms and cordials. Cordial.
baptizeth with fire. Baptism.
beams. Light; Sun.
Beatific. Beatific vision.
Beatific Sight. Beatific vision.
Beatitude. Felicity.
beautiful. Beauty.
because. Cause.
behold. Beholding.
beings. Being.
believe. Belief; Faith.
beloved. Love.
benefactor. Benefactor and beneficence.
benefits. Benefit.
benevolent affection. Love.
Bethel. Jacob's ladder.
Bible. Scripture.
bleeding. Blood.
blessed. Blessing.
blessings. Blessing.
blind. Blindness.
blinded. Blindness.
bloody sufferings. Blood.
bodies. Body.

Body of God. World-soul.
bond of all. Microcosm.
book. Book and writing.
books. Book and writing.
born. Birth.
born again. Birth; Conversion.
bountiful. Bounty.
bow before. Worship.
Bowels. Straitened and bowels.
Brazen. Brazen serpent.
bread and water. Bread.
breathe. Breath.
breathings. Breath.
bride. Bride and bridegroom; Marriage.
bridegroom. Bride and bridegroom; Marriage.
bright. Brightness.
brother. Brotherhood.
brother of Christ. Brotherhood.
brothers and sisters. Brotherhood.
by way of eminence. Eminence.
calamities. Affliction.
capable. Capacity.
Carcase. Carcase and eagles.
causes. Cause.
celestial life. Heaven.
centre. Centre and circumference.
centre of desires. Cross.
changeable. Change.
changed. Change.
characters. Book and writing.
charities. Charity.
Charles. Charles I.

Chemist. Alchemy and philosopher's stone.
cherubim. Angels; Cherubim and seraphim.
cherubims. Angels; Cherubim and seraphim.
child. Child and childhood.
childhood. Child and childhood.
children. Child and childhood.
choose. Choice.
chose. Choice.
Christianity. Christian.
Christians. Christian.
Church militant. Church.
churches. Church.
Cineas. Pyrrhus and Cineas.
circumference. Centre and circumference.
cities. City.
Clew. Clue.
clothed. Clothing.
clothes. Clothing.
clue of Nature. Clue.
co-heirs. Heir and inheritance.
cold water. Water.
colors. Colour.
colours. Colour.
Comforter. Holy Spirit.
command. Commandment.
commandments. Commandment.
Commerce. Trade.
common. Common things.
communicate. Communication.
communicative. Communication.
Communicative humour. Humour.
company. Society.

compassionate. Compassion.
Complaisance. Complacency.
complete. Perfection.
comprehensive head. Microcosm.
Comprehensors. Comprehensor.
conceits. Conceit.
conception. Conceit.
concern. Interest.
Concernments. Concernment; Matter.
condescencions. Condescension.
confide. Trust.
confidence. Trust.
Conservation. Preservation.
consider. Consideration.
constancy. Patience.
contemned. Contemn.
contemners. Contemn.
contemplate. Contemplation.
contemplative happiness. Contemplation.
content. Contentment; Matter.
contentation. Contentment.
contrition. Repentance.
Contrivance. Art and artifice.
converse. Conversation.
convert. Conversion.
Copula. Copula and Hymenaeus.
cordials. Cordial.
cords of love. Attraction and loadstone.
corrupted. Corruption.
counsels. Counsel.
count. Account and reckoning.
countenance. Face.

countries. Country.
Courageous. Courage.
courageously. Courage.
Cousenage. Cozenage.
covet. Avarice and covetousness; Desire.
covetousness. Avarice and covetousness.
created. Creation.
creatures. Creature.
cross of Christ. Cross.
crown of thorns. Crown.
crowned. Crown.
crucified person. Cross.
curious art. Art and artifice.
curious cabinet. Cabinet.
curiously. Curious.
curiousness. Curious.
customs. Custom.
Darius. Darius and Zopyrus.
dark. Darkness.
day and night. Day.
De Dignitate Hominis. Pico della Mirandola.
dead. Death.
dearest affection. Bosom.
Deity. God.
delight in. Delight.
delight others. Delight.
delightful. Delight.
depravation. Corruption.
desert. Desert and merit.
deserve. Desert and merit.
Deus me dedit. Seneca.
devils. Devil.

devised riches. Invention.
dignities. Dignity.
dilate. Enlargement.
diligent. Diligence.
Dionysius Cato. Cato.
discontented. Discontent.
discontentment. Discontent.
disrobe. Clothing.
dissatisfaction. Discontent.
Distichs of Cato. Cato.
distresses. Affliction.
diurnal. Day.
divaricated feet. Divaricated.
diversities. Variety.
divine philosophy. Philosophy.
Divine resentments. Resentment.
Document. Documents.
doing good. Benefactor and beneficence.
Doubt. Knowledge.
drawn. Attraction and loadstone.
dread. Fear.
dreamed. Dream.
Duration. Eternity; Time.
dust of the streets. Dust.
dying. Death.
Eagles. Carcase and eagles.
effusions. Effusion.
elements. Element.
Elixir. Alchemy and philosopher's stone.
emergencies in this world. Emergencies.
Emergency. Emergencies.
empty. Emptiness.

end. End and means.
endless life. Immortality.
ends. End and means.
enemies. Enemy.
enflame. Fire.
engraven. Impression.
enjoy. Enjoyment.
enjoyer. Enjoyment.
enlarge. Enlargement.
enlarging. Enlargement.
enlightening. Light.
Enmity. Enemy.
enslaved. Bondage.
Entertain. Entertainment.
entertained. Entertainment.
entertainments. Entertainment.
enthrals. Bondage.
Epire. Pyrrhus and Cineas.
equal. Equality.
equally. Equality.
equity. Justice.
err. Error.
Estate. Estate and fourfold estate.
estate of innocence. Innocence.
eternal. Eternity.
Eternal Act. Immutability.
Eusebius. Eusebius Pamphilus.
Eusebius of Caesarea. Eusebius Pamphilus.
everlasting. Eternity.
every sand. Sand.
everything. All and everything.
examples. Example.

excellence. Excellency.

excellencies. Excellency.

Exchange at Athens. Socrates.

Exercise. Exercise and practice; Experience.

exercised. Exercise and practice.

existence. Being.

Expatiation. Expatiate.

expect. Expectation.

eyes. Eye.

face of Heaven. Face.

Faculties. Capacity; Power; Soul.

Faculty. Capacity; Power; Soul.

fair. Beauty.

faithful witness. Witness.

Faithfulness. Fidelity.

fallen. Fall.

false colours. Colour.

farthing. Coin and money.

favour. Grace.

fears. Fear.

figures. Allegory and parable.

firmament of Heaven. Firmament.

first in the intention. Eusebius Pamphilus.

first parents. Parents.

flame. Fire.

flesh and bones. Body.

fleshly eyes. Flesh.

flower. Flowers.

forbear. Forgiveness.

foreign country. Country.

forgery. Falsehood.

forgive. Forgiveness.

Fourfold estate. Estate and fourfold estate.

friend. Friendship.

from the womb. Birth.

fruitions. Fruition.

fruits. Fruit.

full assurance of understanding. Implicit faith and assurance.

gardens. Garden.

Gate of Heaven. Jacob's ladder.

gates. City.

generations. Age and ages.

generous. Generosity.

gentle. Gentleness.

gifts. Gift.

give. Gift.

glad tidings. Gospel; News.

glass. Mirror.

glorious. Glory.

Godhead. God.

God's Word. Scripture.

gold. Gold and silver.

golden link or tie. Copula and Hymenaeus.

good. Goodness.

government. Providence.

Grain of sand. Sand.

grateful. Gratitude.

great. Greatness.

Gregory of Nazianzus. Gregory Nazianzen.

grieve. Grief.

grieved. Grief.

ground. Earth.

habits. Habit.

happy. Happiness.

hate. Hatred.
healing influences. Influence.
heavenly documents. Documents.
heavenly Father. Father.
heavens. Heaven.
Heir. Heir and inheritance.
heiress. Heir and inheritance.
heirs. Heir and inheritance.
hidden. Secret.
highest reason. Reason.
his 38th Oration. Gregory Nazianzen.
holy. Holiness.
holy angels. Angels.
Holy Catholic Church. Church.
Holy Ghost. Holy Spirit.
Holy Temple. Temple.
honourable. Honour.
honours. Honour.
House of God. Jacob's ladder.
house of Paradise. Paradise.
human nature. Man and mankind; Nature.
Humane learning. Humanity.
humble. Humility.
Hymenaeus. Copula and Hymenaeus.
hypocrisies. Hypocrisy.
Hypostatically. Hypostatic union.
hypostatically united. Hypostatic union.
ignorant. Ignorance.
Ignorant Dread. Plutarch.
illimited extent. Infinity.
illustrate all it illuminates. Illustrate.
imaginations. Imagination.

Imitation of Christ. Thomas à Kempis.

Immensity. Infinity.

immortal. Immortality.

Impertinent. Impertinence.

implicit faith. Belief; Faith; Implicit faith and assurance.

impressed. Impression.

impressions. Impression.

improportionable. Balance and proportion.

in frame. Order.

In-being. In-being and objective presence; Place.

inclinations. Inclination.

inconsideration. Consideration.

individually one. Individually; Unity.

individually united. Individually.

Industry. Labour.

inevitably fatal. Fatal.

infant. Infancy.

infant-like. Child and childhood.

infinite. Infinity.

infinite room. Room.

infinite space. Space.

influences. Influence.

inherit. Heir and inheritance.

Inheritance. Heir and inheritance.

innocent. Innocence.

Insatiable. Insatiableness.

Insensibility. Blindness.

inspire. Breath.

intelligence. Knowledge.

Intention and execution. End and means; Eusebius Pamphilus.

interests. Interest.

interminable sphere. Interminable.

interminable Temple. Interminable.

Intuitive knowledge. Intuition.

inventions. Invention.

inward room. Bosom.

Jacob. Jacob's ladder.

Jaundice. Sight.

Jesus. Christ.

joys. Joy.

Jubilees. Jubilee.

judgments. Judgment.

jurisdiction. Authority.

Kempis. Thomas à Kempis.

king. Charles I; King and kingdom.

King Charles. Charles I.

King Charles the Martyr. Charles I.

King of Egypt. Amasis.

King of Epire. Pyrrhus and Cineas.

kingdom. King and kingdom.

kings. King and kingdom.

knew by intuition. Intuition.

knowing. Knowledge.

labor. Labour.

last in the execution. Eusebius Pamphilus.

law-giver. Authority.

laws. Law.

learned. Learning.

liberal. Generosity.

Likeness. Image.

limbs and members. Body.

limner. Limner and pencil.

little child. Child and childhood.

Little world. Microcosm.

living. Life.
loadstone. Attraction and loadstone.
Lodestone. Attraction and loadstone.
looking upon. Beholding.
looking-glass. Mirror.
Lord Jesus. Christ.
love of propriety. Avarice and covetousness.
loving. Love.
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Childhood and education

Adam; Apostasy; Authority; Birth; Bondage; Book and writing; Change; Cherubim and seraphim; Child and childhood; City; Conceit; Corn; Corruption; Country; Curious; Custom; Documents; Dust; Education; Emulation; Example; Fain; Fall; Fear; Fortune; Gentleness; Habit; Humanity; Ignorance; Imagination; Infancy; Influence; Innocence; Intuition; Invention; Learning; Man and mankind; Matter; Music; Nature; News; Orient; Original sin; Parents; Physic; Preternatural; Principle; Purity; Reason; School; Science; Scripture; Secret; Skill; Strangeness; Study; Wisdom; Wonder; Youth.

Christ and Scripture

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Desire and value

Account and reckoning; Air; Alexander the Great; All and everything; Amphion; Art and artifice; Attraction and loadstone; Avarice and covetousness; Benefactor and beneficence; Benefit; Blessing; Bounty; Bread; Cabinet; Choice; Coin and money; Commodity; Common things; Contemn; Contentment; Crown; Curious; Delight; Desert and merit; Desire; Discontent; Dominion; Earth; Eden; Emulation; Enjoyment; Esteem; Excellency; Fame; Felicity; Flowers; Force; Fortune; Freedom; Garden; Generosity; Gift; Glory; Gold and silver; Goodness; Gratitude; Greatness; Honour; Hope; Impertinence; Inclination; Insatiableness; Magnificence; Malice; Mistake; Nakedness; Necessity; Omnipotence; Orient; Ornament; Patience; Peculiar; Pomp; Possession; Poverty; Preternatural; Profit; Propriety; Pyrrhus and Cineas; Quintessence; Sand; Socrates; Sufficiency; Thanksgiving; Thirst; Treasure; Use; Value; Vanity; Varro; Want; Worth; Youth.

Devotion and spiritual practice

Account and reckoning; Admiration; Adoration; Altar; Anselm; Awakening; Baptism; Beatific vision; Beholding; Benefit; Breath;

Business; Carcase and eagles; Cato; Church; Communion; Complacency; Concernment; Consideration; Contemplation; Courage; Cross; Diligence; Documents; Dreadful; Emergencies; Exercise and practice; Fain; Faith; Fear; Fidelity; Fire; Food; Friendship; Grace; Gratitude; Gregory the Great; Heart; Holiness; Holy Spirit; Hope; Implicit faith and assurance; Impression; Jubilee; Kindness; Labour; Meditation; Moses; Pain; Piety; Plutarch; Poverty; Praise; Prayer; Precedent; Preservation; Providence; Quick and quicken; Return; Service; Solitude; Tears; Temple; Thanksgiving; Thomas à Kempis; Trust; Worship; Zeal.

Ethics and virtue

Action and activity; Affliction; Alchemy and philosopher's stone; Ambition; Anger; Anselm; Appetite; Art and artifice; Authority; Avarice and covetousness; Balance and proportion; Benefactor and beneficence; Brotherhood; Care; Change; Charity; Charles I; Choice; Christian; Clothing; Coin and money; Commandment; Compassion; Conceit; Condescension; Conscience; Contemn; Conversation; Cordial; Corruption; Counsel; Courage; Cozenage; Darius and Zopyrus; Deordination; Diligence; Duty; Emulation; End and means; Equality; Example; Experience; Falsehood; Fear; Fidelity; Folly; Forgiveness; Freedom; Fruit; Fruition; Generosity; Gentleness; Goodness; Habit; Happiness; Help; Holiness; Honour; Humility; Hypocrisy; Inclination; Ingratitude; Insatiableness; Interest; Joy; Justice; Law; Liberty; Magnanimous; Malice; Measure; Meekness; Mind; Mistake; Nature; Obedience; Obligation; Order; Passion; Patience; Peace; Philosophy; Phocion; Phoenix; Pico della Mirandola; Piety; Pleasure; Pomegranate; Pomp; Precedent; Pride; Principle; Prudence; Punishment; Purity; Rapine; Reason; Recreation; Remembrance; Repentance; Repose; Return; Reverence; Reward; Righteousness; School; Self; Self-endedness; Self-love; Service; Silence; Simplicity; Sin; Skill; Stupid; Sympathy; Temptation; Tendering; Theatre; Time; Trade; Use; Value; Vanity; Vice; Virtue; War; Wickedness; Will; Wisdom; Work; Worth; Zeal.

Felicity and enjoyment

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God and divine attributes

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Knowledge and perception

Admiration; Age and ages; Amasis; Angels; Antipodes; Apostasy; Apprehension; Aristotle; Atheist; Awakening; Beatific vision; Beauty; Beholding; Belief; Birth; Blindness; Book and writing; Brazen serpent; Brightness; Business; Cato; Cause; Child and childhood; Christian; Clue; Colour; Complacency; Comprehensor; Conceit; Concernment; Conscience; Consideration; Contemplation; Conversion; Counsel;

Country; Covenant; Custom; Darkness; David; Diligence; Divinity; Documents; Dream; Dust; Education; Element; Emergencies; Eminence; Error; Esteem; Eternity; Expectation; Experience; Eye; Face; Faith; Falsehood; Felicity; Folly; Golgotha; Gospel; Gregory the Great; Habit; Hermes Trismegistus; Ignorance; Imagination; Impertinence; Implicit faith and assurance; Impression; In-being and objective presence; Infancy; Innocence; Intuition; Invisible; Knowledge; Language; Learning; Light; Lustre; Matter; Meditation; Mind; Miracle; Mistake; Monuments; Mystery; Necessity; Object; Philosophy; Picture; Place; Plato; Power; Presence; Preservation; Prevent; Prospect; Purity; Reason; Reflection; Relation; Religion; Remembrance; Resentment; Revelation; Sand; Science; Secret; Sense; Sensible and sensibles; Shadow; Sight; Soul; Study; Stupid; Sun; Superstition; Taste; Thought; Truth; Understanding; Unsuppose; Value; Varro; Vision; Wisdom; Wist; Wonder; World-soul.

Language and literary images

Accident and substance; Alchemy and philosopher's stone; Alexander the Great; Allegory and parable; Amasis; Amphion; Art and artifice; Attraction and loadstone; Balance and proportion; Book and writing; Bosom; Brazen serpent; Breath; Bride and bridegroom; Brightness; Cabinet; Carcase and eagles; Cato; Centre and circumference; City; Clothing; Clue; Colour; Commodity; Conversation; Copula and Hymenaeus; Cordial; Crown; Curious; Daemon; Darius and Zopyrus; Divaricated; Dreadful; Effusion; Emptiness; Entertainment; Epithalamium; Expatiate; Fain; Fancy; Fire; Flowers; Fountain; Fruit; Gold and silver; Golgotha; Gregory Nazianzen; Harmony; Health; Heart; Hermes Trismegistus; Illustrate; Inconvenient; Influence; Interminable; Jacob's ladder; Light; Limner and pencil; Lustre; Magnificence; Marriage; Matter; Microcosm; Mirror; Monuments; News; Nothing; Orient; Ornament; Phoenix; Physic; Pico della Mirandola; Picture; Platforms; Plato; Plutarch; Pomegranate; Prospect; Pyrrhus and Cineas; Quintessence; Reflection; River; Sea; Seneca; Shadow; Socrates; Spectacle; Stars; Stupid; Sun; Table; Temple; Theatre; Thomas à Kempis; Tree; Water; Wist; Witness; Word.

Love and relationships

Abundance; Adequate object; Affection; All and everything; Benefactor and beneficence; Benefit; Blessing; Bondage; Bosom; Bride and bridegroom; Brotherhood; Charity; Cherubim and seraphim; Christ; Church; Communication; Communion; Compassion; Condescension; Conversation; Copula and Hymenaeus; Cordial; Courage; Daemon; Death; Delight; Devotion; Divaricated; Dominion; Duty; Enemy; Enjoyment; Enlargement; Entertainment; Envy; Epithalamium; Equality; Fame; Father; Fellowship; Fidelity; Fire; Forgiveness; Friendship; Generosity; Gentleness; Gift; Gratitude; Happiness; Harmony; Hatred; Heir and inheritance; Help; Humility; Humour; Illustrate; Impertinence; Individually; Interest; Kindness; Love; Lustre; Magnanimous; Malice; Marriage; Meekness; Mirror; Misery; Motion; Obligation; Ornament; Pain; Paradise; Parents; Peace; Peculiar; Person; Phocion; Possession; Praise; Profit; Prudence; Quintessence; Recreation; Relation; Resentment; Reverence; Riches; Saint; Self-endedness; Silence; Society; Solitude; Straitened and bowels; Strangeness; Subsistence; Tendering; Thanksgiving; Treasure; Trust; Union; Unity; Whole; Wickedness; Will; Witness; Worship; Worth; Zeal.

Sin and redemption

Affliction; Anger; Apostasy; Babel; Birth; Blood; Bondage; Child and childhood; Christ; Compassion; Conversion; Corruption; Covenant; Cozenage; Cross; Darius and Zopyrus; Darkness; Death; Deordination; Desert and merit; Devil; Dignity; Dreadful; Eden; Enemy; Estate and fourfold estate; Evil; Fall; Fatal; Flesh; Forgiveness; Fruition; Grace; Grief; Hatred; Health; Hell; Humility; Hypostatic union; Immortality; Incarnation; Innocence; Mercy; Misery; Nothing; Obedience; Obligation; Omnipotence; Original sin; Parents; Patience; Phoenix; Punishment; Rapine; Redemption; Repentance; Resurrection; Sacrifice; Salvation; Sin; Socinians; Tears; Temptation; Vice; Wickedness.

Society and possessions

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things; Contemn; Country; Cozenage; Custom; Estate and fourfold estate; Fame; Fortune; Gold and silver; Heir and inheritance; Honour; Humour; Hypocrisy; Invention; Monuments; Nakedness; Paradise; Peculiar; Phocion; Place; Pomp; Possession; Poverty; Preternatural; Pride; Propriety; Pyrrhus and Cineas; Rapine; Seneca; Society; Socrates; Thomas à Kempis; Trade; Vanity; Vice; War; Whole; World.

Soul and mind

Abundance; Action and activity; Adequate object; Affection; Ambition; Appetite; Apprehension; Atheist; Balance and proportion; Being; Body; Capacity; Centre and circumference; Change; Comprehensor; Concernment; Copula and Hymenaeus; Creature; Daemon; Desire; Devil; Dignity; Discontent; Dominion; Dream; Eminence; Emptiness; Enemy; Enlargement; Envy; Error; Essence; Eusebius Pamphilus; Evil; Excellency; Exercise and practice; Expectation; Eye; Fancy; Force; Fountain; Greatness; Grief; Heart; Hermes Trismegistus; Humanity; Humour; Hypocrisy; Ignorance; Illustrate; Image; Immortality; In-being and objective presence; Inclination; Individually; Infinity; Interminable; King and kingdom; Knowledge; Liberty; Life; Magnanimous; Man and mankind; Measure; Memory; Microcosm; Mind; Miracle; Mirror; Motion; Nature; Object; Order; Perfection; Person; Pico della Mirandola; Platforms; Power; Prayer; Presence; Principle; Quick and quicken; Reason; Resentment; Self; Self-love; Sense; Sensible and sensibles; Sight; Soul; Space; Spirit; Straitened and bowels; Subsistence; Sufficiency; Sympathy; Thought; Understanding; Union; Unity; Unsuppose; Variety; Will; Work.

Space time and infinity

Age and ages; Annihilation; Antipodes; Cabinet; Capacity; Centre and circumference; Day; Death; Effusion; Enlargement; Essence; Eternity; Expatiate; Fatal; God; Heaven; Illimited; Imagination; Immortality; Immutability; Infinity; Interminable; Measure; Memory; Moses; Omnipresence; Place; Presence; Prevent; Resurrection; Room; Sabbath; Soul; Space; Straitened and bowels; Throne; Time; Universe; Unsuppose.