

One of twenty children, or more, Catherine was determined from a very young age not to marry and to give her life to God and she lived in an age and a city where God mattered very much. From our more secular age, her devotion might seem excessive and her role and influence we often now play down, but her writings, or rather her dictations, are remarkable for their depth of understanding, both spiritual and theological. Here's an excerpt from one of her prayers:

*Why then,
 Father
 did you create this creature of yours?
 I am truly amazed at this
 and indeed I see
 as you show me
 that you made us for one reason only
 in your light
 you saw yourself compelled
 by the fire of your charity
 to give us being
 in spite of the evil we would commit against you* *eternal Father.*

.....
*No, you took your eyes off the sin that was to be
 and fixed your gaze
 only on your creature's beauty
 For if you had concentrated on the sin
 you would have forgotten the love you had
 for creating human kind
 Not that the sin was hid from you
 but you concentrated on the love
 because you are nothing but a fire of love,
 crazy over what you have made. (prayer 13)*

There's lots more in the same vein but what I like about this is that sin is given its due weight, but grace also – echoing St. Paul:

Sin aboundeth but grace aboundeth more

which is as relevant now as ever.

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