



# The World Community for Christian Meditation

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## October 3, 2010 Readings

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### "Kissing the Joy as it Flies"

**John Main OSB, THE HEART OF CREATION: Meditation: A Way of Setting God Free in the World (London: Canterbury, 2007) pp. 74-75.**

Meditation is concerned with detachment. And as in our Western religious vocabulary there is no word more misunderstood than detachment, meditation can often present unnecessary problems or complications for people. It seems to us, generally, that detachment means a frosty sort of platonic indifference and it was this that put most of us off the idea when we came across the word [and the] largely negative or repressive view of [it].

Yet I feel that detachment is the most important lesson that meditation has to teach us today as men and women of the West. . . . Detachment is not dissociation from yourself or an evasion of your problems or responsibilities. It is not a denial of friendship or affection, of even of passion. Detachment is, in essence, detachment from self-preoccupation, from that often unconscious mind-set that puts myself at the center of creation.

Detachment is equally concerned with a commitment to friendship, to enduring brotherhood and sisterhood, to a self-transcending and outreaching love. Detachment makes love possible because love is only possible if we are detached from self-preoccupation, if we have moved out of self-isolation, if we are freed from self-indulgence. The disengagement that detachment involves is from using other people for one's own ends. But above all, and this is the important lesson we have to learn in meditation, detachment is liberation from the anxiety we have about my own survival as a self.

Life teaches us all that loving is in essence losing oneself in the larger reality of the other, of others, and of God. Detachment from self-centeredness liberates us for love so that we are no longer dominated by the animal quest for survival. Detachment requires fully human trust: trust of the other, both in other people and in God. It requires the willingness to let go, to give us control, and to be. [. . .]

Christian discipleship is lived detachment and loving other-centeredness. And discipleship begins with a call that awakens out of the coma of self-preoccupation. We are called, we are chosen. Meditation is our response to that call from the deepest center of our awakened consciousness.

**Meditate for Thirty Minutes....** Remember: Sit down. Sit still and upright. Close your eyes lightly. Sit relaxed but alert. Silently, interiorly, begin to say a single word. We recommend the prayer-phrase "Maranatha." Recite it as four syllables of equal length. Listen to it as you say it, gently, but continuously. Do not think or imagine anything—spiritual or otherwise. Thoughts and images will likely come, but let them pass. Just keep returning your attention—with humility and simplicity—to saying your word in faith, from the beginning to the end of your meditation.

### **After Meditation...**

"Cup and Ocean," THE SOUL OF RUMI, tr. By Coleman Barks (New York: HarperCollins, 2002), p. 155.

These forms we seem to be are cups floating in an ocean of living consciousness.

They fill and sink without leaving an arc of bubbles or any good-bye spray. What we

are is that ocean, too near to see, though we swim in it and drink it in. Don't

be a cup with a dry rim, or someone who rides all night and never knows the horse

beneath his thighs, the surging that carries him along.

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Weekly Readings Newsletter

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