



The World Community for Christian Meditation

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Readings for 5/8/2012



An Excerpt from John Main, *Being Present Now*, DOOR TO

SILENCE: An Anthology for Christian Meditation (London: Canterbury Press, 2008), pp. 82-83.

If we are truly attentive to the mantra we cannot image God. We cannot construct any idea or icon of God. In the context of this pure attention, pure faith, we learn that all images, ideas, memories and words fall short of the reality we are paying attention to.

They are unreal. They are illusion. So in meditation we realize that God is not an absent memory or an abstract dream. God is.

In the simplicity and faithfulness of the practice God is known not as [an entity] we think about or imagine or talk to or analyse, but as all reality. To go forward to meet God in pure attention is to know and to be known by God. To know is to love. To be loved is to be known. To be loved by God is to love God. We need to divest ourselves of all the intermediary processes. All images, thoughts and language must go.

The simplifying practice of saying the mantra teaches us to pay full attention to what is directly. To pay full attention to the One who is personally. To prepare for this we learn the discipline of mindfulness. We learn the discipline of selflessness, not to be thinking of ourselves. Not to be caught up in a web of our own self-reflective weaving. Not to be snared by external circumstances. But to live from the depth of our own being, from the depth of being itself.

Meditation is a discipline of presence. By stillness of body and spirit we learn to be wholly present to ourselves, to our situation, to our place. It is not running away. By staying rooted in our own being we become present to its source. We become rooted in being itself. Through all the changing circumstances of life, nothing can shake us.

The process is gradual. It requires patience. And faithfulness. And discipline. And humility.

The humility of meditation is to put aside all self-important questioning. To put aside self-

importance means to experience ourselves poor, divested of ego, as we learn how to be. To be present to the presence. We learn, not out of our own cleverness, but from the source of wisdom itself, the Spirit of God.

After meditation: from TALKS WITH RAMANA MAHARSHI: On Realizing Abiding Peace and Happiness (Carlsbad, CA: Inner Directions, 2001), pp. 70-71.

The ultimate Truth is so simple. It is nothing more than being in the pristine state. This is all that need be said. Still it is a wonder that to teach this simple Truth there should come into being so many religions, creeds, methods, and disputes among them. . Oh, the pity!. . .[Because people] want something elaborate and attractive and puzzling, so many religions have come into existence and each of them is so complex, and each creed in each religion has its own adherents and antagonists.

For example, an ordinary Christian will not be satisfied unless he is told that God is somewhere in the far-off Heavens not to be reached by us unaided. . . .If told the simple truth??The Kingdom of Heaven is within you?---he is not satisfied and will read complex and farfetched meanings into such statements. Mature minds alone can grasp the simple Truth in all its nakedness.

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