



The World Community for Christian Meditation

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READINGS FOR 8/7/2012



From John Main OSB, *‘Growing Point,’ THE HEART OF*

CREATION, (New York (Continuum, 1998), pp. 105-107.

God is the breath of life. God is presence and he is present deep within our being, in our hearts. If only we persevere we discover that in the power of his Spirit each one of us is regenerated, renewed, recreated so that we become a new creation.

‘I have poured out my Spirit,’ said the prophet Ezekiel. And the Spirit is the presence of power, the power of love. Meditation teaches us that this is the foundational wisdom on which to build life and true religion. What we discover is that we can only live our lives fully if we are always open to this mysterious presence of the Spirit, and always open to the presence more profoundly. That is the pilgrimage we enter upon every time we sit down to meditate. We open our minds, our hearts, our consciousness more permanently to the ultimate reality that is, that is now, that is here.

What is the basis of the Christian mystery? It is surely that the beyond is in our own midst, that absolute reality is here and now. The Christian faith teaches that by being open to the mystery of this reality we are taken out of ourselves, beyond ourselves, into the absolute mystery which is God. God is how we transcend self. We transcend all limitation by simple openness to the All who is now.

The great awakening to the mystery is the Kingdom of heaven and the Kingdom of heaven is now. It is established by Jesus and proclaimed by his own words, ‘The Kingdom of God is upon you. Repent and believe in the gospel.’ To repent means simply to turn in the direction of God. Repenting is turning not so much away from ourselves (for that keeps us still tied to our own center) but beyond ourselves. This means not rejecting ourselves but finding our marvelous potential as we come into full harmony with God. This awareness of potential is the positive basis of Christianity and so, for a Christian, the central concern is not self, nor is it sin. The central reality is God and love and, as far as we are concerned, growth in God’s love. Growth consists both in our openness to his love for us and in the response we make by returning that love. [. . .]

After meditation: ?The Swan,? by Mary Oliver, The Paris Review # 124, Fall, 1992.

The Swan

Did you too see it, drifting, all night, on the black river?
Did you see it in the morning, rising into the silvery air -
An armful of white blossoms,
A perfect commotion of silk and linen as it leaned
into the bondage of its wings; a snowbank, a bank of lilies,
Biting the air with its black beak?
Did you hear it, fluting and whistling
A shrill dark music - like the rain pelting the trees - like a waterfall
Knifing down the black ledges?
And did you see it, finally, just under the clouds -
A white cross Streaming across the sky, its feet
Like black leaves, its wings Like the stretching light of the river?
And did you feel it, in your heart, how it pertained to everything?
And have you too finally figured out what beauty is for?
And have you changed your life?

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