

Weekly Teachings 17/2/2013



Birth of Christ in the Soul

In this week leading up to Christmas it is very appropriate to look at Meister Eckhart's idea of the 'Birth of Christ in the Soul'.

Meister Eckhart supports the view of the early Church Fathers that we can 'know' God because we have something essential in common with the Divine, which he calls 'the spark', 'the castle' or sometimes the 'ground' of our being. He feels that we are able to 'descend' to this 'ground' of our pure being, become aware of its true Divine nature and thus be transformed into Christ, ascending with Him to God in this life. He calls the moment of realization of our potentiality to know God 'the birth of Christ in the soul'. He shares with St Augustine the primacy of this experience, who said: 'What does it avail me that this birth of Christ is always happening if it does not happen in me? That it should happen in me is what matters.' An important aspect of this potentiality is humanity's deep longing for God implanted by the Divine in the 'spark' within the centre of our being.

He sees this 'birth' as a revelation. It will occur, if we 'keep the mind fixed on God.' It is not a result of any effort on our part but a pure gift, a grace: 'God alone must do it.... and you must undergo it.'

Like Origen and St Augustine he talks of this way of intuitive knowing, the way 'by which God may be seen?', as 'the eye of the heart'. He talks of 'purely spiritual knowledge; therein the soul is rapt away from all bodily things. There we hear without any sound and see without matter?'

The intuitive capacity of the intellect to know God, our way of being able to have direct contact with the Divine Reality, is our Divine essence; but at the same time it is also the element that makes us truly human. It also gives us the ability to see beyond the ordinary created world and at the same time truly appreciate creation as a manifestation of the Divine.

Meister Eckhart does not at all deny the importance of our rational intelligence, which given

his highly intellectual educational background and career is very understandable. Although he feels God cannot be reached by reason, he considers our rational powers to be essential for clarifying our intuitive experience. He sees contemplation as a marriage of mind and heart.

The urgency of his teaching is occasioned by his conviction of the necessity for everyone to become aware of this potentiality.

The attitude Meister Eckhart here expresses is very similar to John Main's teaching. By faithfully and longingly repeating our mantra we are led to the Silence, where the gift, the grace of this deep insight into the true Divine nature of the ground of our being is given to us. ?Nothing describes God as well as silence.?

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For further help with setting up and leading groups, please look [HERE](#).

School of Meditation Weekly Teachings

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