

Daily Meditation Transcript 08/13/21

How Imagination Heals and Empowers in Hard Times

Good morning.

As I relay in today's meditation Meister Eckhart is very busy encouraging us to tap into our creativity, which is for him our nobility, our God-likeness.

After all, for him God is the Creator above all else and we are co-creators with divinity. For example, in one of his sermons he says:

It is good for a person to receive God into himself or herself, and I call this receptivity, the work of a virgin: the virgin is receiving the Godself.
But it is better when God becomes fruitful within a person, when God becomes fruitful, for becoming fruitful as a result of a gift is the only gratitude for the gift. I call such a person a wife and in this sense the term "wife" is the noblest term we can give the soul; it is far nobler than virgin.

Now it's interesting because he gave this sermon to Beguines, who were celibate women who lived outside monasteries and outside marriage in his time. And he's telling them that even though they were celibate, that it's better to bear fruit. And he's saying that virgins can bear fruit too -- don't settle for just being receptive, he's saying!

And then he says every day such a person bears fruit a hundred times or a thousand times or countless times! Giving birth and becoming fruitful are the most noble foundation of all, the most noble foundation of all.

And so you can see what tremendous emphasis he puts on the Via Creativa, the path of creativity, and as I'm saying in the essay today, clearly we're all called to this creativity today. We need a literal explosion of creativity because really none of our professions are doing their job right.

We have to give birth to an educational system, an economic system, to a political system, to religious views of the world that carry the weight and substance of our time. That can get the job done, that can take us deeper into our depths, into our nobility as a species.

To wake up to the sins of our fathers, if you will: that is to say the inherited mess and chaos we have from the era that we're just emerging out of. That was so narcissistic, to use Pope Francis's term, so anthropocentric, that we ignored the other systems of the planet: the other creatures, our relationships with them, simply to exploit.

So we have to move beyond all that and that's going to take strength and it's going to take imagination. And this is why tapping into Eckhart's deep teaching about our nobility in our creativity is so useful.

And then I think of the great psychologist Otto Rank, who says that all neurosis is the *artiste manqué*, the failed artist. And we stand back from that and look at our world today as being neurotic! Not just the events of January 6 that blow up in our face whenever we want to think of democracy, but the yearning for authoritarianism in many countries in the world today.

And our ignoring our being in denial about climate change and all the effects that are happening and we'll have happening on our children or grandchildren.

When we look at our world today there's a lot of neurosis to go around! And there too, though, Rank is saying that neurosis is a misuse of our creativity: instead of applying it to reality, we apply it to the bad messages we have about ourselves when we've lost the sense of nobility, the royal person that we all are as children of God as images of God, as Buddha natures, other Buddhas, other Christs, other images of God.

When we lose that then we spend our deep powers of creativity projecting suffering on others and on ourselves. This is the *artiste manque*, this is what neurosis is, says Otto Rank. He says when religion lost the cosmos in the West, the whole society became neurotic and that's when we invented psychology to deal with the neurosis.

So we can undo this neurosis by bringing in the cosmic sense again, which takes us beyond just the human, beyond our anthropocentric agendas. When we do that we'll not only heal our souls - we will be in a much sturdier place and looser place, imaginative place to heal the planet as we know it.

That's the good news, I think from Meister Eckhart and Otto Rank speaking to the deep issue of tapping into our nobility when we tap into our creativity.

Thank you, we'll see you tomorrow.