

Daily Meditation 10/09/2021

Good morning.

We're meditating this morning on words from Nicolas of Cusa, an amazing figure, part of the Rhineland mystic movement for sure. Cusa is a town just a little bit north of Bingen.

Cusa was an exceptional person: he was a scientist, a lawyer, critical historian, philosopher, a humanist right at the dawn of humanism (the late 15th century), a mystic, and surprisingly a cardinal of the Catholic Church.

But he was a diplomat for the Pope to Greece, and of course Greece was Greek Orthodox, not Roman Catholic, so I think he learned some humility there, which is not easy for cardinals to learn, because he was very much a minority. Not unlike Pope John XXIII was a diplomat to Turkey, and of course Turkey is basically a Muslim country. So being a minority like that, I think he too (Pope John the 23rd) learned a lot of humility, and I think a lot of his sense of what I call deep ecumenism was born there.

The same is true with Nicolas of Cusa. I think that he sought "What did the Greek version of the next version of Christianity have in common with the Western Roman Catholic Church at that time?" So it made him a humanist.

So here are some more teachings of Cusa:

He connects very much the theme of the Logos that you find in John 1 -- "in the beginning was the Word (or the Logos)" -- with Wisdom.

See, Wisdom is so important to him -- and of course Wisdom, as we've been writing about for some time is the Feminine, it's the Divine Feminine -- so he connects, and of course he's biblically correct, that the passage in John 1 about setting up his tent comes directly from one of the Wisdom books. It said Wisdom is looking around the world to set up his tent, and it settled on setting it up in Israel... so the writer in John's gospel is referring to the Word.

But here's how Nicolas puts it:

"If anyone held that all things are in created Wisdom, and if another person held and said that all created things are in the Logos, would they not be saying the same thing? Even though there seems to be a difference in expression, yet they express the same idea: for the Logos of creation, in whom all things were created, can be nothing other than divine Wisdom."

There he's absolutely making a parallel between Wisdom and Logos. And that's very important, and it's a wonderful example of bringing the Sacred Masculine, because Logos is masculine, together with the Divine Feminine, because Wisdom is feminine. So in Greek, Logos - Word - masculine; Sophia - Wisdom - feminine.

And of course he was a lover of creation. Remember how Eckhart said that "every creature is a word of God and a book about God?" Well, Cusa says that "divinity shines forth in creatures as the truth of a reflected image." So that, for him, every creature is an image of God, and a face of God with a small "f".

He says there's only one Face with the big "F", and that's divinity, and all the rest of us are faces with the small "f". And by "the rest of us," I mean all beings, not just humans.

He says, "There's only one mirror without flaw: the Divine in whom what is revealed is received as it is. For this mirror is not essentially different from any existing thing." See, the divine mirror is found in every being: when you look in the being, you're seeing the divine mirror; you're seeing divinity. Rather, he says, "in every existing thing it is That Which Is: it is a universal form of being." So the Divine Being is the universal form of being: it is in every being, and it is a mirror of divinity therefore.

And that is why, when we gaze on the Cosmic Christ -- and he says, "in all faces is seen the Face of Faces" -- capital F, the Face of Faces -- "veiled in a billion riddles, yet unveiled, it is not seen at last until, at last, above all faces being entered into a certain secret and mystical silence of a Face."

So he invokes the apophatic divinity of silence, and he talks about darkness, and nothingness, and finding the mystery behind the Face in darkness. And so he has the dialectic between the Via Positiva and the Via Negativa -- between the cataphatic divinity which is about light, and the apophatic which is about darkness.

And we see the cataphatic light in all beings, the Face of God, but we also go into darkness and mystery and silence, and there we find the God of mystery, in a darkness that is bigger than creation and anything we can imagine.

Thank you; we'll see you tomorrow.