

Daily Meditation 10/10/21

Cusa on Wisdom

So, in yesterday's meditation, we saw Cusa saying that humanity will find that it is not a diversity of creeds, but the very same creed which is everywhere proposed. That's radical of humanism. This is coming from the late 15th century!

"There cannot be but one wisdom," he says. "Humans must therefore all agree that there has been but one most simple wisdom, whose power is infinite. And everyone in explaining the intensity of this beauty must discover that it is a supreme and terrible beauty."

Notice he leaps from wisdom to beauty, from wisdom to beauty. Wisdom and beauty for him are the same words. And this wisdom is infinite, powerful. It is supreme and terrible beauty.

Amazing insight about the essence of all religions in this--500 years ago, the very time that Europeans were setting out to rape the other religions of the world and commit genocide against indigenous peoples everywhere.

There was a fellow, a cardinal no less, but a scientist speaking of the powerful wisdom and commonality between all religions. Wisdom and beauty, beauty and wisdom.

And in today's reading we hear Cusa offer a beautiful poem:

"Wisdom is shouting in the streets. It's simply not enough for those seeking wisdom to merely read about it," he says.

This is from a great scholar. Get out of your books, he's saying. "Wisdom must be discovered, and once discovered, it must be learned by heart."

Learn in our hearts, not about something in the head. That's knowledge.

"You will not find wisdom in your books," he says, "for it is not of your books but of the books of our God/Goddess. What are these books? They are those which Divine has written with her own finger. Where can they be found? Everywhere!"

And so he's speaking very much to the book of nature, to the book of nature.

And this is very Celtic. Remember, he was from the Rhineland. And the Celts settled down the Rhine. And they had the source, really, of creation spirituality in the west.

And Scotus Eriugena, a very important Celt theologian of the 9th century, he was condemned here and there. He talks about the big book and the little book. The little book is the Bible and the big book is nature.

Of course he didn't have...Cusa didn't have the awareness of how big nature is, how big the cosmos is; that it's two trillion galaxies. So it's even a bigger book than they imagined. Talk about the little book and the biggest book!

But he's really...Cusa is really expressing this tradition from the Celts and Scotus Eriugena. But he's also expressing what Aquinas says, when Aquinas says revelation comes in two volumes: nature and the Bible. Not just the Bible.

This is such a horrible, horrendous mistake made by, well, modern consciousness, including Protestantism, which tried to put the word of God into a book exclusively. But logos is about the whole history of the universe. The whole history of the universe is the word of God. And it's still unfolding, obviously.

And, of course, Cusa's teaching echoes the teaching of Meister Eckhart, whom he knew well. He read his works. We found the trial of Meister Eckhart in Cusa's library in the 19th century. So we know there was that close connection. Cusa was even studying his condemnation, the trial against Meister Eckhart. That's how well he knew Eckhart.

But, of course, Eckhart said that every creature is a word of God--logos--and a book about God. Almost identical language coming from Cusa a century after, 150 years after Meister Eckhart.

So, clearly, he's part of this tradition. After Eckhart came Julian of Norwich, and then came Cusa about 50 years later.

Thank you.

We'll see you tomorrow.