

Daily Meditation 12/20/2021

A Litany to Toxic Masculinity

Good morning.

In your meditations on the holy and unholy masculine, focusing mostly right now on the unholy, getting to the holy very soon. But Hildegard of Bingen proposes some ways to move from lies to something better. She talks about what she calls "Concerning the Repentance of Lying Men."

"If the men who sweat in falseness want to avoid these wicked spirits and their punishments, let them fast and scourge themselves and wear a hairshirt for a long time, according to the judgment of their judge. Let those who ever wanted to destroy their lies, told under oath and with perjury, chastise themselves very harshly with fasting and scourgings and the roughness of hairshirts for a long time."

Now, this is medieval punishment. (laughs) And I'm not saying that everyone responsible for January 6th, and denying it, has to wear a hairshirt for a long time, but maybe it's time to bring such things back! (laughs)

Says, "Falseness does not rejoice in the truth, rather it exaggerates what does not exist, and what cannot exist with exultation and unjust delight. It places no value on the truth but speaks strange things with lies that people are unaware of."

So she's pretty fierce about lying and about how inappropriate it is for a human being. As apparent the other day, she actually says it's inhuman to lie, because creation does not lie. No other creatures lie, she says, only humans.

Now, bell hooks makes a direct link between the patriarchal world and the elevation of lying. She says, "It is no accident." (This is page 40 of her book, *All About Love: New Visions*.)

"It is no accident that greater cultural acceptance of lying in this society of ours coincided with women gaining greater social equality. Early on in the feminist movement, women insisted that men have the upper hand because they usually control the finances. Now that women's earning power is greatly increased (though it is not on a par with men's) and women are more economically independent, men who want to maintain dominance must deploy subtler strategies to colonize and disempower them."

So, she says that to maintain this dominance over women by any means necessary, includes lying and presenting a false self, encouraging them to present a false self, develop a false self. So, both Hildegard and bell hooks are reminding us that the opposite of a healthy masculine is this need to dominate and to structure a circumstance where lies come from more than the truth.

So, we have to be on guard against this.

And when we talk about patriarchy, we also talk about the media and those who run it, and those rich enough to own it and to dictate their so-called values on the rest of us. And, of course, certain media were very responsible for what occurred on January 6th, leading up to it. And, of course, patriarchy then becomes a kind of bubble of energies that are anything but healthy masculine.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.