

Daily Meditation 3/06/2023

Thomas Merton and the Search for Our True Selves

Good morning.

We're talking this morning about Thomas Merton and the search for our true selves. Because we've been talking about truth for at least a week or 10 days now because of all the untruths that are floating around and are being exposed in the discrimination suit against Fox News.

I've been calling on many mystics who have a lot to say about truth. But this, too, is a take on truth from the mystical tradition, that is to say that search for the true self and living out of the depths of ourselves, that is our true self and not the false self.

And I refer to both St. Paul and Meister Eckhart in this essay, even though we're talking about Thomas Merton's contribution and his wonderful observation at the end of the meditation about how if we don't get beyond the mask, role, there will be an "itch with discomfort, so much so that we have to pay a psychiatrist to scratch it."

It's kind of funny, paying a psychiatrist to scratch the itch in our soul from discomfort of avoiding the true self and playing of false self.

But what I want to do here is to take you to Eckhart's words in my book that has 37 of his sermons, each with the commentary after them. And on page 71 of this book, which is the second sermon, commentary on the second sermon, Eckhart says there is a distinction between the outward and the inward person.

"The outward person is the old person, the earthly person, person of this world grows old from day to day. His end is death. The inward person, on the other hand, is a new person, the heavenly person in whom God shines."

God shines. That's definitely a reference to the Cosmic Christ, that radiance that emerges from within things, which is where the Christ dwells. So, we are shining people. If we go deep enough, we get to the true self.

Barriers of ego and time and competition and dualism can put us out of touch with this inner self. And then we live only at the superficial level of the outer person's consciousness. And that outer person is often designed to connect to the expectations of others, rather than truly bringing your true self into the world and showing that.

Eckhart says, "There, in the innermost person, time never penetrates. And no image shines into the inner person. So, there, God is free to play and interplay and to create."

And I quote Freud who says, "In the id, there's nothing corresponding to the idea of time."

So, in a mystical state, time is suspended. We're not looking at our watches; we're not bored. In fact, we say afterwards 'Where did the time go?' because we've been having so much fun. Because where there's play, you're not looking at your watch.

And here Eckhart says is where the whole universe is birthed inside of us. This place that's deeper than time, and where images do not come in.

And he says, "The inward person is not at all in time or place but is purely and simply in eternity. It is there that God arises. There, God is heard. And there, God is. There, God, and God alone, speaks. Blessed are they that hear the Word of God there." Luke 2:11-28.

So, all this is the promise of the inward person, the inner person, the true self that we do all have access to, but it takes some digging sometimes.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.