



The World Community for Christian Meditation

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Weekly Readings 30/12/2012



A selection from Laurence Freeman OSB, **JESUS: THE**

TEACHER WITHIN (New York: Continuum, 2000) pp. 226-227.

[T]he mantra . . . is recited continuously whatever we may be feeling: ?in times of war and times of peace,? as The Cloud of Unknowing puts it; ?in times of prosperity and adversity,? as John Cassian puts it; ?from the beginning to the end of each meditation,? as John Main said in his turn.

With practice the mantra pushes its roots deeper into our being, establishing harmony between the conscious and the unconscious. Imperceptibly and gradually it sinks from the head to the heart. Over time we say the mantra, then sound it, then listen to it with less effort and more attention.

Naturally, there are stormy days or dry periods of meditation when it seems next to impossible to say the mantra. We look for every justification not to sit and meditate. When we do, the mantra is immediately washed away by waves of thought and emotion. But if we do persevere or start again then, like the seed in the parable, which grows in the dark womb of the earth (how we do not know, Jesus said), the mantra faithfully guides us ever deeper. And with depth comes clarity, stillness, self-knowledge, the great gift of compassion and the inner stillness needed for ever-more complete attention, more generous transcendence. The mantra imperceptibly progresses through the interspace of stillness, between the waves of thought and of the inner life. [. . .]

With time it brings us to the authentic poverty where we learn simply to be. Experiencing this lovely reality from time to time empowers us to endure many setbacks and disappointments along the way. There will be times of defeat. . . But even when we seem to be regressing, growth is happening if there is faith at work. In the darkest night an invisible light still shines.

An attitude of nonpossessiveness and trust develops to replace greed and fear. With this comes a more and more unshakeable peace. Underlying all turbulence, this peace flows from the knowledge that we are known and, once acknowledged, it becomes the condition of all further growth.

After meditation: A selection from John Main OSB, ?Purity of Heart,? WORD MADE FLESH (London: Darton, Longman, Todd, 1993) p. 60.

There is nothing less shining in our hearts than the glory of Christ. That glory is not triumphalist but it does triumph over hearts hardened by the wounds of life. Poverty, purity, simplicity are strange weapons to minds strained on images and values of violence. But our survival, spiritually and even physically, depends on our recovering an awareness of the redeeming power of these qualities of humanity. This is the way of the mantra.

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