



The World Community for Christian Meditation

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The Light of the Word

*?The psalmist praised God by singing, ?In your light we see light.? This clarity is felt as joy.
Seeing the light is the
essence of joy and so it is the only secure basis of contentment in our life.?*

When we talk or think about meditation, it is very easy to get carried away by theory. And meditation is an extremely exciting and wonderful mystery to talk and think about. But the talking and the thinking have a great inbuilt danger, which is that we do not go beyond the words and the ideas and instead remain looking at a reflection in a mirror.

We are so fascinated by the reflection and so unaware that the mirror distorts whatever it reflects, that we fail to turn around and see the real thing. Seeing the real thing means doing the real thing. It means actually meditating, actually putting in the time each morning and evening, to see the real thing.

The teaching we have received, which we try to share and to live, is entirely realistic and practical. It is not concerned just with speculation or elaborating theories; it is concerned primarily with experience, experience in faith.

First, it is concerned with the experience we all start from as begin to meditate. Secondly, it is concerned with the experience we pass through as we learn to meditate. Only thirdly is it concerned with the experience we enter into, the goal we arrive at?the teaching itself has the authority to reflect and guide our experience. This is what we call a ?living tradition?.

Each of enters into it when we begin to meditate. Because it is a teaching that began long time ago, it is one that to a great degree formed us into who we are when we come to enter it. The teaching, the tradition, is simplicity itself.

It says that to meditate we have to become silent and still, not just externally, not just physically-though those are essential dimension- but interiorly silent, interiorly still. In this way the tradition leads us to enter the knowledge of unity with ourselves. The teaching leads us to find ourselves.

Our exterior stillness reflects the interior stillness. During the time of meditation you have nothing else to do, nothing to be ambitious about, to plan or to analyze. You have only to say your word.

Whatever great insights may come to you, just let them go. Whatever trivial thoughts or

distractions may come to you, just let them go.

Probably to begin with we are more likely to encounter restless desire and discontentment. We are all radically discontented because we are encouraged and trained to live so much in the future, planning for the future, or in the past, regretting or analyzing it over and over again.

Our restlessness makes us miss the only opportunity we have for contentment, for fullness of life. The only chance we have is the present moment. Missing that we miss everything.

Meditation is concerned with being rather than doing?as we learn how to be, how to accept the gift of our being, we find real contentment.

The God whose Spirit dwells within us then shines through our spirit as sunlight shines through the water. This is what we call purity of heart. This is the clarity of consciousness that allows us to see God.

LIGHT WITHIN Laurence Freeman OSB

We invite you to reflect on the reading from Light Within and how it may resonate in your journey of a spiritual awakening in the 12 steps of recovery, and in particular to step 11.

Light - ?I must turn in all things to the Father of Light who presides over us all.? BB p.14, Bill's Story

?We all need the light of God's reality, the nourishment of His strength, and the atmosphere of His grace.? 12&12 p 111

Theory - ?The spiritual life is not a theory.? Big Book p.83

Practical - ?And let's always remember that meditation is in reality intensely practical.? 12&12 p.101, Step Eleven

Experience - They are matters of knowledge and experience? 12&12 p.104, Step Eleven

Faith - ?When we began to do that, we received the gift of faith, a faith which works. When we began to do that, we received the gift of faith, a faith which works.? 12&12 p.30, Step Two

Restlessness - ?They are restless, irritable and discontented, unless they can again experience the sense of ease and comfort which comes at once by taking a few drinks -- drinks which they see others taking with impunity. ? BB xxviii (xxvi), The Doctor's Opinion

Contentment - ?From a trembling, despairing, nervous wreck, had emerged a man brimming over with self-reliance and contentment? BB xxxi (xxix), The Doctor's Opinion

We want to find exactly how, when and where our natural desires have warped us?Without a willing and persistent effort to do this, there can be little sobriety or contentment for us.? 12&12 p.43

Consciousness - ?He has been granted a gift which amounts to a new state of consciousness and being? 12&12 p.107, Step Twelve

?When many hundreds of people are able to say that the consciousness of the Presence of God is today the most important fact of their lives, they present a powerful reason why one should have faith.? BB p.51, We Agnostics

Joy - ?Understanding is the key to right principles and attitudes, and right action is the key to good living; therefore the joy of good living is the theme of A.A.'s Twelfth Step... joy of helping others to face life.?12&12 p.125, Step Twelve

Love - ?Step Eleven Then he asked for the grace to bring love, forgiveness, harmony, truth, faith, hope, light, and joy to every human being he could.? 12&12 p.101
?But its object is always the same: to improve our conscious contact with God, with His grace, wisdom, and love? 12&12 p.101

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