

# The Christian Crisis

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**From John Main OSB, “The Christian Crisis,” THE PRESENT CHRIST (New York: Crossroad, 1991), pp. 74-76.**

To become truly spiritual we have to learn to leave our official religious selves behind—that is, to leave behind the Pharisee that lurks inside all of us—because, as Jesus has told us, we must leave self behind. All images of ourselves coming as they do out of the fevered brain of the ego, have to be renounced and transcended if we are to become one with ourselves, with God, with one another—that is, to become truly human, truly real, truly humble.

Our images of God must similarly fall away. Curiously, we find that they fall away as our images of self fall away, which suggests what . . . we always guessed anyway, that our images of God were really images of ourselves. In this wonderful process of coming into the full light of Reality, of falling away from illusion, a great silence emerges from the centre. We feel ourselves engulfed in the eternal silence of God. We are no longer talking to God or worse, talking to ourselves. We are learning to be—to be with God, to be in God. [. . . .]

On the spiritual journey it takes more energy to be still than to run. [M]ost people spend so much of their waking hours rushing from one thing to another that they are afraid of stillness and of silence. A certain existential panic can overtake us when we first face the stillness. But if we can find the courage to enter this silence, we find the peace that is beyond all understanding.

**After meditation: Charles Bukowski, “about competition,” *Sifting Through the Madness for the Word, the Line, the Way* (New York: HarperCollins, 2003), p. 75.**

### **about competition**

the higher you climb  
the greater the pressure.

those who manage to  
endure  
learn  
that the distance  
between the  
top and the  
bottom  
is  
obscenely  
great.

and those who  
succeed  
know  
this secret:  
there isn't  
one.

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