

The grace of the guru

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An excerpt from Laurence Freeman OSB, JESUS THE TEACHER WITHIN (New York: Continuum, 2000), pp. 62-63.

The question that Jesus asks, “And who do you say I am?” is the *rabbuni’s* gift to us: its very asking bestows the “grace of the guru.” In every era his question is the gift waiting to be received. Its power to simply, subtly awaken self-knowledge is perennial. St Thomas uses the present tense when he speaks of the Resurrection. He can be understood to be saying that the resurrection. . . transcends all categories of space and time. In a similar way icons of the resurrection in the Orthodox tradition suggest the same transcendence and show that the power that raised Jesus is presently and continuously active.

The essential work of a spiritual teacher is just this: not to tell us what to do but to help us see who we are. The Self we come to know through grace is not a separate, isolated little ego-self clinging to its memories, desires and fears. It is a field of consciousness similar to and indivisible from the consciousness that is the God of cosmic and biblical revelation alike: the one great I AM.

After meditation: Rumi, an excerpt from “Love with No Object,” THE SOUL OF RUMI, tr. Coleman Barks (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), p. 168.

Have you seen someone fall in
love with his own shadow? That’s what we’ve done. Leave
partial loves and find the one
that’s whole. Where is someone who can do that? They’re
so rare, those hearts that carry
the blessing and lavish it over everything. Hold out your
beggar’s robe and accept
their generosity. Anything not coming from that will damage
the cloth, like a sharp stone
tearing your sincerity. Keep that intact, and use clarity;
call it discernment,
You have within you a deciding force that knows what to
receive, what to turn from.

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