

Smashing the Mirror

wccm.org/weekly-readings/smashing-the-mirror

19 January 2024



From Fr John Main, “Smashing the Mirror,” *MOMENT OF CHRIST* (New York: Continuum, 1998), pp. 50-51.

I do not think it is any exaggeration to say that original sin is self-consciousness, the hyper-self-consciousness of egoism, because self-consciousness gives rise to divided consciousness. This is like having a mirror between God and ourselves. Every time we look into the mirror we see ourselves. The purpose of meditation is to smash that mirror so that we no longer look at reflections of things and consequently see everything backwards, including ourselves. . . . The mirror must be smashed. And Jesus is talking about overcoming self-consciousness, the mirroring self, when he says no one can be a follower of his unless they leave self behind.

Now it does not take very much knowledge of life to perceive that self-consciousness deludes us into seeing the whole universe revolve around ourselves; or to conclude that this self-consciousness is an appalling state to be in. Perhaps that is what brings most of us to meditation. We don't want to look into that mirror and see everything backwards for the rest of our lives. We want to look with courage into the infinite mystery of God.

After meditation: “Just Now” by W.S. Merwin in *THE PUPIL* (New York: Knoph, 2001), p. 62.

Just Now

In the morning as the storm begins to blow away
the clear sky appears for a moment and it seems to me
that there has been something simpler than I could ever
believe

simpler than I could have begun to find words for
not patient not even waiting no more hidden
than the air itself that became part of me for a while
with every breath and remained with me unnoticed
something that was here unnamed unknown in the days
and the nights not separate from them
not separate from them as they came and were gone
it must have been here neither early nor late then
by what name can I address it now holding out my thanks

[Download Printable version](#)

Image by [Wilfried Wende](#) from [Pixabay](#).