

Communicating ourselves to others

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From Laurence Freeman OSB, *The Light of the Self, LIGHT WITHIN: The Inner Path of Meditation* (London: Canterbury Press, 2008), pp. 85-87.

Meditation exposes. . . a hard and essential truth. If we want to be fully human we must face the fact that we cannot communicate our real self to others because we haven't yet made contact with it ourselves. If we feel isolated from those around us it is because we are isolated from ourselves. Only when we know who we are and so can be who we are, can we communicate ourselves to others. [But] what does in fact block us from our real self? Meditation gives us a very simple answer. Not an easy one but a simple one. Nothing. Nothing lies between us and our real selves. Nothing anyway except the false idea that something does lie between them. The false idea is what we call the ego. [. . .]

Each time we meditate we shuffle off another layer of self-consciousness. . . . And as we do, we simply become ourselves, unlayered and naked. This is what Jesus called poverty of spirit. [. . .]

It is a beautiful poverty of spirit, and an invigorating path to follow. It is a grand poverty because it sets us free to see the light of our real self and to know that we are that light. The mantra takes us through the layers of thought, language and imagination to the pure light of full consciousness. The mantra is very simple. It is simply the focal point that leads

us to the center where the light of the real self shines out. As we continue to meditate we may not feel this happening. [But] if we persevere then our life itself will slowly but deeply shine with that inner light and we will know that the light is there in everything.

After meditation, W.S. Merwin, THE RIVER SOUND (New York: Knoph, 1999), p. 133.

The String

Night the black bead
a string running through it
with the sound of a breath

lights are still there from
long ago when
they were not seen

in the morning
it was explained
to me that the one

we call the morning star
and the evening
star are the same

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