

Daily Meditation, 08/15/2021
Eckhart on Our Creativity & Nobility, continued

Good morning.

In today's meditation we are dealing with Meister Eckhart and the important topic of our creativity, which for him is also our nobility in the image of God working in us.

One philosopher has said that one can extract an almost complete philosophy of art from Eckhart's writings, a complete philosophy of art, and it is true that absolutely one of his most important themes is our creativity. And as we've meditated on earlier, for him this has a lot to do with our nobility as a species.

He says the proof - well actually he cites Paul from Galatians: "The proof that you are sons is that God has sent the spirit of the Son into our hearts. The spirit cries Abba, Father! and it is this that makes you a son. You are not a slave anymore. And if God has made you a son or daughter, then God has made you an heir also."

Now Eckhart picks up on this, and he says that we have the essence of God in us, as capacity for birthing, for fatherhood. He says the word Father signifies a pure generation. It means the same thing as a life of all things, so we are involved in birthing just as God is constantly involved in birthing.

I was once asked what the Father did in heaven and I said he's generating his Son and that is his activity, that most agrees with him. He says the word father implies a pure generation, any production of children, so God, he says, is generating at the same time he's indwelling and his indwelling is his generating. So to talk about God being in us is to talk about God birthing, indwelling of divinity in us, and the outward oriented indwelling where we are co-creating with God, are creating into the world

So he says from the start once one has become an artist, and as long as one is an artist capable of creative work, art remains with the artist, art remains with the artist. And this is a meaning of the phrase "the word was in the beginning with God" - that is, the art was with the artist, as the son is with the father and God. And so he's really talking to artists here, but he's talking to all of us because ultimately he recognizes that we all are the image of God and we all create.

Many decisions every day are creative decisions: the meals we prepare, the checks we write out to pay our bills, the decisions we make in leading and disciplining our children, and of course our work: all this calls forth creativity. The medieval consciousness, like the indigenous consciousness, does not have a special room for art in our heads, or for those who are especially talented at art.

We are all meant to be birthers. That's at the heart of how he celebrates in today's meditation the experience of Mary being invited by the Holy Spirit to be a mother and inviting the holy spirit, as

Gabriel did, the angel Gabriel inviting Mary to take on the responsibility of being a mother to the forthcoming child Jesus. She had a choice and she said Yes.

That big YES is something we carry within ourselves, too. We carry our capacity for saying Yes to the Holy Spirit, to the coming of the Spirit to birth in us the sacred son and daughter of god who is first of all ourselves, and then whatever else we give birth to, including our children and grandchildren and our work and our citizenship and all our creativity.

So it's wonderful that Eckhart develops his theology of creativity and art around his theology of the Holy Spirit and this is what I celebrated in my book on creativity: that the Holy Spirit is what pours through us when we are lost in our acts of creativity. We're not looking at our watches, we're not counting the time, we're being carried along by the Spirit.

That's the creative act, and Eckhart knows all about it.

Thank you, we'll see you tomorrow.