

Daily Meditation 04-12-22

Expanding Our Hearts and Minds, continued

Good morning.

We continue our meditations on expanding our hearts and minds, while connecting Psyche to Cosmos therefore. And how important is it that we expand our hearts and minds? Meister Eckhart says "God is delighted to watch our souls enlarge."

...God is delighted to watch our souls enlarge. To me, there are two teachings in that one sentence. One is, of course, that our souls enlarge, that we're here to enlarge our souls. So it's a responsibility we have, we're not here to shrink our souls, to grow smaller; we are here to expand our souls. And the second message in that rich statement is that we delight divinity by doing this, we delight divinity by doing it.

Eckhart also says, "God is delighted through and through...God is tickled through and through." That's the word he uses -- "tickled." When we work for justice, our works of justice tickle God through and through.

Bet you didn't know you could tickle God, did you? That's why we need the mystics, to remind us of these things.

And, of course, we emphasize in this meditation that beauty enlarges the soul. And there's beauty in so much, if we allow it to enter us, if we look at the world, looking for the beautiful. And I don't even know if I mentioned the art that humans give birth to: the music, the dance, the costumes, food, the relationships, the beauty of all that.

Let's listen to what Thomas Aquinas says about beauty, because it's very rich. And again, the modern era threw beauty out as a philosophical and theological category. That's the last 500 years. Beauty was not an important theological category, but in pre-modern consciousness, such as Aquinas and the medieval thinkers, but also, of course, indigenous people, Beauty is at the essence of our existence, at the essence of what divinity is.

For example, the Navajo people: so much of their religion, their spirituality, is based on beauty. There's a beautiful dance, in which we sing, "I walk with beauty before me, I walk with beauty behind me, I walk with beauty above me, I work with beauty below me, I walk with beauty all around me. Your world is so beautiful, oh God." That's a wonderful prayer of the Navajo people, and there are many others like it.

But here's Thomas Aquinas:

God is always and uniformly beautiful. God is a fountain of total beauty. The beautiful is said to be from God as a cause. From this beautiful one, beauty comes to be in all beings, for brightness comes from a consideration of beauty. But all beauty, through which a thing is able to be, is a kind of participation of the Divine brightness. So all beings participate in the divine beauty. And therefore bring out some of that beauty, in their own splendor, their own brightness. We carry this beauty, divine beauty, around with us.

And that word, "brightness," he uses is so interesting. Remember, Hildegard of Bingen says that there's -- what's a word she uses? -- a radiance in every creature, a radiance in every being and every creature. That's the same word as brightness, isn't it?

Aquinas goes on -- and of course that's the same word as doxa or glory, which is always a sign of the presence of the Cosmic Christ in the Christian tradition, or the Buddha nature in Buddhist tradition, or the Shalem, the image of God in the Jewish tradition. Aquinas adds:

God is supersubstantial beauty, and is called Beauty.

...God's name is beauty. Beauty is God, because God bestows beauty on all created beings. He says:

The beautiful is God. The beautiful which is God is the end of all, like the final cause of all things. For all things have been made in order that they imitate the divine beauty, in whatever way possible. They exist to imitate the divine beauty.

And he says that beauty awakens reverence in us...reverence. He says:

We are to do two things with beauty: one, hold beauty in reverence; and two, share beauty, rendering it conspicuous.

He says,

All beauty yearns to be conspicuous. It yearns to be shared therefore.

And he says,

In addition to holding both beautiful things and good things in reverence, it is necessary for good things to be conspicuous, because to be conspicuous pertains to the nature of beauty. We are made for beauty.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.