

**Daily Meditation 01/21/2023**

**Non-dualism: Chenu & Aquinas on Passions as the Seat of Virtues**

Good morning.

It's our purpose this morning to continue to meditate with Pere Chenu and with Thomas Aquinas on the topic of non-dualism in this very, very rich essay called "Body and Body Politic in the Creation Spirituality of Thomas Aquinas."

And we have a passage here from my book *Christian Mystics* from Father Chenu. It's from another writing of his, not writing this in the body of the essay today. It's very important and very much in tune with the topic we're talking about. He writes:

*Inspired by converging evolutions, our generation would seem to have the task of finally determining the human truth of matter and its historical dimension. For matter is impressing its importance in the many phases of humans' collective life and in the psychological life of soul. It is a daring assertion which proclaims that philosophical and religious truth matter.*

I'm going to pause right there. I think very much this is what was at the center of Pierre de Chardin's work as well. Remember that Teilhard was writing in the time that Chenu-- he was older than Chenu-- for like Chenu, he was a philosopher and more of a scientist than Chenu was. But Chenu was very open and eager to learn from scientists. And of course, he was French, like Chenu was.

"It is a daring assertion that claims philosophical, religious truth matter."

But then Chenu comments on his specialty, which is Thomas Aquinas in the Middle Ages. He says this:

*In the finest hour of the University of Paris, in the emancipated world of the communes, Thomas Aquinas roused the anger and disdain of intellectuals and religious people by proclaiming the importance of matter in the metaphysics of the universe, in the constitution of humans, and in the evolution of society.*

It's a very, very rich, powerful statement. Controversial it was in Aquinas's day, and even in our day!

*He roused the anger and disdain of intellectuals and religious people by proclaiming the importance of matter in the metaphysics of the universe, in the constitution of humans, and in the evolution of society.*

There is, in that one strong sentence, a revolution, an awareness, necessity of bringing matter and spirit together. And I do think in our time, even after Perre Chenu's death in 2005, that more and more, science is bringing matter and spirit together. And thoughtful religious leaders are doing the same. A good example would be Pope Francis's Encyclical Laudato Si.

And Mother Earth's suffering is forcing us to make great strides in overcoming this ultimate dualism: matter versus spirit, other matter as spirit, light in all things. The Cosmic Christ in all things. The Buddha nature and Salem. Image of God in all things.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.