

Daily Meditation 03/16/2023

How Concepts Assist Our Spiritual Journey's Deepening, iii

Good morning.

Today we're going to meditate on concepts that help name our spiritual experiences, and how important that is: as Thomas Aquinas says, spirituality is about experience, but to teach it, you need concepts. You have to have a language by which we can understand and share our experiences, our deepest experiences.

And of course, poets and musicians and others are often the ones who assist us to name what spirituality really is.

Now, I make a list of several concepts in today's presentation that I think are very useful to people. We began with the Four Paths a couple of days ago.

But one of these concepts is panentheism. And in my book, *Original Blessing*, done in 1983, Chapter Six is on "Panentheism: Experiencing the Diaphanous and Transparent God."

And here are a few citations from various sources about panentheism:

Pablo Casals, the musician says this in his autobiography: "In music, in the sea, in a flower, in a leaf, in an act of kindness, I see what people call God in all these things."

...I see what people call God in all these things.

In the first epistle of John, chapter 4, verse 16: "God is love. Anyone who lives in love, lives in God, and God in her."

That's panentheism: everything in God and God in everything, that's pure panentheism.

And in the book of Acts, Paul is giving a sermon, preaching, and says, "It is in God that we live, move and have our being."

...It is in God that we live, move and have our being.

So we see that this tradition of panentheism is found everywhere, including in the scriptures.

Mechtild of Magdeburg, the 13th century Beguine (Beguines being the women's movement of the Middle Ages): "The day of my spiritual awakening was the day I saw, and knew I saw, all things in God and God in all things."

That was the day of her spiritual awakening, of her coming alive, spiritually, and aware and conscious.

Julian of Norwich, the 14th century mystic: "We are in God, and God whom we do not see is in us." Pure panentheism.

And in John's Gospel chapter 15: "Make your home in me as I make mine in you."

...Make your home in me, as I make mine in you.

"I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me with me in him bears plentiful fruit."

So again, that's pure panentheism in the first century of Christianity. And it's not just about making our home in Christ as Christ makes his home in us, but it's also about bearing plentiful fruit; it's about giving birth; it's about creativity. Good things happen in this context of panentheism. Creativity breaks out.

Kabir, the great 15th century mystic in India, says: "I laugh. I laugh when I hear the fish in the water is thirsty."

...I laugh when I hear the fish in the water is thirsty.

We often compare panentheism to the fish in the water: that we are fishes in the water and the water is in the fish. That's another way of picturing our relation to divinity.

And it's good to ask the question: What sort of a god would it be who only pushed from without?...who only pushed from without?

So are these are examples of panentheism, and the experience of it comes from many, many corners, including the scriptures themselves.

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.