

## Daily Meditation 06/16/23

### Eckhart on Democracy (and Love, Equality, Compassion, Justice)

Good morning.

In today's meditation we consider Meister Eckhart's democratic consciousness and awareness, how he brings together love, equality, compassion, and justice in this bigger context we've been talking about: the royal personhood of all people, a theme that he preached to peasants in their own dialect, their own language.

And this really is a striking moment in history to realize that this great mystic was also a great champion of justice and equality. Meister Eckhart said, "The person who understands what I say about justice, understands everything I have to say." So that is how he blends and brings together the mystical and the prophetic, the personal and the social, the individual and society or community. Of course, he's urging us to do the same. In all this I put under the same umbrella, the *via transformativa*, and also the *via positive* the *via negative*: we're dealing with our deepest experiences of joy and gratitude and reverence, and also of silence, emptying, and suffering. But then we move, by way of the *via creativa*, into the work of *transformativa*.

What I want to do for you is to take my major volume that collected 36, 37 of Eckhart's sermons (a few of them are treatises, most are sermons) and arrange them by the four paths. So I just want to share with you some of the titles and themes from the fourth path, the *via transformativa*.

The first is actually his long commentary on Luke 6: "Be you compassionate as your creator in heaven is compassionate." This is where I really first encountered Eckhart, because I was working on a book on compassion.

I was really getting frustrated that I couldn't find many theologians who had written about compassion; they're so busy writing about contemplation over the centuries, but Eckhart got it in his major exegesis on Luke six, then a sermon, a wonderful sermon that I call "Compassion is an Ocean: The Mystical Side to Compassion," where he talks about how we are in compassion, compassion is in us, we are in God, God is in us, we are in love, love is in us. And he ends it by saying, "We don't have a soul until we are agents of compassion." That's what soul means: to be an agent of compassion -- a very strong sermon.

Sermon 32 in my book, *Passion For Creation: "Driving Merchant Mentality from our Souls: Economics, and Compassion,"* and Sermon 33, "Justice, the Work of Compassion," where he talks about how God is justice and to be in God is to be in justice.

Sermon 34 is a whole important sermon on work: "When Our Work Becomes a Spiritual Work: Working in the World."

And Sermon 35, again, is a treatise not a sermon, exegesis, and a lengthy exegesis on how bread is given us for others, on account of others, and with others, especially the indigent. And he talks about the need for an "our" consciousness, as in Our Father, not just my consciousness or my father.

And in Sermon 36 we've been dealing with; again, it's not a sermon here; it is a treatise on how everyone is an aristocrat; everyone, a royal person.

And finally, Sermon 37 and the entire volume closes with this: "Compassion as celebration." And that's where he talks about God becomes tickled through and through and rejoices in our work of compassion; our works of compassion and justice tickle God through and through.

So it really is a tremendous presentation by Meister Eckhart on the *via transformativa*: how we serve the world through our mystical awareness, because, as he says, "In compassion, peace and justice, kiss."

Thank you. We'll see you tomorrow.