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**The Journey School: The Way Draws Us Deeper**

**"Surrendering to Love"**

**Excerpted from *God is Love: The Heart of All Creation***

**Thomas Keating**

Fr. Carl: If you had 20 more years of life and prayer and also to study, what would you like to explore?

Thomas Keating: Well, what I’m interested now is the surrender to the movement of letting go of the false – not only the false—self, but the self-identity in the sense of being concerned about the work I’ve done or the work I might do. In other words, I’m at the point where I don’t want to do anything except God’s will and it may be nothing but nothing is one of the greatest activities there is. It takes a surprising amount of time! And so that’s the direction I’m interested in and what time is left each day is an opportunity, I hope, for God to take over my life more completely in every level and every detail.

So, in a sense, it’s a “no-I” kind of project and I don’t, by God’s grace, hang on to anything I’ve done. I appreciate all the people I’ve worked with and so on but now they’re in God’s hands and the work itself is really not my work; I was just trying to help or contribute modestly to the renewal of the contemplative tradition. If it’s gone farther than I expected, that’s not me, that’s the Spirit that has moved it along and, hopefully, will move it farther in my evolutionary theological vision that I’ve accepted at this point with a certain amount of lightness of touch so that I can …

Fr. Carl: Sitting on it lightly …

Thomas Keating: … integrate new things or I can recognize exaggerations and so on but, the substance of it is, that God is – in my understanding—and more and more so – trying to move the human race to the next stage of the human consciousness which is a capacity to respond to intuitive insights, rather than rely as heavily as we do now on the rational, technological and dominating kind of world view that thinks of human nature as the boss or in-charge of the rest of the universe, at least of this planet, and loses the insight into the equality of all creatures, especially humans among themselves.

It’s just recognizing the truth that there is only one self, ultimately, and this is God manifesting in us and this manifests most effectively when we’re not thinking about ourselves *at all*. It’s just being who you are as a human being and who you are is a rational animal that is being deified in communion with all other human beings. So we are influencing other people by our personal work on ourselves, not for our sake, but for the transformation of the whole human family.

I’m absolutely certain that anyone who commits themselves in any religion or no religion sincerely to the transformative process is changing the world more than they could by any other activity but they’ll have activities recommended to them by the Spirit, if they’re called to it, but the real work is to work on ourselves so we don’t and can’t fix anybody else. We can’t even fix ourselves without grace and we become more and more certain of that through the experience of the prayer in our weakness and deprivations and absences of God and defeats, failures, humiliations, rejections, all of these things are treasures planned by God with great love to bring us little by little, not all at once – we would be blown away – but helping us to bear the trials of life as stepping stones in this transformative process to deepen our surrender. But you don’t really let go of anything when you accept God’s will because he never takes anything away except to provide something better or to incorporate us in a project that is … we couldn’t do alone and with the encouragement, help, and support of others.