



THE MARK

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A Contemplative Mind Minds Its Own Business

by Tim Cook

Seng T'san, the Third Chinese Patriarch of Zen, who died in 606 CE, opens his exquisite poetic discourse on the Mind of Faith with these precious words; "The Great Way is not difficult for those who have no preferences. When love and hate are both absent everything becomes clear and undisguised. Make the smallest distinction, however, and heaven and earth are set infinitely apart. If you wish to see the truth, then hold no opinions for or against anything. To set up what you like against what you dislike is the disease of the mind. When the deep meaning of things is not understood, the mind's essential peace is disturbed to no avail."

When I first read those words about 45 years ago, I was a bit stunned by them. It had never even occurred to me that my mind could ever even have an essential peace to be disturbed, not to mention actually experiencing such an undisturbed state. It became clear to me that my mind was *always* in some state of disturbance and Seng T'san was helping me see why. I had a severe case of what he called "the disease of the mind." I was always setting up "what I like" against "what I dislike" and I had opinions about everything. Isn't that what the mind is for? How else would we ever know right from wrong or distinguish the good guys from the bad guys?

I've since learned that there is

a vastly superior way to be guided on the paths that we need to follow and that there are terrible, though nearly invisible, costs to be paid for cherishing our opinions. Like attitudes, opinions are fixed, "knee jerk" ways of taking things. They are close minded and inflexible and they keep our attention imprisoned in the most superficial aspects of ourselves; blind to the wondrous presence of God and deaf to the unerring guidance of his Spirit.

Our opinions are shallow and superficial, not based on deeply considered, wise reflection, on all the facts available about all the things we are concerned with. In fact, they are usually simple imitations of or reactions to our families, our societies or our economic group. And though they may seem to protect us or keep us in the right, our opinions actually do us incalculable harm because they freeze us into an "either-or" mindset that leaves us utterly unaware of the undivided unity of the Living Presence of God in whom we live and move and have our very being. Our minds can only participate in the unifying presence of God when they are free from concern with likes and dislikes, most especially with regard to the behaviors and appearances of others.

Thomas Merton, the most well-known contemporary Christian contemplative, lays it out clearly in *New Seeds of Contemplation*. "One of

the first things to learn if you want to be a contemplative is how to mind your own business.

"... A serious obstacle to recollection is the mania for directing those you have not been appointed to direct, reforming those you have not been asked to reform, correcting those over whom you have no jurisdiction. How can you do those things and keep your mind at rest? Renounce this futile concern with other men's affairs!

"Pay as little attention as you can to the faults of other people and none at all to their natural defects and eccentricities." (p. 255)

One of the most helpful truths in this regard is the deep realization and trust in the verifiable fact that we are rarely objective and accurate on-target observers. We should literally distrust our mechanical reactions.

A friend from the Church shared a powerful moment of insight regarding this phenomenon. It followed a Sunday service where we had shared several powerful and convincing exercises using illusions that demonstrate to the community just how fallible and unreliable our perception based opinions actually are.

The email read, "Last Sunday in church Tim threw out the question 'Does anyone want to share a story about last week's sermon about illusion?' or something like that. I didn't raise my hand, but I had a

story to share, and it had the time to write itself this morning... It is attached. Share as you see fit.”

“Last week I was cleaning my house and listening to C-SPAN. As I was doing the dishes I was listening to these two diametrically opposed ideologues speaking for their respective sides. As I was listening, I thought to myself, ‘Holy S***, neither one of them has a clue...for that matter none of them has a clue, maybe nobody has a clue...!’ At that moment I had an epiphany similar to the ‘face and chalice’ illusion.

“I had always taken Jesus’ second to last words as being meant as a beautiful gesture just to the people responsible for his execution. But I was able to see it differently in that moment. When Jesus said ‘Father forgive them for they know not what they do!’ perhaps he was asking forgiveness for all of us for all time, because when it comes down to it, we don’t have a clue.

“I laughed out loud, to myself, by myself. ‘Father forgive all these fools. They are simple and self-centered and they just don’t have a clue!’ I thought myself better than the rest of them because now I had an epiphany. I had a paradigm shift. I had a clue! I felt friendly forgiveness for [our political leaders] (short lived, although I am still given the gift of taking them a little less personally).

“Then it occurred to me, I have

been familiar with the story of Christ on the cross since I was a baby. Those words had been staring at me all my life and now I think I ‘get’ it at age 52. Nice try. I cannot afford the arrogance of feeding this into my false self because now I Know. What other clues will I become aware of? Perhaps I will notice something at age 104 that just flips this on its head. ...

“None the less, I felt the experience was worth writing about, and it did leave me a little changed. It left just a little more room in my heart for forgiveness.

“And finally I thought to myself that I actually do have a clue. Contemplation in the Sacred Heart of Christ is the clue that I have been given. It doesn’t make me better than anyone else, but it helps me know how to be ... if I listen.”

There it is! There is the key – “If I listen!” A contemplative is listening to God and no one who is paying attention to the interior cacophony of judging voices concerned with the perceived (remember those illusions) appearances or behaviors of others is capable of hearing the still, small, utterly trustworthy, silent voice of God. When we are caught in judgment of the way things appear; we are not even aware that there is a God, not to mention being in relationship with Him.

Jesus was definite on the issue of making judgments on the basis

of how things seem to us: *Judge not, and you shall not be judged. Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.* (Luke 6:37) Our own minds become disturbed by our very judgments, condemnations and unforgiveness. Our preferences cost us our peace and our true life.

This whole idea is summed up beautifully in a little vignette at the very end of John’s mystical Gospel. Jesus and some of the disciples are walking together. Jesus has been giving Peter some personal instruction which He concludes with the clear command, *Follow me*. Peter then turns his head and notices one of the other disciples following right behind them. He then says to Jesus, “What about him, what’s going on with him?” In response, Jesus admonishes him for his inattention and simply reiterates His prior instruction to Peter, *What is that to you? He is none of your business. I told you to follow me.*

We know that He is actually speaking directly to each one of us, to all humanity. So how are we to follow Him? Where is He now? He is right here. His is the Life, our very life. Life is the Truth, Life is the Way and Christ’s Life in us is always undisturbed by people or events. He loves them all. He is the Prince of Peace, the Divine Physician ... a specialist in healing diseases of the mind. ☸

It's Not That We Love God, but That God Loves Us

by Barbara Cook

As Tim and I were making preparations for our sabbatical, which includes time at several monasteries, I was reflecting on my first 30-day retreat many years ago.

I remember feeling called by Spirit to be in a place where people were in prayer all the time. My choice was assisted by consulting with people that I respected. I just laid the idea out in front of them to see if they thought it was too totally egoic or whatever, and then I prayed about it, or discerned, for a couple of months. I sincerely asked, "Is this coming from my false self? Am I trying to avoid something? Am I trying to make something happen, or have I really felt a deep call to have some intimate time to develop that relationship with Christ?" Signs came to me that really made me feel it was not my false self, but that it truly was a deeper call than that.

The call was to deepen my relationship with God; specifically Christ, because as Fr. Thomas Keating says, that's the part of us that is the very center of our being. That's Christ. The True Self is right next to that, but even deeper. The call continues. Through being on retreats, pilgrimages, and through my prayer practice, I continue getting intimations of Christ and getting tastes of that. Sometimes it's in Jesus, the Christ – just a subtle awareness that is there. Sometimes it's in that deeper part of myself.

The way to develop this deeper

part is by taking time apart. It's not that God isn't equally present always and everywhere – there can't be any place or anywhere that God isn't – but it's we who are busy. By taking 20 minutes twice a day, as many of us are doing, we're opening a space in us, opening an awareness of God's already present presence. So when we go on retreat for multiple days, we have an experience that perhaps we can't even formulate; but everybody has a taste of that sweetness, a taste of That which is greater than we are and that is always loving us.

When I felt the call by Spirit to spend 30 days in His presence I went to Snowmass, Colorado and have returned many times since. And, as many of you know, Tim and I will be spending the end of our sabbatical there. St. Benedict's Monastery has been there since 1954, so there is nearly 60 years of constant and continual awareness of the presence of God. When you drive in the gate there, you can feel that peace. This doesn't mean that conditions are always going to be perfect, but that peace is always there. Wherever people agree that God is present, that Presence is more tangible. Where people have been praying, it's more tangible. Sometimes in nature, removed from all of the confusion of the mind, you can more easily or readily see God. It's the mind relaxing and opening that allows that to happen. It's kind of like having a date with God; setting time aside

to do that and to see what develops.

In taking time apart like that, we start to taste what St. John was saying; "It's not that *we* love *God*, but that *God* is loving *us*. After all, how much can we love God? Can we remember for 30 seconds? When we get up out of prayer, do we remember that we are being lived by this Presence that is pulling for us, wanting us to receive all of everything He has? Not for 30 seconds, usually! It's a process. It's hard to remember that God loves us, but that awareness begins to accumulate.

Fr. Thomas – his constant love, his constant referring to God's love, his constant example – has helped me to realize that God is loving me. Then, even my mind starts to believe. Whereas, I used to be able to go for months without remembering that the whole thing is about love. And it's not *our* love; that was the hardest part to get. We try to be as loving as we can, but it's a very difficult thing to do. Some people are more given to it than others, but for most of us, being loving is a very difficult and challenging thing. Of course, we want to try to be more accepting of others and so on, but it is God's love, really, that we want to become aware of and to allow in. That's what re-forms us, makes us over in His image.

In going on an extended retreat, I have an intention to deepen my relationship and knowledge of Christ. Everything falls into that framework.

Guidelines for Christian Life, Growth and Transformation

Fr. Thomas Keating, in his seminal work *Open Mind, Open Heart*, lists 42 principles underlying the Christian spiritual journey.

Fr. Keating asks that these principles be read according to the method of *Lectio Divina*.

One principle will appear in these pages each month

33rd Guideline



Chastity is distinct from celibacy, which is the commitment to abstain from the genital expression of our sexuality.


Chastity is the acceptance of our sexual energy, together with the masculine and feminine qualities that accompany it and the integration of this energy into our spirituality.

It is the practice of moderation and self-control in the use of our sexual energy.

Everything comes under that aim, that desire, everything is framed through that and everything works through that. Even ordinary circumstances are met in that light. As people who have gone on 10-day retreats start to see, everything works together. Whether it's the unloading, or whether it's a conversation at dinner, everything is kind of highlighting that intention to be deeper in relationship with God.

As a result of that, I'm much more grounded in that awareness. A friend of mine said, "So why would you do that? Why go apart when God is everywhere?" I think it's very difficult for us to get, that it's really about God and not about us. A lot of the time we practice loving relationships with each other, but we forget the Sponsor! I think that's what our call is, to remember the sponsor and to get in alignment with Him. Jesus said basically there are only two commandments: *love God with all your heart, all your mind, and all your soul, and love your neighbor as yourself.*

Our tendency, because we're caught in personality, is to try to love each other and to try to love ourselves. Without God first, this turns into a kind of secular humanism. There is all this force, all this possibility beyond anything we can think of, that is waiting for us if we make the first commandment our *first* relationship. We are all called to make that our first relationship.

It usually comes bit by bit; you get a taste of silence, which is where we hear God, you get a taste and think, "I'd like a little more of that! That was good!" If we could remember how good it is, and compare it to our normal existence, we would just continue to evolve in that relationship. Not all of us will necessarily be pulling apart from the world for 30 or 90 days, but I think that some of us are called to a deeper relationship in that way. And if and when we answer, it benefits not just ourselves, but everybody in our community and in our world. 



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I give thanks to my God at every remembrance of you ... Philippians 1:3

Annual Aim: Gratitude for Ministers and Teachers

by Wally Huck

We wish to serve
the deepening of our community's
relationship with God,
as householders,
through the Work of Inner Christianity
and the contemplative Christian way
and that all programs, services,
ministries and operations
be an embodiment
of conscious intention,
selfless participation,
prayerful stewardship
and gracious hospitality,
always guided by the Spirit
and rooted in love.

from 2012-2014 Two-Year Plan, *The Church of
Conscious Harmony*

*No longer will your teacher
hide Himself,
but with your own eyes
you shall see your teacher.
While from behind a voice
shall sound in your ear:
'This is the way; walk in it,'
when you would turn
to the right or to the left.*

Isaiah 30:20-21

Our community has been richly blessed by the 25 year commitment and dedication of our ministers, Tim and Barbara Cook. What has materialized here is clearly the hand of God; it is a tangible feeling when you enter the grounds. The true gift of our ministers is more than all their day-to-day efforts; it is that they hold a wish for a God centered community, and in faith continue to say “yes” as God continues to grow and deepen our congregation.

In considering my views around gratitude for ministers and spiritual teachers, I see that I have been blessed by a rich and diverse group. Some were in clearly defined roles, while others came to me in totally unexpected ways. What has struck me is that the most significant lessons learned were not from dogma or philosophies, but rather on a different level. The lessons were spiritual truths that manifested from experiences rather than from explanations of concepts or beliefs.

I was raised in the Catholic tradition, but its teachings didn't make sense to me as a young boy and didn't feed my longing for more. So I departed Christianity and began my own search. For many years, I studied under several Native American shamans and became very active in one group. At one of the meetings, the teacher stated that four of his most senior students had left our community. He said that they had left angry at him in reaction to a mistake he had made. He then said that if we were there to only learn the Indian teaching and not learn from his mistakes, we were missing a great deal. I can still feel the truth of that as it landed deep in my being. I realized that I too had put him on a platform, one without humanity, seeing him as somehow above the rest of us, and above the human condition. How unfair to place him in this position, the Work of Inner Christianity would say this was doing violence to him. And in some way,

doing this invalidated me, negated my personal responsibility and denied my ability to be fully vertical. Letting go of any accounts against him was the pathway to accepting my own humanity and reinforcing my utter dependence on God.

After many years of searching Native American traditions, Buddhism, Transcendental Meditation, and numerous other teachings, I was guided back to Christianity through a close friend of mine. He called one day and said he wanted me to go with him to a church he had found. Since my friend knew that I had not been to church in 25 years, this request seemed outrageous. But my friend was persistent, and after three months of cajoling, pleading, and bribing, I finally relented and went with him one Sunday morning. (God bless you Richard!)

I was shocked by what I heard that Sunday. This was Christianity with the depth I had been looking for, somehow different than anything I had ever heard. I began regular attendance and started listening in a new way. I finally felt at home, but it was short lived. The minister announced that he had found a teacher and was leaving to study with him. I was devastated. How could my minister do this to me! I had been on a 25 year search and finally found what I thought I was looking for and now he was leaving. Feelings of raw anger raged within. After several weeks of processing, I realized that I held a belief that I needed someone

to be my intermediary, my guide in my search for God. Then I realized that God doesn't need to go through anyone to guide me on my path. That minister brought me back to Christianity, and in leaving, gave me a teaching I could not have received in any other way.

“Everyone has an eternal centre of gravity, but, being swayed by the senses, by the feeling that they are nothing but their bodies and by the impact of impressions coming from external life, they get far away from this centre of gravity. Self-Remembering is the beginning of the attempt to bring us back into ourselves and so into our real centre of gravity.” ~Maurice Nicoll

My career in industry then led me to Europe. The time spent living overseas greatly enriched my life as I had the opportunity to experience the history and traditions of Christianity through the churches, art and culture. Returning three years later, I was concerned about reintegrating; but discovered that though life was continuing on as normal with our friends and acquaintances, my experience had somehow created a shift in me, and the search for more meaning had quickened. I learned that the minister who brought me back to Christianity had returned to town and started a new church. While not interested in going back in time, curiosity led me to his church to see what it was like. I discovered that the minister had also changed during my absence; he was different, in ways difficult to explain, in ways of being.

I have been coming to the Church of Conscious Harmony ever since. But now with different eyes, in gratitude for this minister, his teachings on the Work of Inner Christianity and Centering Prayer, and in clearly knowing that God is my source, my ultimate Teacher. Thank you, Tim, for these transforming lessons.

Among the many teachers that our ministers have brought to us, two stand out and have touched me deeply – Fr. Thomas Keating and Bernadette Roberts.

Father Keating's involvement with our community has been a huge gift in my spiritual journey. This goes beyond the gift of Centering Prayer, his teachings about the programs for happiness, and dismantling the false self system. One of the most powerful gifts for me was his formal blessing of our church, which felt like a direct communication from God that I was in the right place. Somehow, this event helped begin a process of healing my childhood wounds of anger and guilt towards the Catholic Church. The other gift came from subsequent trips to St. Benedict's Monastery, where receiving the Eucharist from the monks gave me a deeper experience of this mystery, and changed my understanding of Christianity.

Bernadette Roberts has been a key part of our community for many years as well. As a teacher, she has made an impact on me in an unorthodox manner. I can clearly remember the first time I went to one of her classes. I was sitting near the

back of the church, and during her talk, I could not understand anything she said; absolutely nothing seemed to go in. It was if she were speaking a foreign language. Leaving the church that evening, I was confused, wondering what had happened. So the next time she visited, I made it a point to sit right up front. That day she was talking about God's revelations to man. When a question arose in my mind, I raised my hand. Bernadette left her stool and stood right in front of me as I asked my question. As she looked at me, I began to feel a different reality – a "Oneness of Being" devoid of anything external. I cannot tell you if it was a second or an hour, but it was an experience of eternity for

me. The experience did not land on any associations; it was clearly three-centered, visceral, deep and intuitive. It is now part of my cellular memory, my being, and as clear and vibrant today as when it happened.

I also experience gratitude for teachers through the gift of our CCH community, for instance in a group discussion on the Work, a sharing over breakfast on Sunday, fellowship after our service, conversing with a first-time visitor to our church who has been moved by the experience, and various other ways that we form relationships based on our common wish for God. The Holy Spirit as "Teacher" is always present in each of us; and I am reminded of this repeatedly through individuals who

speaking the Truth that needs to be heard in that moment. Perhaps, the teachings most important to our spiritual journey are available from our community, where our personal receptivity coupled with a common wish for greater intimacy with God provides fertile ground for the "Teacher" to appear.

"Now help is always coming to us from Higher Centres which are fully developed and are always working in us, always speaking to us—in fact, always telling us what to do—and I think here I do not exaggerate." ~Maurice Nicoll

A few weeks ago, while in Centering Prayer during our Sunday service, a thought came to me to bring two people in our community together. Somehow the thought that they needed to talk was clear. After the period of prayer was over, the idea was still with me. My initial reaction was to dismiss it as silly, how ridiculous to believe I know what people need. But the thought kept pressing forward, so I took action. The following Sunday, both of them independently thanked me for the connection. Each said it was very helpful to them and their journey. The Teacher, always within, had been heard that morning.

...the Holy Spirit, whom my Father will send in my name will teach you everything, and remind you of everything which I tell you. John 14:26

May we all have ears to hear. 

SEEDS

A New Direction

The one thing necessary is a true interior and spiritual life, true growth, on my own, in depth in a new direction.

Whatever new direction God opens up for me.

My job is to press forward, to grow interiorly, to pray, to break away from attachments and to defy fears,

to grow in faith, which has its own solitude, to seek an entirely new perspective and new dimension in my life.

To open up new horizons at any cost, to desire this and let the Holy Spirit take care of the rest.

But really to desire this and *work* for it.

Thomas Merton, *Seeds*, page 129.

Play with God

A Dialogue Between One of Us and All That Is

At the Sunday service on August 25, CCH Board Member Lauri Raymond filled in for Tim Cook. Her talk compared our lives, when we try to go it alone without God, to a long-running play with situations happening over and over again. When we begin in earnest to “seek first the Kingdom of God,” the Divine Director, Producer and Playwright takes us on a journey we could never imagine for ourselves. At the end of the talk, Lauri delivered this dialogue.

Here I am Lord. I come to do your will. I’m throwing away those old scripts and I need to learn my new lines. Where’s my script?

Don’t worry ahead of time about what you will say. Instead, say whatever is given to you at that time, because it won’t be you speaking, but the Holy Spirit.

But Lord, when do I go onstage, and when do I come off?

To everything there is a season. And a time to every purpose under heaven. The Lord keeps watch over you as you come and go, both now and forever.

Well God, how are we going to produce this play? What about the sets and the costumes? We have financial concerns here. And how are we going to feed everybody?

Do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ Or ‘what shall we wear?’ For your heavenly Father knows that you need these things.

OK God, you’ve got this. But could you at least tell me what this play’s about? What’s the theme?

Faith, Hope and Love ... but the greatest of these is Love.

But I don’t know how to do that! I don’t know what to do or say ... and in what order!

The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.

But Lord, I’ll be just stepping out into the void! This is improv! I don’t do improv!

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ☺

CCH Bookstore

October Community Reading
begins Sunday, October 7

*The Untethered Soul –
The Journey Beyond Yourself*
by Michael A. Singer



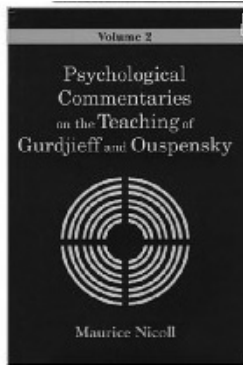
Recommended by Tim for its
modern expression of
Work ideas in common terms.

Christ in Evolution
by Ilia Deio



Christ as the center and meaning
of an evolving universe –
Christology with a contemplative heart.

For peaceful, contemplative
browsing and study
visit the CCH Bookstore and Library
Monday-Friday 9 am-3:30 pm
Sunday 9-10 am & 11:30 am-12:30 pm



The Work

of Inner Christianity

My Father is still working, and I also am working. John 5:17

How “Help” Can Reach Us

The feeling of the Work and all the background of esoteric teaching can bring about a state of Self-Remembering and it is to the development of the mental and emotional evaluation of the Work that the power of Self-Remembering eventually belongs, apart from transient forms induced more or less by accident. The increasing feeling of the Work as stronger than life and all its ups and downs and swinging to and fro between the opposites brings about a state of Self-Remembering that is not due to chance nor is merely a fleeting experience. But for a very long time we mix the Work with our associations, with the machine of personality, which is driven by life and reacts to it mechanically. And this is inevitable because only a gradual separation is possible. A person cannot be torn suddenly away from personality. It would destroy him. So even though we try to work, we identify with the reactions of personality which

seem more distinct and real, or more ‘natural’ as we say. At the same time we may know well enough that we should remember ourselves and even want to do so, and are unable to do so. We are unable to because we are identified with the reactions of personality. We view the incident, whatever it may be, through personality—that is, through all the attitudes, buffers, associations, pretences, pictures, negative emotions, and so on, in short, through all the typical reactions that belong to our personally acquired personality. That is, we see it from the life point of view and not from the Work point of view—and this though we are not forgetting the Work and are even trying to work. Now if we are identified with the reactions of our personality and at the same time try to remember ourselves we find it impossible. To be identified and to be in a state of Self-Remembering is impossible. It is not merely that

the taste of each is contradictory. It is rather that the two states are incompatible. The more identified we are, the more are we in life under the mechanical laws of this planet. The more we are in a state of Self-Remembering the more are we under conscious influences. In the Work the idea of Self-Remembering—that is, the Third State of Consciousness, where help can only reach us—is always given in conjunction with non-identifying. The Work as Third Force reaches us only when we are relatively *awake*—that is, in some degree of Self-Remembering. The original idea of prayer was to put us in a state of Self-Remembering, to let go our troubles, or, as it were, to ask for help and acknowledge our powerlessness *to do*. ☉

Maurice Nicoll, *Psychological Commentaries on the Teaching of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky*, pages 332-33. For more information and experience with these teachings, you are invited to attend the Work of Inner Christianity class held every Thursday at 7:30 p.m. at The Church of Conscious Harmony.

Using Eager Aspirations

It is not to be wondered at that you should have a sort of jealous eagerness and ambition to advance in the spiritual life, and to be in the confidence of noteworthy servants of God.

Self-love naturally seeks this kind of success, which is flattering to it. The real thing that matters, however, is not to satisfy your ambition by some brilliant advance in virtue or by being taken into the confidence of distinguished persons, but to mortify the flattering tendencies of self-love, to humble yourself, to love obscurity and contempt, and to seek God only.

People cannot become perfect by hearing or reading about perfection. The chief thing is not to listen to yourself, but silently to give ear to God. It is to renounce all vanity, and apply yourself to real virtue.

Talk little, and do much without caring to be seen.

God will teach you more than all the most experienced persons or the most spiritual books can do. What is it you want so much to know? What do you need to learn but to be poor in spirit and to find all wisdom in Christ crucified? “Knowledge puffs up.” Only “love builds up.” Be content to aim at charity. Do you need any such great knowledge in order to love God and deny yourself for his love? You already know a great deal more than you practice. You do not need fresh knowledge half as much as you need to put into practice what you already know.

How people delude themselves, when they expect to advance by means of argument inquisitiveness! Be lowly, and never expect to find in people those things that are God’s only.

The Complete Fénelon, page 26. François Fénelon was a seventeenth-century French archbishop, controversial theologian and spiritual thinker. His writings have been translated into English and edited by Robert J. Edmonson & Hal M. Helms.

October Calendar

Visit consciousharmony.org
for a complete listing of events

Special Events

Introduction to Centering Prayer
Oct 19 8:30 am-3:30 pm
plus 6 consecutive Tuesdays 7:30 pm
Cost: \$75 preregister in the office

One-day Centering Prayer Retreat
Oct 26 8:30 am-4:30 pm
\$15 Bring your own sack lunch

New Member Induction
Oct 20 during service

Monthly

Caritas Food Bank
1st Sunday of each month
Bring non-perishable items

Tuesday Enrichment 7:30 pm
Oct 15 Gurdjieff Music

Community Workday
Oct 12 9 am-noon

Weekly

Prayer Circle
Wednesdays 9:15 am

Contemplative Lunch
Wednesdays 12 noon

Mid-Week Communion Service
Wednesdays 6-7 pm

Yoga
Thursdays 6-7:15 pm
Cost \$14 each session

Work of Inner Christianity Class
Thursdays 7:30 pm

Daily

Weekday Centering Prayer Service
M-F 7-7:35 am in Theosis Chapel

Recordings of services are available
through the Bookstore and online at
www.consciousharmony.org



The Church of Conscious Harmony
A Contemplative Christian Community
7406 Newhall Lane Austin, Texas 78746

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*The light came into the world,
but people preferred darkness to light,
because their works were evil.
For everyone who does wicked things
hates the light
and does not come toward the light,
so that his works might not be exposed.
But whoever lives the truth
comes to the light,
so that his works
may be clearly seen as done in God.*

John 3:19-21

Ever Deepening Levels of Surrender

The experience of most people on the spiritual path
is a recycling of our major instinctual programs for happiness
in which we let go of them at ever deepening levels of surrender.

Now we know that whether we succeed or not,
they are of no consequence to us.

We are no longer interested in reward.

The love of God has taken over our motivation
so that we have more and more freedom just to do God's will.

And let the chips fall where they may.

If they happen to fall on us,
there is no big investment in self anymore
to shed a tear over the humiliations of that illusory entity.
A distinction that might help is to realize that devotion alone
is not what the Gospel recommends.

It is a good start, but it is not what the Gospel
holds out as the goal of the Christian,
which is transformation,
transformation of consciousness.

Thomas Keating, *Divine Therapy and Addiction*

