

## THE MYSTIC AND MYSTICISM

### PART 2

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The true mystic is the person in whom the transcendental consciousness (that consciousness that transcends human experience but not human knowledge) can dominate the normal consciousness, and who has definitely surrendered himself (or herself) to the embrace of (God). Such a person perceives the world on a different level.<sup>1</sup> Such a person reacts to spiritual life. This can be, and usually is, a lonely life, since the mystic finds it difficult to explain experiences, and even if he or she could explain them, the listener would find what is being said difficult to understand.

The mystic seeks union with God so there is a natural withdrawal from creatures. This is not to imply that such a person ceases to care and love those <sup>WITH WHOM</sup> they interact ~~with~~, far from this. The <sup>is</sup> concern <sup>for others'</sup> material and spiritual well being. They are sensitive to the needs of others <sup>BUT</sup> ~~and~~ also aware of their own personal need for solitude.

The inner transformations that are undergone compel the <sup>se</sup> person to seek out a spiritual advisor who is familiar with those who have been on such a journey. It is preferred to have an advisor who has <sup>s</sup> himself or herself made this journey. These new experiences, <sup>ARE</sup> though transitory, <sup>AND</sup> cannot be prolonged, <sup>BY OUR EFFORT,</sup> no matter how hard a person may try, <sup>THE PERSON TRIES</sup> to deal with <sup>THIS</sup> joy without feeling or sensation, <sup>THAT</sup> this joy is a welling up within the soul.

This "silent music," this "song of love,"—this new experience of God has no relationship between what is <sup>TRULY</sup> experienced and the words used to <sup>TRY TO</sup> describe <sup>THE</sup> ~~this~~ experience. So the mystic uses symbols, metaphors, ~~and~~ poetry and song in an almost fruitless effort to describe these experiences.

How is this mystical experience played out in the transformed life of the person? God's claims and summons the whole (person) and his (or her) whole life strives to grasp and penetrate ever more deeply the hidden truth of the

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<sup>1</sup> Underhill, Evelyn. Mysticism, p. 75.

mystery (of God) to a constant dedication in faith, fidelity, and love.<sup>2</sup> The persons listen more attentively to that silent voice of the Holy Spirit, as acts of faith in God and creatures are played out in acts of love and concern for others, <sup>THIS LOVE AND CONCERN ARE</sup> not only for those things or people <sup>KNOWN AND ALSO</sup> loved, but, for the sick, <sup>THE</sup> dying, those with AIDS, the unborn, <sup>THE POOR,</sup> the environment, <sup>WITH WHOM</sup> and all, the mystic interacts ~~with as well as those not known, like the poor in India and Africa.~~ <sup>AND UNKNOWN ALIKE.</sup> God expands the vision of the mystic and the mystic becomes a true missionary, <sup>EVEN</sup> though he or she may never leave home.

In his or her created nature, and in spite of one's sinfulness, the mystic experiences himself or herself as constantly addressed by God. No matter how far God travels with the soul or how close God draws to the person, the spiritual experience is not a true representation of God as He is in Himself. The gifts of God <sup>ARE</sup> is not God. The experiences of God, this mystical knowledge that God imparts to the soul, has only one purpose, ~~and that is~~ to bring the soul closer to God, <sup>TO GOD</sup> and this closeness, <sup>HIM</sup> makes the person resemble ~~God~~ more and more. This closeness that is experienced is brought about by God's grace, by prayer and <sup>BY</sup> faith. We must keep in mind, <sup>THAT</sup> God will not do for us that which we can do for ourselves. ~~For~~ without prayer and faith it is impossible to experience God in the manner being discussed here.

God's invitation. The Carmelite must strive constantly to enkindle a mystogogical piety which, even in one's everyday life, lives out <sup>his or her</sup> their faith in Jesus Christ. This love and faith teaches that the mystery of God who comes and gives himself is present even in the seemingly insignificant (occurrences of life).

As intimated earlier, the person who is a true mystic is active and practical, and not one who denies reality. Such a person uses common sense and realizes that <sup>HE OR SHE</sup> they have an intellect and the use of reason <sup>WHICH GOD</sup> and God expects ~~then~~ to employ <sup>BE</sup> the same. ~~For~~ the mystical life is something in which the whole self participates, <sup>VITALLY</sup> and not just <sup>WITH</sup> an opinion.

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<sup>2</sup> Sacramentum Mundi, Vol. 4, p. 137.

Duties to self and others. The true mystic does not neglect ones duties according to ones state in life<sub>χ</sub> but is cognizant that obedience ~~this~~ means "doing the right thing at the right time because its the right thing to do."

The continuing journey. This faith journey ~~only~~ ends<sup>ONLY</sup> in death. As one resembles Christ more and more, <sup>THAT</sup> the person is moving towards the ultimate truth which we call mystical activity. In the beginning, the person was at odds with himself or herself. Now the individual begins to truly experience the prayer of Jesus; "that they all may be one as we are one, you in me and me in you, and that they may be in me as I am in you." ~~so~~ The passions are brought more and more under the control of the will and so the mystic realizes that it is truly Christ who lives within. This level of consciousness is not obtained on one's<sup>s</sup> own, no matter how much one might study or speak about Christ. It is only by the grace of God that one can attain this level of love.

So, in a sense, the mystic forgets all that may have been read or learned and remembers the words of Christ; "There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her."<sup>3</sup> ~~so~~ It is the mystic who sits at the feet of Christ and listens, "----if you love me, you will listen to my word." This listening is with the ears of the soul <sup>AS</sup> ~~for~~ the sense of hearing is bypassed.

Who does the mystic seek? God alone and the things of God. "All things are gathered together in one with the divine sweetness, and the (person's) being is so penetrated with the divine substance that he or she loses himself or herself there<sup>2</sup> in as a drop of water is lost in a cask of wine,<sup>4</sup> and the person seeks God alone, not His gifts. ~~For~~ Such a person realizes that nothing more can be desired <sup>BECAUSE</sup> ~~for~~ the soul now <sup>POSSESSES</sup> ~~has~~ everything. This love the mystic bears to God is a total love of the will - not the emotions - for the emotions can deceive.

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<sup>3</sup> Luke 10:42.

<sup>4</sup> Mysticism, p. 84.

The silence of the mystic is not a perverted silence which may imply a fear or dread of ~~or for~~ those around us. Sometimes a person may be experiencing physical <sup>PEACE</sup> but the soul may be in turmoil. The silence is holy if the mystic uses this opportunity to get closer to God. This silence must be used to love, otherwise one's periods of silence are wasted.

God's call. Even though God calls many to love beyond bounds, not all of those called are so bold and courageous and have the perseverance to stay the course. It takes all of these gifts to totally surrender to God's call. Most wait many years before picking up the gauntlet, and after some time in Christ's service, <sup>THEY</sup> these always lament: "Too late I loved Thee, O Thou Beauty of ancient days, yet ever new! Too late I loved Thee!"<sup>5</sup> ~~These, of course, are the words of St. Augustine.~~ So, too, our ears <sup>ARE</sup> often closed to the Master's call, our Lord calls out to us, "Taste and See."

"Taste and See" But we are afraid. ~~For~~ We are like children who cling to the candy when our parents are offering us food that <sup>WILL</sup> nourish <sup>US,</sup> not realizing that candy can never totally satisfy <sup>US.</sup> It is Christ alone who can satisfy. Let us not deceive ourselves; <sup>MYSTICS DO CONTINUALLY</sup> the mystic is not always enjoying spiritual consolations and everything <sup>DOES</sup> was not <sup>ALWAYS THEIR</sup> going <sup>THEIR</sup> their way, but deep down in the center of their soul <sup>IS</sup> there was calm and peace <sup>even though</sup> although the surface of their lives may <sup>SEEM TO</sup> have been in turmoil.

86 Carmelites, let us pray to be transformed in Jesus Christ so that our human consciousness <sup>MAY</sup> might be altered and we <sup>MAY</sup> live and love like Christ. Should an angel look at Christ and us, <sup>OUR DESIRE IS THAT</sup> the angel could not tell one from the other, for when we truly learn to love like Christ we, in a sense, become Christ and then we become true mystics. This change can begin even in this life <sup>and so</sup> <sup>THAT</sup> what Jesus <sup>S</sup> have by nature we become by grace. So, brothers and sisters in Christ, let us pray that Our Blessed Mother of Mount Carmel, St. Teresa and St. John <sup>OF THE CROSS</sup> will help us obtain the graces necessary to become what Our Lord wills for us, ~~and~~ that ~~is~~ the Holy Spirit will transform us into another Christ.

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<sup>5</sup> The Confessions of St. Augustine, The Modern Library of the World's Best Books, Book X, p. 221.