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God, Our True Life

We are conscious these days of a deep-seated hunger, a secret need in our heart's core, to be set free from sin, from the world, and from self-centeredness, and so to be reunited with our source. We must only be in earnest about it. The power is close at hand.

Just stay where you are and unite yourselves with God as with something there already, that you do not need to seek! For God is certainly with you and in you, although hidden by darkness.

It is true that this Something to which your heart inclines is not known by you clearly; but this not-know-

ing is true knowing, and this undefined, better than a thousand definitions.

You don't need to search for God; you have only to realize Him.

The mind of God and the light of God do not come in from outside. They do not borrow their certainty and strength from our minds or our senses. They make themselves known in the heart's core and have both energy and certainty in themselves, although these become darkened and disappear when the soul begins to search after clear certainty in her depths. So do not go out so much into reflections. Do not seek merely by reasoned, external methods to find sure foundations, but close your eyes like a child and confide yourself to the hidden Being who is so near to you inwardly.

O that I could pour out my whole heart in tears and weep for the blindness of men! They take their deceptive illusions and their trivial things for the essential, and the essential things of the spirit for imagination and error. Yet it has been told us aforetime that the natural man, in contrast to the spiritual, can perceive nothing of the things of the Spirit of God.

What is visible is passing; the best in it comes and goes.

We see, we admire, we bury ourselves in things which are not, and Him who is, we leave out of consideration.

All we children of Adam live in time; and we can neither comprehend nor criticize the eternal and infinite with our finite reason. We see God in parts, so to speak, now from this side, now from that, and what

we cannot make into rhyme or reason, we try to isolate, and will not believe to be God. Then we fashion God after our own idea and draw our own consequences and conclusions; and anything which does not agree with them, we must, of course, contradict. And it is just in this way, in my opinion, that many ugly theories and errors have arisen among all sections of Christendom.

Oh, what a difference when, after reason has carved an image of God, the Lord himself comes and impresses His glorious knowledge and His very self upon the soul!

I esteem no books to be more superfluous in the world than those which set out to prove that there is a God. Since so many millions of people have been

in America, no books are needed to prove that there is a New World.

The witness of grace in the heart and conscience is the best guarantee of truth, and anyone who keeps to this will never be led astray by any error. To self-activated reason this is a piece of foolishness.

Where *we* stop doing and worrying, God begins, and He will be everything in our nothingness.

God is all-sufficient in every way. He is able, He alone is able. He is perfectly able. He is able to satisfy and bless the incredibly great receptivity of our soul.

May the Lord grant us living experience of this Being in our souls, even although we should at the same time forget all we know about it.

It is a little thing for Him to let us find in our souls in one moment, without any trouble, what we may have been seeking for years with such trouble outside ourselves.

In general you must overcome all evil, all distractions, yes, and the whole world, not by force and restlessness, but by calm suffering and contempt, by forgetting and closing your eyes. There is Another in us who is fighting for us. Look to Him lovingly.

There are still many good souls today, but few true worshipers of God's will. We live too much in ourselves and our good intentions.

Our dear brother writes that he has so many cruel adversaries who have left him stripped even of the shadow of outward honor, but that is a good start, a palisade fencing him in and keeping him from sal-

lying forth. Let all that is personal to us rot away! Let the whole world die for us and all creatures abandon us; we would only become free, more fitted to hear the Lord, follow the Lord, and enjoy Him in the blessed wilderness of inner solitude. Oh, that our whole being might remain turned toward Him alone! When we enjoy esteem from others or have anything else, knowledge, or ability in the physical or the spiritual realm, it is so incredibly easy to bring some of the plunder with us to our intercourse with God, but that is not lawful merchandise. We should come naked, give ourselves blindly and entirely to love, and, empty of will, empty of activity, leave ourselves in the hands of love that He may fashion us, order us and use us at His good pleasure for His purposes. The longer we practice this discipline, the more we experience of the blessed mercilessness of God's love: how He brings to nought,

destroys and rejects all that is not His own work, how He draws everything to Himself and absorbs it, that at last He may live and work in us and through us and reign alone as king. Happy the soul who refuses nothing to love, but places everything at His disposal: for only thus may all our works be done more and more in God.

What we ourselves do is truly of no use whatever. The less we ourselves are in our doing, the purer and more useful it is.

To obey is better than sacrifice. We must serve God in His way, not ours.

In short, I realize more and more that what I do is unavailing, but everything avails when I let God do it.

And yet it is really not necessary for you to know much about yourself and your state. It would be better for you and me to be quite unconscious of ourselves.

Let us forget ourselves.

Your sensuous nature is mercurial, sensitive, touchy: if it finds no nourishment in creatures and creature comforts, it seeks it in the spiritual realm, desiring to clutch God and all God's good gifts to itself. Well, as the Lord, for your good, is not allowing much to flow in to your sensuous nature (you can feel no sweet consolations), your nature takes on a disgruntled, irritable temper and like a dog who has no bone, is biting at a stone.

And, since self-love lies at the bottom of it, spiritual poverty is the end of it. What is to be done? Just follow God in His healing guidance which aims at

destroying your self-love and making you capable of loving Him with a direct outflowing of all your heart, just as self-love is a crooked turning into ourselves. He has put something into your heart, which yearns to be entirely and eternally God's; this inclination lies there, deep, dark, and all-embracing.

You must withdraw into yourself a little and keep quiet before the face of God, then look gently and perfectly frankly at God who is so near to us, to let Him see if there is anything in us or near us which must be handed over, and assure Him of our hearty consent to give up everything to Him. Remain exposed to Him in the light of truth simply, in this way, without any investigations or scruples of your own, for as long as God gives grace.

Since then, I am neither willing nor able to row against the wind, I let my little ship go in it. If only I take care not to stick fast on some sandbank of selfishness, let come what may, even if I suffer shipwreck, it will only be in the ocean of God, whose depths are as good as the best harbor.

I do not as yet desire the death of the body, but that death I do desire where I can neither find nor see myself anymore.

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