



Silent Compassion: Finding God in Contemplation

Richard Rohr

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By entering into the silence that is common to all, we encounter the source beyond all stories, and come forth with greater compassion, enhanced abilities for non-dual thought, patience, and unshakable hope. We come to know that none of the models put forth in a culture's myths, including our own, are truth. That being the case, why should we argue? This silence, writes Richard Rohr, can "absorb paradoxes, contradictions and the challenges of life." In it, we meet God and experience the indwelling presence for ourselves.

Rohr is a Franciscan priest, teacher, noted author, and founder and director of the Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He writes that "any systematic teaching of contemplation has been lost to the Western churches for most of five centuries...Even Catholic contemplative religious orders stopped teaching it to their own members, which was quite a loss indeed." The result has been discord and division among Christians.

Rohr declares that "the Sunday service alone seldom leads people on deeper or even real journeys." Yet, we are told to keep coming back—that if we do, we'll eventually "get it." But we don't, because those in charge haven't "got it" either.

What is needed today, according to Rohr, are "living models" of the contemplative mind. "Whenever you see a movement into solitude or hermitage or quiet or any kind of aloneness, you know you have non-dual contemplative consciousness emerging," he writes.

Rohr's book gives an honest, and sometimes surprising, look at the richness of an inner life nourished by compassionate silence.

KRISTINE MORRIS (Spring 2014)

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