

A.Prof Michael Griffith

LOVE & INTELLECT: RECIPE FOR PEACE



AL-GHAZZALI CENTRE
SYDNEY



Imam Al Ghazzali 1058-1111



Hildegard von Bingen 1098-1179



Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī 1207-1273



Meister Eckhart 1260-1328



Hadewijch of Antwerp 13th Century



The Cloud of Unknowing 14th Century

Saint John of the Cross 1542-1591

Hildegard von Bingen 1098-1179



“When I was forty-two years and seven months old, Heaven was opened and a fiery light of exceeding brilliance came and permeated my whole brain, and inflamed my whole heart and my whole breast, not like a burning but like a warming flame, as the sun warms anything its rays touch.” — Hildegard von Bingen, Scivias

“I, the fiery life of divine essence, am aflame beyond the beauty of the meadows, I gleam in the waters, and I burn in the sun, moon and stars ... I awaken everything to life.” — Hildegard von Bingen, Liber Divinorum



Peace on Earth: Goodwill to men

Charles Wesley 1739

Peace on Earth, and mercy mild

God and sinners reconciled...

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Rumi:

If your knowledge of fire comes only from words,
ask to be cooked

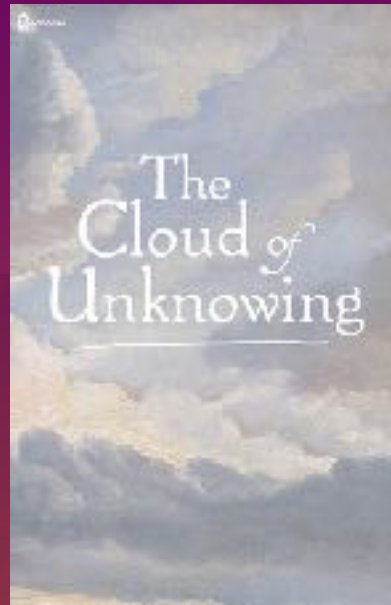
Do not dwell in the certainty acquired through others.
There is no real certainty before burning.
You want this certainty? **Then enter fire.**



Breathing Truth edited by Muriel Maufroy (London 1997)

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The Cloud of Unknowing



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"Our intense **need to understand** will always be a powerful **stumbling block** to our attempts to reach God in simple love [...] and must always be overcome... For **if you do not overcome this need to understand, it will undermine your quest.** It will replace the darkness which you have pierced to reach God with clear images of something which, however good, however beautiful, however Godlike, is not God."

“Our greatest need is to be silent before this great God with the appetite and the tongue, for the only language He hears is the silent language of love”.

Earlier in the same letter he writes:

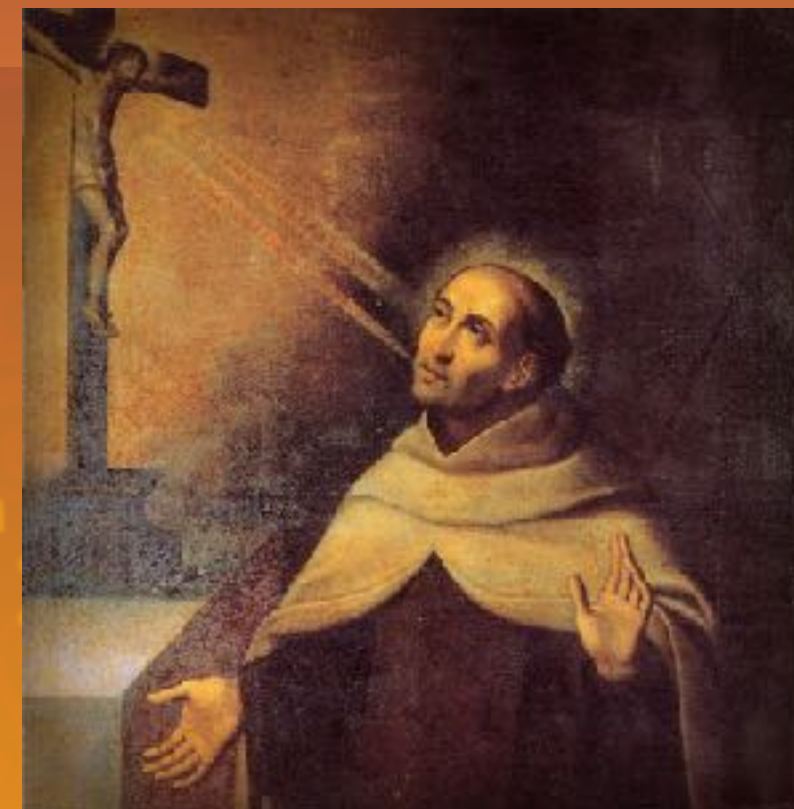
...what is wanting, if anything is wanting, is not writing or speaking- rather these usually superabound – but silence and work. Furthermore, speaking distracts one, while silence and work recollects and strengthens the spirit....

Never ... cease to quiet your heart with deep love so as to suffer whatever comes along.

Keep this in mind, daughters: the soul that is quick to turn to speaking and conversing is slow to turn to God.”

7th Letter, November 22, 1587

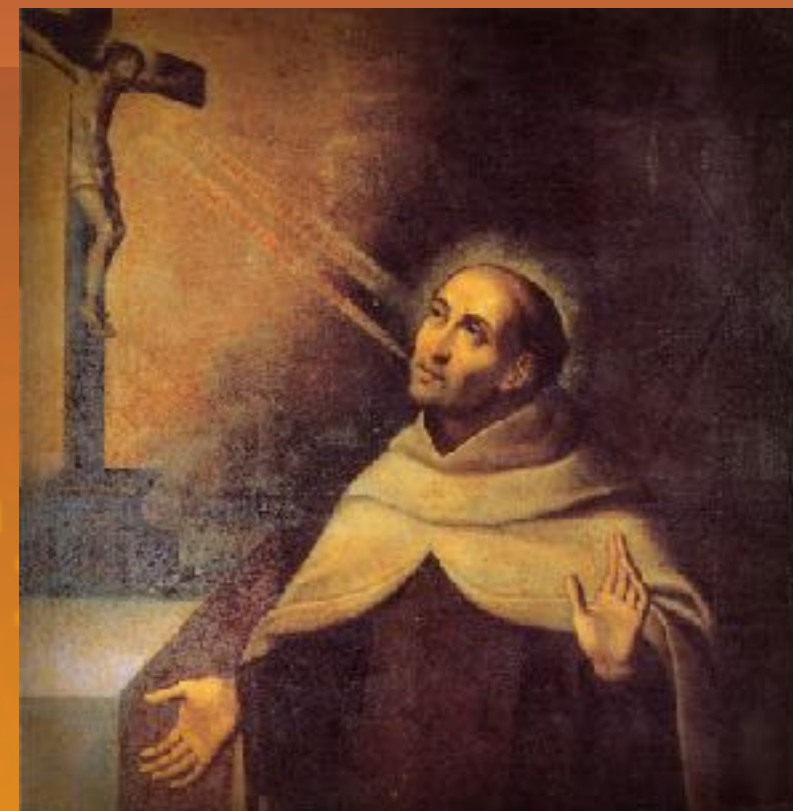
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Maxims on Love St. John of the Cross

1. Bridle your tongue and your thoughts very much, direct your affection habitually toward God, and your spirit will be divinely **enkindled** (as in Rumi)
2. The Father spoke one Word, which was his Son, and this Word He always speaks in eternal silence, and in silence must It be heard by the soul.

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“On Detachment”

I find, as well as my reason can testify or perceive, that only pure detachment surpasses all things, for all virtues have some regard to creatures, but detachment is free of all creatures. Therefore our Lord said to Martha, “*unum est necessarium*” (Luke 10:42) which is as much as to say, “Martha, he who would be serene and pure needs but one thing: detachment .”

The teachers greatly praise love, as does St. Paul who says, “Whatever things I may do, and have not love, I am nothing” (1 Cor. 13:1). But I extol detachment above any love... because, at best love constrains me to love God, but detachment compels God to love me. ... God is bound to give Himself to a detached heart.

Meister Eckhart



But what prevents us from being open to such an approach from the divine?

LOVE (III)

by George Herbert

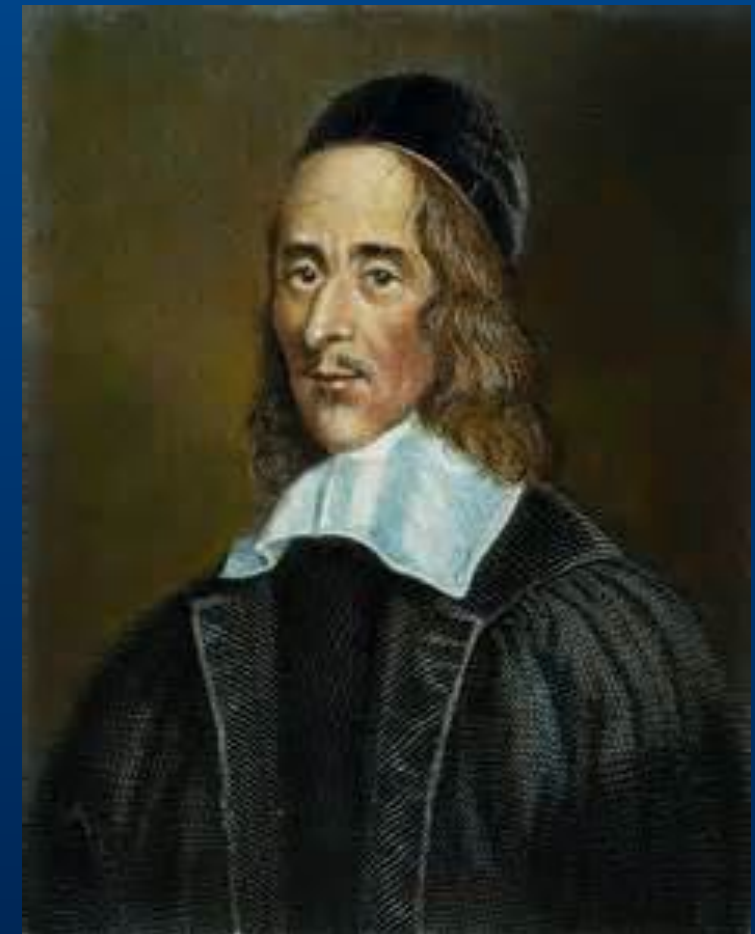
Love bade me welcome, yet my soul drew back,
Guilty of dust and sin.
But quick-ey'd Love, observing me grow slack
From my first entrance in,
Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning
If I lack'd anything.

"A guest," I answer'd, "worthy to be here";
Love said, "You shall be he."
"I, the unkind, the ungrateful? ah my dear,
I cannot look on thee."
Love took my hand and smiling did reply,
"Who made the eyes but I?"

"Truth, Lord, but I have marr'd them; let my shame
Go where it doth deserve."
"And know you not," says Love, "who bore the blame?"
"My dear, then I will serve."
"You must sit down," says Love, "and taste my meat."
So I did sit and eat.



George Herbert 1633



(1 John 4:7, 8, 10-11)



Laurence Freeman OSB “Aspects of Love” Meditatio Talks Series

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In the stillness of meditation, we let go of our fixed ideas, judgements and prejudices, which imprison us in our relationship with ourselves, with others, and with God. In stillness comes a knowledge of the Spirit which enables us to experience life free from all conceptual reference levels of reality.

Laurence Freeman OSB

“Aspects of Love” Meditatio Talks Series

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When we meditate, we transcend and move beyond the limitations of our own desires and fears, of our ego, of our individuality. We break out of the culturebound understanding of love only as an erotic, egotistical force that leads to disappointment when it fails or dies. We break out of that into a vision of love that is of God, a vision of love we find in the New Testament, a vision of love that enables us, incredibly, to equate God and love: ‘God is love.’ 1 Jn 4:8

Laurence Freeman OSB

“Aspects of Love” Meditatio Talks Series



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To meditate is to become a student of love. The experience of love to which meditation leads us, renews our religious understanding and our spiritual vision. We come to be able to see how deeply love is the background energy of everything we are and everything we do. It is the ultimate meaning of all our experience.

Laurence Freeman ACU Strathfield July 7-8, 2017