

Merton: Searching for Oneself

“People will do anything, no matter how absurd to avoid facing their own psyches. They will practise Indian Yoga and all its exercises, observe a strict regimen of diet, learn theosophy by heart, or mechanically repeat mystic texts from the literature of whole world - all because they cannot get on with themselves and *have not the slightest faith that anything useful could come out of the psyche*”
(Carl Jung quoted in “The Intimate Merton” p243)

“The life of the soul is not knowledge, it is love, since love is the act of the supreme faculty, the will, by which man is formally united to the final end of all his strivings - by which man becomes one with God.” (“The Seven Storey Mountain” p191)

“The logic of worldly success rests on a fallacy: the strange error that our perfection depends on the thoughts and opinions and applause of other men! A weird life it is, indeed, to be living always in someone else’s imagination, as if that were the only place in which one could at last become real.” (ssm330)

“For it is the unaccepted self that stands in the way and will continue to do so for as long as it not accepted.” (im167)

“...it seems to me that, when one is too intent on ‘being himself’ he runs the risk of impersonating a shadow.” (im297)

“If I were to make any resolutions, it would be the same old ones.... Get at the root: union with God. Drop everything and hide in yourself to find Him in the silence where He is hidden with you. Listen to what he has to say.” (im71)

“‘Union with God!’ So mysterious that in the end man would do anything to evade it, once he realises it means the end of his own Ego-self-realization, once and for all. Am I ready? Of course not. Yet the course of my life is set in this direction. (im323)

“The real root sin of modern man is that, in ignoring and condemning *being*, and especially his own being, he had made his *existence* a disease and an affliction. And, strangely, he has done this with all kinds of vitalistic excuses, proclaiming at every turn that the stands on frontiers of new abundance and permanent bliss.” (“Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander” p221)

“In our being there is a primordial yes that is not our own...”

Where do “I” come in? Simply in uniting the “yes” of my own freedom with the “yes” of Being that already *is* before I have a chance to choose.

The Christian choice is... simply a complete trusting, and abandoned consent to the “yes” of God in Christ.” (cgb266-267)