

## Contemplative Outreach

### Spiritual Journey with Thomas Keating

#### Part 5 Tape 25(a)



#### **The Divine Banquet and Dance**

As we progress on the spiritual journey, we can find that the supports and props we are used to become tired and no longer give us life. This is normal and is even called for as we work more closely with God's presence. We have now to let go of our own expectations of relationship with God and recognise that our very weakness is the leaven that will help us to grow.

As God's monumental intelligence and love reach out to us, we discover that the life of faith is being able to trust our relationship with God and depend on his love. We can even find that we become instruments of God in whatever ministry our life demands because there is a divine way to do anything. The kingdom of God is present in all circumstances. Life becomes a dance – a ballet between ourselves, life's circumstances and divine love and God always takes the lead in this dance.

#### **The Parable of the Banquet (Lk. 14:15-24)**

There was a Jewish view of the Kingdom of God which saw Israel finally and fully vindicated and honoured as a nation at the great banquet of nations. Jesus takes this image and turns it around.

A house owner, he says, prepares a banquet and invites his peers. They reject his invitation totally – symbolised by the three excuses in the story. So the house owner, undaunted, sends out his servants, not once but twice, to gather in the afflicted and the marginalised and serve them the banquet instead.

Jesus is saying the God does not stand upon his dignity and status to get people to attend his banquet. He identifies with every human being just as they are. God is only interested in love – in a non-possessive love. The trinity is an outpouring of love between the persons and the incarnation is God's loving identification with humanity. It is a humble and complete emptying of being into which all are invited. God's divine status is no obstacle.

