

«On the 10th of April, 1965, I was by the Lord's Will in Avila. On that night, the Saturday preceding Palm Sunday, I was very tired because of having made a long trip, and I went to bed early, before nine. At two o'clock in the morning I awoke flooded by the light of the Lord. In that light I had a clear understanding of the journey of the souls from the time of their arrival in this world, their thirst for happiness and the dangers to which they are exposing themselves seeking this happiness where it is not. Although it was a little cold and I was feeling lazy to get up to write what I had understood, I couldn't remain in bed and I had to get up to write. Between the understanding that I had had and my putting it into writing, almost two hours had elapsed, because the love of God flooded me even to the very pores of my body and my entire soul, and I could do nothing other than in each understanding to say a prayer of thanks and praise for His infinite goodness.

When I thought I had finished and was getting ready to go to sleep, I felt the presence of St. Theresa of Jesus and St. John of the Cross; this was not a bodily presence that I was seeing with the eyes of my body; it was a spiritual presence but very real, and I was perceiving them with my soul, it if can be said this way. They told me – I believe it was St. John of the Cross: "It is God's Will that you write about what you have understood." Neither was this a voice that I was perceiving with my ears; it was rather an understanding from within. I understood that he was referring to an explanation of the verses or stanzas that I had written under the light of the Lord, namely, that I should also write an explanation of them as I had understood them.»

INTRODUCTION

In our pilgrimage of return to God, we must follow a difficult and narrow way, one which gets even narrower as we approach the goal – “the yearned-for-One” – and many there are who fall by the wayside. Only someone who has really made this pilgrimage truly *knows* the way and can be a guide. But only a guide! For each one must take responsibility for making it a reality in his life.

The call, however, is universal. It is a beckoning and urging that springs from the depths of every man’s heart. It is a restlessness for God that cannot be pacified by the creaturely satisfactions of this world; it is a hunger that can only be satiated by the real Food, the Bread of Life, the Love and Will of the Divine Beloved. And how we hunger and we think there is no “food”! Or else we know not where or how to find this “manna” which will give us the true Life.

This book describes the experience of one who has made the pilgrimage in a mystical revelation, of one who has “seen” and who *knows* the way. We are invited to enter into this experience to discover some of the “markings” along the way, so as to be able to avoid some of the dangers and detours, to be warned of the many and varied temptations that the Tempter entices us with at different stages along the way. But another’s experience can only be an external guide; it is a “map” that we may use to check our experience along the way, to receive some guidance, helpful and at times necessary, in order to stay on the “straight and narrow way.”

But the real guide is the inner Guide. It is He we must discover, for otherwise there is no beginning at all. So the first recognition is that we *need* a guide. Without this all is doomed to failure.

The Law provides us with the possibility of coming to this first recognition: we are *helpless* to free ourselves from the bondage of sin. We are not able to walk on our own, and in our blindness we will surely lose our way. So in humility we search for the guide. For some this is the *historical Jesus*, and their way is to strive to externally imitate His words and deeds. How commendable and yet how dangerous is this way! The result, so often, is either a caricature of the reality of Jesus or a tremendous discouragement, abandoning our desire to enter into communion with God, deeming it a futile hope, an unrealistic dream. But those who have had an *experience of the Spirit of the Risen Christ* know that the way is a going within, going within to surrender ourselves to this Spirit of Truth and Goodness, allowing Him to be the inner Guide who directs and empowers us from within, making a reality in us of what was realized in Jesus. He is the Guide, the “Vehicle” placed at our disposal for our journey back to the bosom of the Divine Beloved.

We are invited to surrender ourselves totally to His care and guidance, allowing Him to carry us wherever He wills, as a dry leaf blown around by the breath of His Life-giving Spirit. We plunge into Him, submerging ourselves in the Ocean of His love, letting go of our “footing” – our security and trust in ourselves and in our reason; we trust only in His guidance, keeping our eyes fixed on Him, thinking of nothing else. And He carries us through our “dark nights” of the soul, our “desert” experiences, our moments of thorns and aridities, and we keep trusting Him, knowing that He is purifying us, preparing us to be one with the Bride who will be presented to the Bridegroom in the Wedding Feast of the “final times.”

This Guide reveals Himself to us through our *righteous conscience*, inspiring and empowering us to follow the Truth and the Good in every “moment-situation” of our

lives. This righteous conscience is the echo of the Divine Nature within us, the true “voice” and “impulse” of the Holy Spirit, and it must be distinguished from the *pseudo-conscience*, the super-ego, the “false voices” assimilated and programmed into our minds, consciously and unconsciously, from our parents, society, and religious institutions with their interpretations of what is good and what is evil.

This pseudo-conscience is frequently contaminated by the suggestions and impulses of the Tempter, “the spirit of evil,” who is trying to sidetrack us along the way. But our “good will,” our sincerity and righteousness in searching for the Truth and the Good, will keep us on the right path. Many may be our mistakes, or even our falls – it doesn’t matter! Our love for the Truth and the Good, or our love for God and our desire to do His Will, keeps us going in the right direction even though there may be some detours along the way. If we desire to love God and to do His Will from the depths of our hearts, He will surely bring us to Himself.

But the way of following one’s righteous conscience is a difficult way; it is the way of the cross, the way of *self-denial*, the *true baptism into Christ Crucified* so that we might be crucified and resurrected with Him. Here courage is required, as well as the willingness to die to our ego, to die to all that is not God’s Will; to allow the sword of Divine Justice to perform the radical surgery of cutting away all our ego-attachments to self and creatures, which keep us in the slavery of “egolatry” and idolatry; this is the price we must pay, and we must pay it freely with love. This is the way of the death to the ego, that “creative suffering” which liberates us from the greater and more tenacious “destructive suffering” created by our ego-attachments to self and creatures, and this “creative suffering” is the death that releases in us the Divine Life.

But how easy it is to abandon the *way of conscience* to follow the other way, the *way of convenience*, the “easy way out,” the way suggested to us by the Tempter so that we might pursue our ego-desires or avoid our ego-fears; it is the way of compromise, of deceit, of inauthenticity, of selfishness for the sake of our security, our pleasure, our prestige, our power, our *convenience*!

The journey, however, is a long one; so easy to go astray, or simply to get discouraged and to abandon the pilgrimage as futile, or to get stuck somewhere not knowing how to continue on. Here is needed fidelity and perseverance to go all the way to God and not to be deluded that one has finally arrived in those moments of partial realization, those “Tabor experiences.” One wants so much to think that one has already arrived when the journey gets particularly arduous and the final climb to the ultimate peak seems so far beyond one’s capacity of endurance, and so few there are who seem to have made it to the top. But the crucifixion and death of the ego takes place only on the top of the hill – Calvary – and in no other place! And if we truly want to die to our ego, to go the whole way of the cross with Jesus, we must make it to the top so that we might be crucified, and from there we will truly “see” and experience the “Promised Land.”

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(pp.11-16)



MEANING OF THE COVER DRAWING

The drawing on the cover depicts the true path that leads to the purification and Realization of every one of us as particles of the Human Nature, the “Total Man,” in

both its Masculine and Feminine aspects.

The lower part represents man in his evolution in the womb of the Unconsciousness, in this world of Darkness, purifying himself through the cross of self-denial in order to fulfill the Will of God. As he dies to his “old man” – cutting the umbilical cord of his attachments to the world, to creatures, to self – man gives birth in himself to the new creature, the “New Man,” begotten by the Divine Mother, the Will-God.

The white cloud represents the state of consciousness of the “Nothingness,” a state of “unknowing” and helplessness through which man must necessarily pass in the process of surrendering himself totally to the All-God, his true Being; it is man’s purified state of self-emptiness that allows God to manifest Himself in him and through him.

The upper part, where we see the glorified figures of a man and a woman, represents the “New Man,” in the Unity of its Masculine and Feminine aspects. The First-fruits of the Realization of this “New Man” in its Masculine aspect is Jesus Christ Arisen, the Firstborn among the Dead, together with all those human beings prior to him who, like him, had identified themselves with the Divine Will. The Feminine aspect, which is in the process of coming to its Realization, comprises all those human beings who, after Jesus Christ, have died to their ego-centric self in order to fulfill the Divine Will. This is the Bride, the true Church. The “New Man “ in its totality is the state of the Human Nature identified with and divinized by the Activity of the Divine Nature in man – “the Christ.”

(from the back cover)