

"Contemplative Verse" written & produced by the R Gray collection certified-environmental.com/Contemplative

## Without God's presence

Once upon a time in a quiet village nestled between towering mountains, there lived a humble carpenter named Peter. Peter was known for his craftsmanship and his deep, unwavering faith. He often pondered the mysteries of life, creation, and his connection to the divine. Despite his humble means, Peter felt a profound sense of purpose and a calling to seek a higher understanding.

One sunny morning, as Peter was working on a beautiful wooden table, a mysterious traveler appeared at his workshop. The traveler had an air of wisdom and carried a staff adorned with intricate carvings. He introduced himself as Eli, a seeker of truth and wisdom.

Eli and Peter began to talk, and their conversation soon turned to the nature of faith and the divine. Eli shared stories of his journeys and the ancient wisdom he had encountered. Peter listened intently, feeling a stirring in his soul that he couldn't quite explain.

"You see, Peter," Eli said, "true knowledge of the divine cannot be found through reason alone. It is born from the Spirit within us, a divine spark that awakens our soul to the presence of God."

Peter was intrigued. "But how can one truly experience this divine spark?" he asked.

Eli smiled. "It begins with a journey inward, a journey to deny the self and embrace the Spirit. You must seek to be reborn, to let go of your earthly desires and open your heart to the divine presence that dwells within."

Determined to understand this profound truth, Peter decided to embark on a spiritual journey. He spent days in prayer and meditation, seeking to quiet his mind and connect with the divine. As he did, he began to feel a transformation within him. His worries and fears started to fade, replaced by a deep sense of peace and purpose.

One night, as Peter sat in meditation, he felt a warmth spread through his chest. It was as if a light had been ignited within him. In that moment, he realized that the divine presence was not something to be found outside but within his own soul. It was the Spirit of God, always with him, guiding and inspiring him.

Filled with this newfound understanding, Peter returned to his workshop. His hands moved with a new grace, and his creations seemed to shine with a divine beauty. The villagers noticed the change in Peter and were drawn to his quiet wisdom and inner light.

Peter became a source of inspiration for all who sought him out. He shared his journey and encouraged others to seek the divine within themselves. His message was simple yet profound: "The kingdom of God is within you. Seek it with an open heart, and you will find the true essence of life."

And so, Peter's village flourished with a renewed sense of faith and purpose. The people learned to look within for divine inspiration, and their lives were transformed. Peter continued to live his life humbly, always aware of the divine presence within, guiding him every step of the way.

## Without God's presence, evil prevails

Paul, the apostle, is committed to knowing nothing except Christ and His crucifixion. This commitment led him to realize that his life is now lived by Christ within him. Paul is questioned whether this commitment was extreme or enthusiastic. However, this commitment to Christ is not about ignorance or darkness; it is about embracing the true light of the world. The passage questions if Paul, by focusing solely on Christ, undermined the foundation of the church. The answer given is that only those who reject the true presence of Christ (the spirit of anti-Christ) could think so. Christ's sole focus was on His crucifixion, which was His mission, His obedience to God's will, and His victory over the world, death, and hell.

Anyone who fully embraces Christ's mission, as Christ did, will have the will and mind of Christ. This person will experience victory over the world, death, and hell, just as Christ did. For such a person, Christ becomes the resurrection and the life within them.

In essence:

- Paul focused solely on Christ and His crucifixion.
- This focus led Paul to realize Christ lived within him.
- This commitment is not extreme but embraces the true light of Christ.
- True believers who embrace Christ's mission will have His will and mind and experience His victory.

Paul focuses on knowing only Christ and His crucifixion. This focus helps him understand that his life is lived by Christ within him. This isn't extreme; it's embracing the true light of Christ.

By focusing on Christ, Paul didn't undermine the church. Instead, he fully embraced Christ's mission, which is about victory over the world, death, and hell. Those who do the same will have Christ's will and mind and experience His victory.

In essence:

- This helps him realize Christ lives within him.
- It's not extreme; it's the true light of Christ.

• Fully embracing Christ's mission brings victory over the world, death, and hell.

Paul says that only the Spirit of God knows the things of God, indicating that only the Spirit within us can understand God's work. The fruits of the Spirit are not separate from the Spirit itself; if the Spirit isn't working in us, neither are its fruits.

St. John explains that we know God abides in us by the Spirit He gives us. James says that every good gift comes from above and advises asking God for wisdom, not human teachers, because true wisdom is divine inspiration.

The passage criticizes people who rely on human knowledge and reasoning about religion instead of seeking divine inspiration. It argues that consulting uninspired individuals about divine matters is as foolish as asking atheists about God's providence or Deists about gospel faith. True understanding of the Spirit comes only from those inspired by the Spirit.

In essence:

- Only the Spirit of God within us can understand God's work.
- The Spirit's fruits are not separate; they are present if the Spirit is working in us.
- True wisdom and knowledge come from divine inspiration, not human reasoning.
- Relying on human knowledge for divine matters is foolish; true reports come from inspired individuals.

To enter the kingdom of God, a person must be spiritually reborn. This new birth by the Spirit is what gives true knowledge and understanding of God's kingdom. While historical accounts can tell us about it, the kingdom of God is actually God's power and presence living in our souls. Only through this spiritual rebirth can we truly experience and understand it.

Everything else in a person is unable to perceive God's kingdom. However, when the part of us that was lost in Adam's fall is revived by the Spirit, we regain our connection to God's divine nature and can experience His kingdom.

In essence:

- Spiritual rebirth is necessary to enter and understand the kingdom of God.
- God's kingdom is His power and presence in our souls.
- Historical accounts can't fully convey this; it requires spiritual rebirth.
- Without this rebirth, we can't perceive God's kingdom.
- Rebirth revives our connection to God's divine nature.

Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." This means that to truly know and benefit from Christ, one must experience a spiritual rebirth. Just agreeing with the words isn't enough. Only through being born of the Spirit can one enter the kingdom of God. Christ's words indicate that His presence and the kingdom of God are accessible only through this spiritual rebirth.

The passage emphasizes the necessity of continual divine inspiration throughout the Christian life. The initial spiritual rebirth is just the start. For the new life to continue, the Spirit must keep working within us. If the Spirit's presence stops, the spiritual life dies, and we are separated from God's kingdom.

In essence:

• Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life; understanding this requires spiritual rebirth.

- Just agreeing with Christ's words isn't enough; we must be born of the Spirit.
- Spiritual rebirth is necessary to enter the kingdom of God.
- Continual divine inspiration is essential for maintaining a godly life.
- Without the Spirit's ongoing presence, spiritual life fades, separating us from God.

If the church lacks the Spirit's power and life, it becomes just a group of water-baptized Christians without true spiritual substance. No matter how learned or outwardly impressive it is, without being led by the Spirit of God, it falls short. Human wisdom and fleshly desires dominate until one is born of and led by the Spirit. Everything else belongs to the worldly kingdom, where Satan rules.

People who rely on human reasoning to reject the Spirit's guidance miss the point that without God's presence, evil prevails. Without the Spirit, all human efforts are just fleshly works, even if they seem spiritual or Christian. People may talk about scripture and religion with great skill, but without the Spirit, they lack true understanding and the essence of God's truth.

In essence:

- The church without the Spirit's power is just outwardly religious without true substance.
- Human wisdom and desires dominate until led by the Spirit.
- Without God's presence, evil prevails.
- Talking about religion without the Spirit lacks true understanding and God's truth.

This booklet laments that even though the Bible teaches that spiritual matters seem foolish to natural (non-spiritual) people, many Christians still rely on human abilities to gain divine knowledge. In other words, people think that logic, rhetoric, and critical skills are enough to understand the gospel.

Divinity students often treat the Bible like any other literature, using their academic skills to analyze it, and then believe they have divine knowledge. However, this approach can result in the same superficial and corrupt understanding that one might find in worldly literature.

In essence:

- Spiritual matters seem foolish to non-spiritual people.
- Many rely on human abilities to understand the gospel, rather than spiritual insight.
- Divinity students often use academic skills to analyze the Bible, thinking it leads to divine knowledge.
- This approach can lead to superficial and corrupt understanding.

A learned Deist (someone who believes in God based on reason rather than divine revelation) becomes an infidel (non-believer) through the same natural abilities that a learned Christian uses to believe in the gospel. Without the power of divine inspiration, there is no true difference between a believer and a non-believer. Christian faith is valuable because it comes from the Spirit, while Deist infidelity is flawed because it comes from human nature.

If a Christian rejects the need for divine inspiration, they support infidelity because they rely on the same natural reasoning as the infidel. Without being born again and inspired by the Spirit, the difference between a Christian and an infidel disappears. Both remain worldly and cannot understand the things of the Spirit of God. True Christianity comes from the continual inspiration of the Spirit. Without this, Christians have only a superficial faith and remain in their natural corruption.

In essence:

- Deists and learned Christians both rely on natural abilities, but true Christian faith comes from the Spirit.
- Without divine inspiration, there is no true difference between a believer and a non-believer.
- Rejecting divine inspiration supports infidelity by relying on natural reasoning.
- True Christianity requires continual inspiration of the Spirit.
- Without the Spirit, Christians remain in their natural, corrupted state.

the clear difference between God, nature, and creatures. Nature and creatures show God's power outwardly and can only serve as instruments through which God expresses His goodness. This divine inspiration, known as Immanuel or God within us, is true religion.

Relying on anything other than God's direct influence is like idol worship. Trusting in theological doctrines or opinions instead of divine inspiration leads people away from true worship and creates pride in their own beliefs. This pride eventually makes them act just like those they criticize, such as popes and religious leaders.

In summary:

• Nature and creatures show God's power.

- True religion is divine inspiration, or God within us.
- Relying on doctrines instead of divine inspiration leads to pride and false worship.
- Pride in religious doctrines makes people act like those they criticize.

Jesus says we can do nothing without Him, so any love for Christ must come from His power within us. When we have this love, God the Father and the Son dwell within us. This shows that redemption in our souls is the continuous work of the Holy Trinity, restoring the divine life that was lost.

In essence:

- Jesus promises to always be with us.
- Christ's presence is within us, like a vine with branches.
- Love for Christ comes from His power within us.
- Redemption is the continuous work of the Holy Trinity in our souls.

To enter the kingdom of God, we must be converted and become like little children. This means we must deny our own natural reason, self-interest, and will. Our fallen nature is corrupt because it relies on its own reason and will, separated from God, leading to selfish behavior.

In essence:

- We need to become like little children to enter the kingdom of God.
- This requires denying our own reason, selfinterest, and will.
- Our fallen nature is corrupt due to relying on our own reason and will, leading to selfishness.

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Two fundamental truths that are central to Christianity according to the scriptures:

1. **Divine Knowledge Comes from Divine Life**: True knowledge of God isn't just intellectual understanding; it comes from experiencing the divine life within. This means that to truly understand and know God, one must live a life infused with the divine presence.

2. Divine Life is the Birth of Divine Nature: This divine life is essentially the birth of God's nature within a person. It's not something that can be achieved through human effort alone but is brought about by the Holy Spirit working within an individual.

This booklet criticizes the blindness of those who read the gospel and the history of Christians but fail to see that true Christianity is about living a life that reflects God's nature, made possible only by the Spirit of God.

In essence:

- True knowledge of God comes from living a divine life, not just intellectual understanding.
- This divine life is the result of the Holy Spirit bringing God's nature into a person.

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## Finding God