



THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Formation in the Christian Contemplative Life

12: A Pause



Photo courtesy of Ron Barnett

I have set before you death and life.

Choose life!

- Deuteronomy 30:19

As we close the first part of our course, pause and reflect, breathe in and out: What have you heard? What has spoken to your heart? What have you noted in your "Notes and Reflections?" What do you wish to carry forward?

A Meditation

"For the yearning for truth burns in the human soul and finds satisfaction whenever truth is finally met. This yearning is a flame that cannot be extinguished. ... The human soul hungers to know who God is, just as a child wants to know his own father and mother. ...

"By its very nature, the contemplative life ... inflames the soul's thirst for truth. Indeed, there is no contemplative grace bestowed unless a soul plunges deeply into a craving for truth. Over the course of time, the contemplative becomes a soul consumed by a desire for truth. Every falsity and artificial mask, every compromise that leans away from truth, every contrived and convenient interpretation that strays from truth, is inimical to contemplative life.

"This is not all surprising, nor does it require strenuous effort. The turning each day to what is real and true becomes a natural impulse for the contemplative precisely because God is ultimate reality and truth. The degree to which our soul lives in truth, in even the simplest of daily tasks and endeavors, conquering pretension and egoism, confronting the truth of our absolute dependency on God is simply an indirect preparation and readiness for all deeper relations with God."

- Donald Haggerty, *The Contemplative Hunger*

To Practice

- Review any session-narratives, video excerpts or transcripts you found particularly helpful, or you wish to take in again more deeply.

- A powerful way of embodying a truth is by affirmation. In this way, what is outward and external, perhaps interesting and worthy as an idea, becomes real and living, connected with the inner spirit and conveying meaning. After reflection, deep listening and pondering these offerings, you might choose a phrase as an affirmation and carry it with you into the next part of this course offering.

Resources for Further Study:

You may wish to review a reading that has been referenced during these past weeks.

Notes and Reflections: