

Covenant of Love

Group Outlines from Schoenstatt

Searching for the God of my Life # 2

Searching for the God of my Life

We shouldn't imagine that God's longing for union with us is a complicated, "theological" matter. It shows itself in the basic yearnings and searching of the human heart. An example is the experience of the TV programme "The Monastery".

The Monastery' is a BBC TWO programme produced by Tiger Aspect TV, broadcast as three one-hour episodes on Tuesdays 10th, 17th, 24th May 2005. Two hundred and fifty people responded to advertisements inviting them to spend six weeks in a monastery – Worth Abbey - living alongside the monks. The five men who were chosen had little or no experience of Catholicism or monastic life. This was an attempt to discover what the Catholic way of life offers to people today who do not share our beliefs. The hope was that they would discover hidden depths in life and in those hidden depths encounter God. All of the participants experienced a major change in their approach to life and were keen to apply the lessons learnt in their everyday lives. One of the participants had this life-changing experience. Here are a few of the things that Tony said:

I'm an Alcoholic. And I have been ever since I can remember. And in the years preceding my arrival in this very church, I had fearlessly and enthusiastically indulged my addiction. I'm thirty now, which probably sounds ancient to you, but in my early-twenties I started a career in advertising which was going to give me access to everything I'd ever dreamt of. Money, freedom, women, drugs and loads of booze. Working in Soho, in Central London, I saw it all. And did it all. And tried to drink it all. And sometimes it was fun. But most of the time it wasn't. And that's when I started taking cocaine. And that's when I started to lose my battle. I was admitted into a rehab unit where I was treated for addiction and depression. I was then offered a job producing soft-porn for small cable TV channel. And that's what I was doing when I left London and arrived at Worth Abbey. On arrival at Worth, something felt right, and unforced. And soon I realised that I wasn't here to make a TV programme. I was here to find out how to live the rest of my life. Once I was having a bad day. I had broken my foot running and was hobbling around on crutches, unable to move around freely. It was cold and wet. And I was surrounded by fields. And I had nowhere to go. Then I sat on a bench and had a conversation with Fr Ian about providence and God's work through coincidences and my spirits lifted. Later I had a strange sensation in church. The feeling of falling in love and the butterflies which go with it. I was put in touch with a spirituality deep inside me which has given me the energy and inclination to strive for so much more in my life and appreciate what's important and be a better person and lead a better life.

We too search for the Divine. We search for God in our lives. God doesn't want "lip service" – he wants the sincere gift of self. He wants all of us. As Ken Wilber so brilliantly comments, "It is not what a person says, but the level from which they say it that determines the truth of what they are saying..." The goal of our soul's journey is God, it is the completely union with God.

There is a story about a newborn baby that is being brought home. The family's other child, a precocious four-year-old, said "I want to talk to my new little brother". Jesus spoke about children's ability to receive and comprehend mystery. Anyway, the little child then says, "I want to talk to him alone". So they take him to the nursery and he is alone with the new baby. They also put their ears to the door, so hear what was going on. What is he going to say? The four-year-old reportedly said, "Quick, tell me who made you. Tell me where you came from. I'm beginning to forget..."

The newborn baby represents the "little ones" that Jesus praised and loved. They are still open for the presence of God in their lives. The four-year-old represents us. We are caught between heaven and earth, caught between knowing and forgetting and wanting to know again.

When you look around and see how people act and live, you get the feeling that they have forgotten who made them and where they came from. Many of our young people grow up in such a meaningless world. What we are facing today is a crisis of meaning that becomes very quickly a crisis of hope. Covenant is searching for the God of Life.

Questions for Reflection

1. What impression does Tony's story have on you?
2. Have you ever felt that God is searching for you and wants to be closer to you ?
3. Do you see your Covenant is a response to God's longing for union with you?

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