



THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

Formation in the Christian Contemplative Life

50: The Archeological Dig and The Spiral Staircase (cont.)

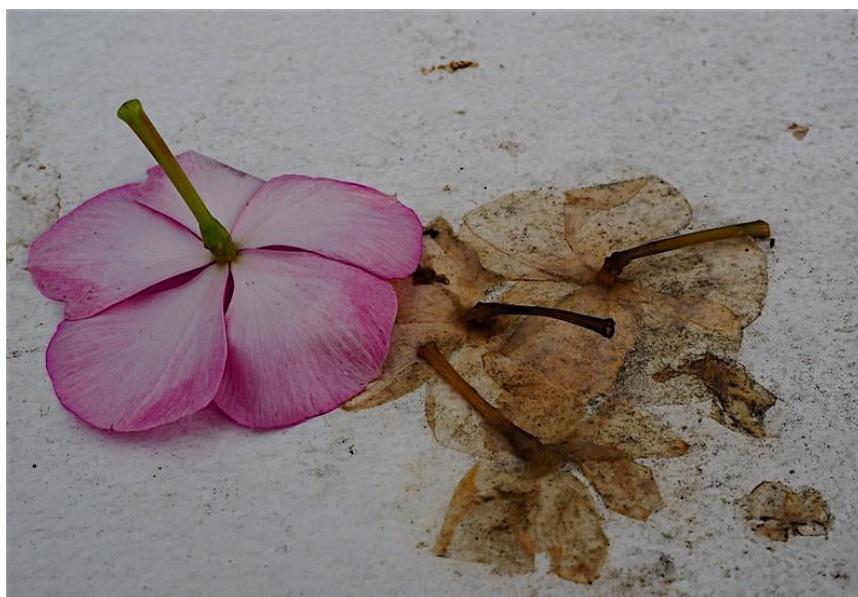


Photo by Ron Barnett

*I will give you a new heart
and place a new spirit within you,
taking from your bodies your stony hearts
and giving you natural hearts.*

- Cantic of Ezekiel

"The Holy Spirit seems to have a certain method to its madness. Although it doesn't feel bound to follow a particular structure, it adjusts to each person. It starts out the conversion when we decide to pursue the transformative process, by clearing off the obvious conscious junk that is obvious to us as hindering our process.

"...Wherever you start – let's say you start in old age, because you can start at any age – it is never too late for this process. The Holy Spirit investigates or brings to our attention what needs to be improved at that point. It then continues the process with a little rest or enjoyment of the new privileges of each state of life, or the new freedom. It works down through adulthood, early adulthood, adolescence, childhood and infancy until each part of our life has been healed or investigated."

- Thomas Keating, from the Session 49 video

"And, indeed, as time goes on, the divine therapist extends the walls of our office, so to speak, our inner room, to the whole of life so that everything becomes a process of purification, of healing and of releasing the empowerment in the unconscious, and in facing more and more the dark side of our personality in the form of self-centeredness, that tends to focus ultimately on over-identification with our roles, our thoughts, feelings, bodies and ultimately, identity. Hence, Jesus says, to be my disciple you must deny your inmost self.

"...To bring our prayer life into confrontation with the reality of daily life with its people and unexpected happenings is really a very important part of the whole purification and sanctification process and might be called the discipline of the Holy Spirit.

"Under the influence of the Holy Spirit...our actions are more and more emerging from that place of surrender, silence and receptivity that is the full development of the contemplative process."

- Thomas Keating, "Divine Transformation," *Heartfulness: Transformation in Christ*

A Meditation

"Transformed in Christ, these blessed souls
will live the life of God and not their own life
...although, indeed, it will be their own life
because God's life will be theirs
...through a union of love.

This is a great blessing...

As he said in the Song of Songs:

'Put me a seal upon your heart' (Song of Songs 8:6).

...The heart signifies the soul in which God
dwells in this life as a seal."

- John of The Cross, *The Spiritual Canticle*

To Practice

- View the Session 79 video "The Archaeological Dig and the Spiral Staircase" again.

- Where are you in relation to over-identification with your roles, thoughts, feelings, body and even identity? Are you able to separate and declare, "This is not I"? "That is not I"?

Resources for Further Study:

You may wish to read Chapters 3 and 4 in *Intimacy with God* (20th anniversary edition), Chapters 7 and 8 in older editions.

Notes and Reflections: