

OLD FASHIONED SUNDAY SCHOOL

September 1, 2019

Awakening Your Heart

I. Opening Prayer.

**Make my hands Your Hands,
my feet Your Feet,
my heart Your Heart.**

**Let me see with Your Eyes,
listen with Your Ears,
speak with Your Lips,
love with Your Heart,
understand with Your Mind,
and serve with Your Will.**

**I commend to You my whole being,
make me Your other self.**

Vincent Pizzuto,
Contemplating Christ: The Gospels and the Interior Life
(2018), p. 32 (adapted from a poem by Symeon the New Theologian, an
eleventh-century monk)

II. What is a Mystic?

A mystic is anyone who has the gnawing suspicion that the apparent discord, brokenness, contradictions, and discontinuities that assault us every day might conceal a hidden unity.

Rabbi Lawrence Kushner, *Kabbalah and Everyday Mysticism*, On Being with Krista Tippett, May 15, 2014

III. What Holds the Unity Together?

And we are put on earth a little space
That we might learn to bear the beams of love.

William Blake

- A. What is the purpose of life?
- B. In what ways do we confuse efficiency (the how of life) and love (the why of life)?

See May, Gerald, The Awakened Heart: Opening Yourself to the Love You Need (1991), pp. 1-18.

IV. How Do We Participate in the Unity?

Awakening the Heart, or the spiritualized mind, is an unlimited process of making the mind more sensitive, focused, energized, subtle and refined, of joining it to its cosmic milieu, the infinity of love.

Kabir Helminski, *Living Presence: A Sufi Way to Mindfulness and the Essential Self* (1992)

Lectio Divina

The Scripture: The Baptism of Jesus

Luke 3:21, 22 (NRSV)

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

The Process:

1. Read the chosen passage slowly and aloud. Allow yourself to be drawn into a word, phrase, or sentence that attracts your attention. You may want to sit for a moment in silence and read the passage again.
2. Begin to work with the passage.

Does it trigger a memory or an emotion? If so, why? If not, why not?

Do you find yourself identifying with a character in the story?
Why?

3. Pray, if you are so moved.
4. Spend a few minutes in silent mediation, letting all thoughts and feelings go and simply “resting in God” – the original monastic understanding of the term “contemplation.”

Note: Monks don’t talk about hearing scripture as much as digesting it. “You are what you eat,” so to speak. You might try an experiment this week. Replace the news with twenty minutes of Lectio and at the end of the week see if you can detect any difference in how you are looking at the world or the world is looking at you.

*See Bourgeault, Cynthia, *The Wisdom Way of Knowing: Reclaiming an Ancient Tradition to Awaken the Heart* (2003), pp. 107-110.*