

01. The Importance of Knowing the Real Jesus



The Old Testament

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The New Testament

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Catechism

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01. The Importance of Knowing the Real Jesus



'We declare to you what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life — this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that was with the Father and was revealed to us.

We declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you may have communion with us;

and truly our communion is with the Father and with his Son Jesus the Messiah.'

1John 1:1-3

God's **WORD** (self-gift) is experienced

- in nature
- in people & events
- in words spoken & written
- in works of art

They reveal something of the truth, beauty & goodness of the transcendent & mysterious God

God's **WORD** (self-gift) is experienced in

- the Vedas & Upanishads
- the sayings of K'ung-fu-tzu (Confucius)
- the sayings of Gautama the Buddha
- the oracles of the Hebrew Scriptures
- the New Testament
- the Moslem Qur'an
- the mystics, poets, artists of all cultures

Danger

Projecting a 'God' limited by our human experiences

Creating a 'God' in our own image

This spawns

atheism: the rejection of a limited God

agnosticism: failure to explore the implications of our experience

The **Numinous** Dimension of Religious Experience

Judaism

- Prophet - Moses

- Book - Torah

- Obedience

Islam

- Prophet - Muhammad

- Book - Qur'an

- Submission

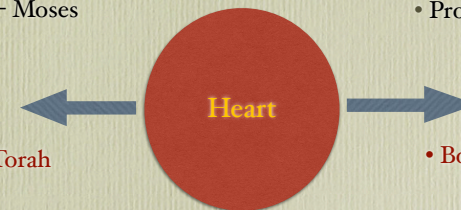
Fundamentalist 'Christianity'

- Book - New Testament

- Obedience

- Book - Catechism

- Submission

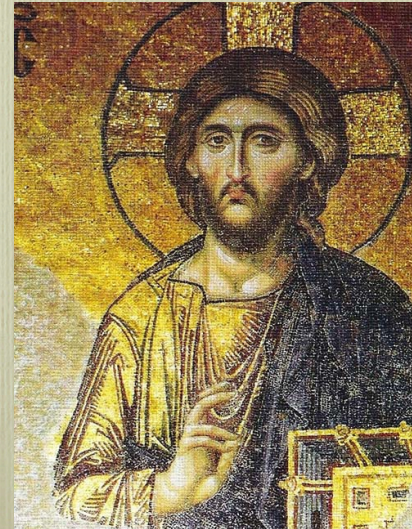


The **Mystical** Dimension of Religious Experience

Buddhism points us to the heart



God's **Word**-made-flesh



John 3:34

'He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for he gives the **Spirit** without measure.'

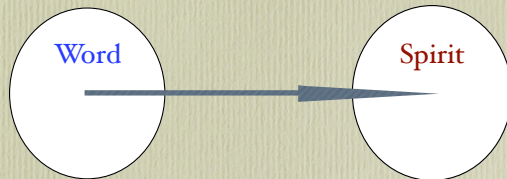
Romans 5:5

'God's love has been poured into our hearts by the **Holy Spirit** who has been given to us.'

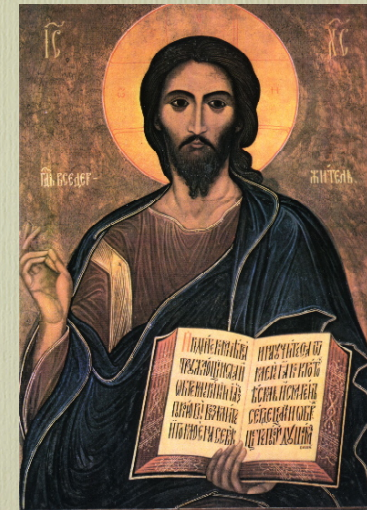
Revelation

Numinous

Mystical



Heart speaks to Heart



Matthew 11:28-29



- 'I am in the Father and you are in me and I in you' (John 14:20).
- 'I pray that they will be one as we are one, with me in them and you in me' (John 17:21).



'I have come to cast fire upon the earth
and how I wish it were blazing already' (Luke 12:49)

Teilhard de Chardin 1934

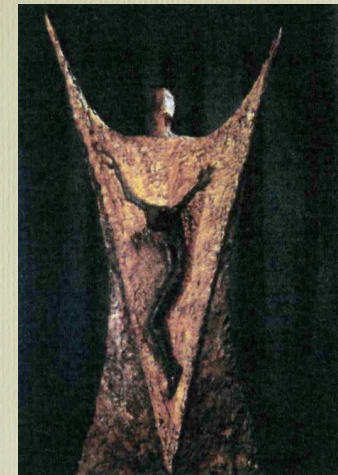
'Some day,
after harnessing space,
the winds,
the tides
and gravitation,

We shall harness for God
the energies of Love.

And then,
for the second time in the history of the
world,
we shall have discovered fire.'

It was Jesus' communion with God that
was the source of his life.

At the Last Supper, with a broken heart,
he said: 'You will be scattered, each one
to his home, and you will leave me
alone' (John 16:32). He went straight on to
add: 'Yet I am not alone because the
Father is with me.'



At the heart of Jesus' disciples attraction to him was their experience of his special relationship to God. Again and again the Gospels speak of Jesus' prayer.

Jesus' Baptism Experience



A voice came from heaven,
"You are my Son, the Beloved;
with you I am well pleased."

Perugino

Having described a busy day in Jesus' ministry, Mark writes that Jesus left the house to find a secluded place where he could be alone in prayer.

Mark 1:35-38

In the morning, while it was still very dark,
Jesus got up and went out to a deserted place,
and there he prayed.
And Simon and his companions hunted for him.
When they found him, they said to him,
"Everyone is searching for you."
He answered, "Let us go on to the neighbouring towns,
so that I may proclaim the message there also;
for that is what I came out to do."

Luke tells us that 'many crowds would gather to hear Jesus and to be cured of their diseases. but he would withdraw to deserted places and pray'(Luke 5:16).

Before selecting his twelve disciples, Jesus went out to the mountain to pray, and spent the whole night in prayer to God'(Luke 6:12).

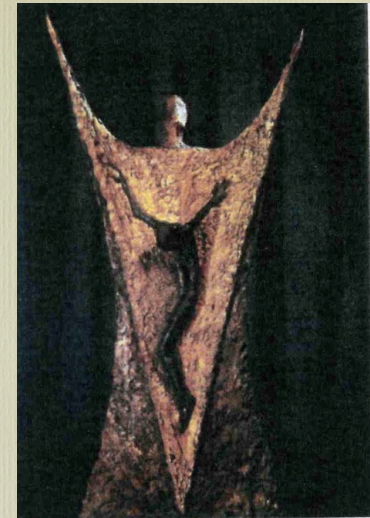




Raphael

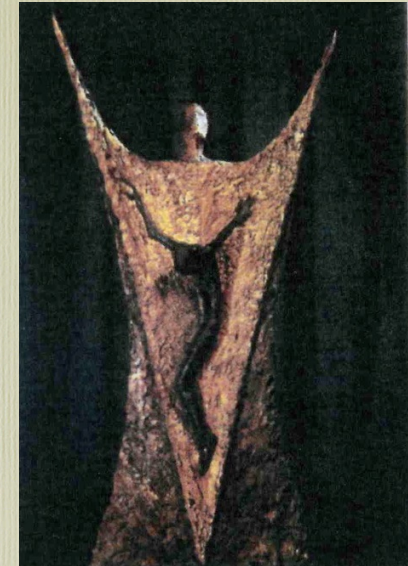
Everything Jesus said or did came from this special communion. John writes: 'The Father loves the Son and has placed everything in his hands' (John 3:35).

His special communion did not protect him from the suffering that is part of the human experience, but it sustained him, and the fruit of this communion was a love that his disciples had never previously experienced: a love for them, indeed for the world, that flowed from his loving communion with God.



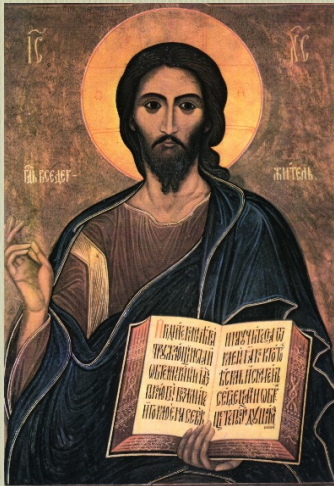
Jesus' humanity, but also his faith in God are, perhaps, nowhere shown more poignantly than in his cry from the cross: 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' (Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34).

It is his faith in God that Luke highlights when he records Jesus' prayer from the cross: 'Father, into your hands I commend my spirit' (23:46).





- 'I am in the Father and you are in me and I in you' (John 14:20).
- 'I pray that they will be one as we are one, with me in them and you in me' (John 17:21).



Everyday God