

Journal314 Part I, 1-6 Recall Summary

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backlinks: [Journal314 Part 2, 7-10](#)

Quotes from Jesus on Trust, Detachment, and Humility

- The section from the document 'Journal314_1-6' titled 'Journal314 Quotes' dated 2025/01/16, provides a collection of quotes from various notable figures, including [Jesus](#), [St. Augustine](#), [Miguel de Molinos](#), [Leo Tolstoy](#), [G.K. Chesterton](#), St. [John](#) of the Cross, and Fr. [Seraphim Rose](#), although only quotes from Jesus are presented in this section.
- The quotes from Jesus emphasize the importance of trusting in God's providence, as seen in Matt. vi. 25-34, where Jesus instructs his followers to take no thought for their life, what they shall eat or drink, or what they wear, and instead seek the kingdom of [God](#) and his righteousness.
- Jesus also teaches about the importance of detachment from material possessions, as stated in Luke xii. 33-34, where he instructs his followers to sell their possessions, give alms, and provide themselves with a treasure in heaven that will not fail.
- Additionally, Jesus warns against laying up treasures on earth, where they can be destroyed or stolen, and instead encourages his followers to lay up treasures in heaven, where they will be safe, and notes that where one's treasure is, there their heart will be also.
- Other quotes from Jesus emphasize the importance of living a life of humility, non-judgment, and service to God, including the instruction to judge not, lest

one be judged, and to enter by the narrow gate that leads to life, rather than the wide gate that leads to destruction.

- Jesus also teaches about the importance of putting his words into practice, using the parable of the wise man who built his house on the rock, which was able to withstand the storms, as a metaphor for those who hear and do his words.
- The section from the document 'Journal314_1-6' contains a collection of teachings and sayings of [Jesus](#), emphasizing the importance of following his words and doing the will of God, as those who do not do so will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand, which will fall when faced with challenges.

Jesus' Teachings on Anxiety, Giving, and Family

- Jesus teaches his followers not to be anxious about their needs, such as food, drink, and clothing, but to seek first the kingdom of [God](#) and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to them, and they should not worry about tomorrow, as each day has its own troubles.
- He also instructs them on how to give to the needy, saying that they should do so in secret, without seeking praise from others, and to turn the other cheek when faced with evil, and not to resist those who are evil, but instead to show compassion and humility.
- Jesus warns his followers that he has come to bring a sword, not peace, and that his teachings will set people against each other, even within their own households, and that whoever loves their family more than him is not worthy of him, and that they must take up their cross and follow him to be worthy.
- The section also includes Jesus' interactions with his disciples and others, including his mother and brothers, whom he does not recognize as his family, but instead considers those who do the will of God to be his brothers and sisters, and he teaches that whoever humbles themselves like a child will be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
- [Jesus](#) also teaches that it is difficult for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven, comparing it to a camel going through the eye of a needle, but promises that those who leave everything for his sake will receive a

hundredfold and inherit eternal life, and that they should not fear those who can kill the body, but fear God who can destroy both [soul](#) and body in hell.

- Throughout the section, Jesus emphasizes the importance of faith, humility, and following his teachings, and warns against the dangers of wealth, pride, and seeking praise from others, and he calls his followers to a life of discipleship and obedience to God's will, as spoken through him.

Augustine on Worldly Desires and God's Law

- The text from 'Journal314_1-6' discusses the importance of prioritizing godliness and contentment over worldly desires, as stated by [Augustine](#), and warns that the love of money is the root of all evil, which can lead to destruction and perdition.
- It highlights the attractiveness of worldly things, such as beautiful bodies, gold, silver, and worldly honour, but emphasizes that these should not distract us from following God's law and obtaining immortality, as Augustine notes that to obtain all these, we may not depart from Thee, O Lord, nor decline from Thy law.
- The text also quotes Heidegger, who states that suddenly every vain hope became worthless to him, and references biblical figures such as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who were righteous but judged unrighteous by others, demonstrating that human judgment can be flawed.

Grief, Loss, and Spiritual Interpretation

- It touches on the theme of grief and loss, as the author expresses their sorrow and horror at the death of a loved one, feeling that their life is now halved, and quotes a friend who said "Thou half of my [soul](#)", highlighting the deep bond between the two individuals.
- The text advises to praise God for physical objects that bring pleasure, but to turn back one's love to their [creator](#), and to sacrifice worldly desires and imaginations to God, in order to be re-created immortally, as stated in the passage "nor slay their own soaring imaginations, as fowls of the air, nor their own diving curiosities".

- The author reflects on their past mistakes, including barking against the Catholic faith due to carnal imaginations, and expresses joy at having come to a deeper understanding of spiritual interpretation, as stated in the passage "those passages in scripture...I could see that they were to be resolved by the mysteries of spiritual interpretation".
- The text concludes with the author acknowledging that they had panted after worldly honours, gains, and marriage, but were mocked by God, highlighting the fleeting nature of worldly desires and the importance of seeking a deeper connection with God.

Seeking God and Abandoning Worldly Pleasures

- The author expresses a desire for their [soul](#) to cleave unto God, having been freed from the glue of death, and acknowledges the wretchedness of their previous state, where they were stuck in the glue-pot of pleasure and greedy for present goods that wasted their soul.
- The author recognizes the joy of a faithful hope lies beyond the vanity of worldly hopes and desires, and considers abandoning worldly hopes to seek after [God](#) and the blessed life, but is hesitant to give up the sweetness of worldly pleasures.
- The author, now in their thirtieth year, reflects on their past and how they were stuck in the same mire, but was disturbed by inward stings and guided by God to enter into their inward soul, where they found that iniquity is the perversion of the will turned aside from God towards lower things.
- The author reads the books of the Platonists, which teach them to search for incorporeal truth, and comes to understand God's invisible works and eternal power, but is weighed down by carnal custom and the corruption of the body, which presses down the soul and weighs down the mind.
- The author is assured of God's existence and nature, and recognizes that all other things are from God, and that God is the same ever, in no part nor motion varying, and that the perversion of the will is bent aside from God towards lower things, casting away its inmost treasure and becoming bloated with external good.
- The author is influenced by the writings of the Platonists, which led them to believe in God and his Word, and is congratulated by Simplicianus for not

falling upon the writings of other philosophers, which were full of fallacies and deceit, and instead finding the pathway to belief in God and his Word through the Platonists.

- The author is also inspired by the life of Anthony, which they read about in a book, and is inflamed by the example of his devotion to God, which serves as a catalyst for their own spiritual journey and desire to undertake a peaceful life, away from the crowds, and to seek after God and the blessed life.

Augustine's Inner Struggle with Worldly Desires and Spiritual Aspirations

- The narrator of the text, likely [Augustine](#), is reflecting on his inner struggle to dedicate his life to a higher power, and is torn between his worldly desires and his spiritual aspirations, as he meditates on the idea of giving up his worldly employment to seek a life of devotion.
- He questions the motivations behind his public service and the fleeting nature of worldly pride, realizing that his hopes and desires are often driven by a desire for earthly recognition, such as being a "friend of the emperor", rather than a genuine pursuit of spiritual growth.
- The narrator describes the conflict within himself as a struggle between his "two wills", one carnal and one spiritual, which tears his [soul](#) apart and leaves him feeling perplexed and uncertain about his path forward, as he is drawn to the idea of eternity and heavenly things, but is also held back by his attachment to earthly delights.
- He recalls a moment of clarity in which he glimpsed the truth and understood the importance of seeking the unchangeable and eternal, but was unable to sustain his gaze and lapsed back into his old ways, carrying with him only a loving memory of his vision and a desire for something more.
- The narrator references [the Bible](#), specifically a passage that warns against rioting, drunkenness, and other worldly vices, and instead encourages the reader to "put on [the Lord Jesus Christ](#)" and make no provision for the flesh, highlighting the tension between his spiritual aspirations and his worldly desires.
- He acknowledges that many people, including himself, struggle to return to a life of devotion and spiritual pursuit, and that this journey is often marked by

difficulty and uncertainty, as he notes that "we scarcely return to Thee" and that the "storm tosses the voyagers" and threatens shipwreck.

- The narrator describes his inner conflict as a battle between his old, carnal self and his new, spiritual self, and notes that he is afraid to give up his worldly attachments and serve a higher power, even though he knows that this is what he truly desires, as he is "bound to the earth" and "refused to be your soldier".
- He recognizes that the "law of sin" is a powerful force that holds him back, and that it is driven by the "tyranny of habit", which draws his mind away from his spiritual aspirations and towards worldly desires, even against his will, leaving him feeling trapped and uncertain about his path forward.

The Influence of a Friend's Devotion and the Search for Wisdom

- The narrator of the text is expressing increasing anxiety as they go about their daily affairs, and they are drawn to the idea of pursuing wisdom and serving [God](#), as inspired by the words of a friend who has turned to a life of devotion.
- The friend had been reading and discussing wisdom, and had come to the realization that the pursuit of earthly fame and fortune is fleeting and perilous, and that serving God is a more desirable and noble goal, as stated in the phrase "but a friend of God, if I wish it, I become now at once."
- The narrator is struck by the fact that their friend, as well as others, including two women who had dedicated their virginity to God, have been able to break free from worldly desires and follow a path of devotion, while the narrator themselves have been unable to do so, despite having been inspired by the reading of Cicero's Hortensius and having a desire to search for wisdom.
- The narrator reflects on their own life, realizing that they have been deferring their decision to reject earthly felicity and follow God, and that they have been held back by their own uncertainty and lack of conviction, as expressed in the phrase "I had thought that I therefore deferred from day to day to reject the hopes of this world, and follow Thee only, because there did not appear aught certain, whither to direct my course."
- The narrator is aware of the contradiction between their desire for wisdom and their inability to act on it, and they are ashamed of their own lack of

progress, as expressed in the phrase "what ails us, what is it, what heardest thou, the unlearned start up and take heaven by force, and we with our learning, and without heart, to where we wallow in flesh and blood."

- The narrator is torn between their desire for spiritual growth and their attachment to worldly desires, and they are struggling to overcome their own weaknesses and limitations, as expressed in the phrase "I was mad for health, and dying for life."
- The narrator recognizes the power of the mind to command the body, but they are unable to translate this understanding into action, and they are left feeling frustrated and stuck, as expressed in the phrase "the mind commands the body, and the body obeys."

The Power of the Mind and the Conflict Between Eternity and Temporal Goods

- The mind is capable of commanding itself, but it can also be resisted, leading to inner conflict and perplexities, as it is torn between the delight of eternity and the pleasure of temporal goods, as noted in the context of the Journal314_1-6 document.
- The City of [God](#) references the ideas of [Socrates](#), who believed that the causes of things can only be comprehended by a purified mind, and that the mind must be delivered from the weight of lusts to raise itself to eternal things and contemplate the incorporeal and unchangeable light of God.
- [Plato](#) is mentioned as possibly entertaining an idea of God as the cause of existence, the ultimate reason for understanding, and the end to which the whole life is to be regulated, highlighting the importance of seeking and loving God in order to attain truth and righteousness.

Mystical Experiences and the Path to the Greatest Good

- The text also references Miguel de Molinos' The Spiritual Guide, which describes the mystical experience, or what is referred to as the Nihilistic experience, as a state of torment and misery, where one must endeavour to be

buried in their nothingness and acknowledged misery in order to attain a high state of mind reformed and reach the greatest good, as explained by mystic divines, including [Seraphim Rose](#).

- The idea of nothingness and misery is presented as a means by which the Lord works wonders in the [soul](#), allowing the individual to get to the greatest good, the first original, and the highest peace, as described in The Spiritual Guide.
- The overall theme of the text appears to be the importance of seeking and loving [God](#), and the need for purification and self-reflection in order to attain a deeper understanding of the divine and reach a state of inner peace and righteousness, as discussed in the context of the Journal314_1-6 document.

Embracing Nothingness and Misery for Spiritual Perfection

- The passage from 'Journal314_1-6' emphasizes the importance of embracing nothingness and misery as a means to attain spiritual perfection, where the individual must mortify their passions, deny themselves, and recognize their own worthlessness to achieve a state of nothingness.
- In this state, the soul despises, abhors, and plunges itself into the knowledge of its own nothingness, quietly embracing passive dryness, enduring desolations, and undergoing spiritual martyrdoms, ultimately dying to itself and barring the door to everything that is not God.
- The text suggests that if one keeps constant quiet and resignation, with a true knowledge of their nothingness, God's omnipotence will produce wonders in their [soul](#), created in His own image and likeness, and that this state will lead to a deep knowledge of oneself, reckoning oneself the worst and most impious of souls.
- It is necessary to believe that the goodness of divine mercy is at work when one is humbled, afflicted, and tried, and that [God](#) loves not those who do most or show greatest affection, but those who suffer most with faith and reverence, believing in the divine presence.
- The happy soul that has attained this holy hatred of itself lives overwhelmed and drowned in the depth of its own nothingness, and it is through silent and

humble resignation, rather than rationalization or industry, that a soul draws near to God and understands the divine law.

- The passage concludes by emphasizing the importance of silence, belief, suffering, patience, confidence, and resignation, stating that it is of infinite fruit to hold one's peace and let oneself be guided by the hand of God, rather than seeking worldly goods or enjoyment.

Humility and Abandonment of Worldly Desires for Divine Wisdom

- The section from the document 'Journal314_1-6' discusses the importance of humility and the abandonment of worldly desires in order to prepare one's heart for divine wisdom, as taught by [Bonaventure](#), who warns against forming conceptions of God or anything else, as this can lead to imperfection.
- According to the text, one should not think that spending time in prayer, even when feeling dry and dark, is a waste of time, but rather it is an opportunity to wait on [God](#) and prepare one's heart, as St. Bernard notes that not waiting on God is the greatest idleness.
- The text also warns that the journey to spiritual growth will be marked by internal and external pains, sorrows, and temptations, including scruples, lascivious suggestions, and unclean thoughts, which will test one's patience, humility, and faith, and will make one feel deserted and incapable of entertaining good desires.
- However, the text reassures that these trials are necessary for purging one's [soul](#), making it know its own misery, and annihilating disordered appetites and passions, and that God allows these temptations to humble one's pride and give them the opportunity to know themselves and be humble.
- The text quotes Isaiah, who says that all human righteousness is like filthy rags due to the stains of vanity, conceitedness, and self-love, emphasizing the need for humility and recognition of one's own limitations and weaknesses.
- Ultimately, the text suggests that the process of spiritual growth and purification is a difficult and painful one, but it is necessary for true humility and a deeper understanding of oneself and one's relationship with God, and that one should not fear these challenges, but rather see them as opportunities for growth and purification.

Purification Through Tribulation and Temptation

- The purification of the soul is necessary through the fire of tribulation and temptation, so that it may be clean, pure, perfect, and agreeable to the eyes of [God](#), and this process can be troubling for many souls who suffer painful torments and may feel like they are already experiencing eternal punishments.
- It is essential to believe that the goodness of divine mercy is at work when one is humbled, afflicted, and tried, as this leads to a deep knowledge of oneself and a sense of humility and lowliness, which is crucial for internal recollection, faith, and silence in the presence of God.
- Internal recollection requires shutting up the senses, trusting God with all care of one's welfare, and minding nothing of the affairs of this life, but this can be challenging as all hell will conspire against the individual, and the devil will make an infinite advantage of an internal [soul](#).
- During the time of recollection, peace, and resignation of the soul, God will esteem the various impertinent, troublesome, and ugly thoughts more than good purposes and high sentiments, and it is essential to sweetly despise these thoughts, know one's own wretchedness, and peacefully make an offering to God of the trouble.
- The effort to resist thoughts can be an impediment and will leave the soul in greater anxiety, and instead, one should resign themselves with vigor, endure with patience, and persevere in God's presence, as this will lead to internal improvement of the soul.
- The fruit of true prayer consists not in enjoying the light or having knowledge of spiritual things, but in enduring with patience and persevering in faith and silence, believing that one is in the Lord's presence, and turning to him with tranquility and purity of mind, and this will reap infinite fruit, even if one feels dry and without spiritual sentiment after prayer.

Internal Recollection and the Devil's Interference

- Nature will torment the individual, being an enemy to the spirit, and will try to deprive it of sensible pleasures, leading to feelings of weakness, melancholy, and irksomeness, but it is essential to persevere amidst this martyrdom, as

these drynesses in spirituals are very profitable if they are embraced and suffered with patience.

- The Devil often attempts to disrupt the soul's internal conversation with [God](#) by bombarding it with a multitude of thoughts, causing horror and discomfort, in order to lead the [soul](#) away from prayer and internal recollection.
- Many individuals who begin the practice of prayer and internal recollection often abandon it, citing a lack of pleasure, trouble with thoughts, and an inability to reason or discourse, which is attributed to their ingratitude and self-love, as they prioritize sensible pleasures over their relationship with God.
- The Lord revealed to Mother Francesca Lopez of Valenza, a religious of the third Order of St. Francis, that a short period of prayer with recollection of the senses and faculties can be more beneficial to the soul than extended periods of penitential exercises, as the former purifies the soul while the latter only mortifies the body.

Sensible Love, Internal Recollection, and Mystical Silence

- The soul's delight in sensible love is inversely proportional to God's delight in it, meaning that the less the soul rejoices in sensible love, the more God delights in it, as stated in point 83.
- The idea that the faculties are inactive during internal recollection or prayer of rest is a common error, as the [soul](#) still operates through simple apprehension, enlightened by holy faith and aided by the divine gifts of the holy Spirit, even if it does not operate through memory, judgment, or discourse.
- The soul can attain happiness and perfection by retreating within itself, shrinking into its own nothingness, and letting go of concerns about its actions or operations, without heeding sensible things, as this allows it to penetrate deeper into internal recollection and mystical silence.
- Few souls achieve this perfect way of praying due to their inability to strip themselves of imperfect reflection and sensible pleasure, and their failure to fully penetrate internal recollection and mystical silence.
- Engaging in daily occupations such as studying, reading, preaching, eating, and doing business does not necessarily divert one from internal recollection or

virtual prayer, as these activities can be done in accordance with God's will and resignation, as stated by St. Thomas.

- The text discusses the importance of mystical silence and resignation to God's will in order to attain true spiritual wisdom and perfection, as stated in the quote that Underhill uses, which emphasizes the need to not speak, desire, or think in order to arrive at the true and perfect mystical silence.
- To gain this treasure, it is not enough to simply forsake the world or renounce one's own desires, but rather one must wean themselves from all desires and thoughts and rest in mystical silence, allowing [God](#) to communicate and unite with them, as advised in the text.

Disordered Desires, Internal Light, and the Rarity of True Spiritual Masters

- The text warns against the dangers of disordered desires, vain complacency, and self-esteem, which can be enemies to the peace of the [soul](#), and instead recommends that one's only scope and desire should be to please God in purity, as stated in the quote from Book Two.
- St. Paul is referenced as recommending the care of one's own soul before that of their neighbor, and the text advises taking heed unto oneself and one's doctrine, continuing in rest, disengaged, and wholly resigned to the divine will and pleasure, as mentioned in the passage from I Tim. 4.
- The text also emphasizes the importance of internal light and experience, which are gifts not communicated to all souls, but rather to abstracted and resigned souls who have advanced to perfect annihilation through tribulation and passive purgation, and advises keeping quiet and resigned in one's own nothingness until God calls for the good of souls.
- The author warns against self-confidence and the undertaking of ministry without true zeal, pure love, and a purged soul, which can lead to vanity, self-love, and spiritual pride, and instead advises renouncing one's own judgment and desire, and sinking down into the abyss of one's own insufficiency and nothingness to find [God](#), as stated in the passage.
- The text quotes Father [John](#) Davila, St. Francis of Sales, and the illuminated Thauler, who all agree that true masters of the spiritual way are rare, with estimates ranging from one in a thousand to one in a hundred thousand,

highlighting the importance of humility and resignation in the spiritual journey.

- The mystical Science is not received by many due to the lack of individuals who are willing to receive it, and a spiritual Director who lives disinterestedly prioritizes internal solitude over the employment of souls, as evidenced by their reaction when a soul leaves them for another guide.
- The mystical Science has a great efficacy in rejecting worldly honor, self-conceit, spiritual ambition, and other desires, and it bids adieu to various worldly attachments, including friends, friendship, and commerce, in order to focus on the spiritual journey.
- Many souls deprive themselves of the benefits of the mystical Science by believing they are not sufficiently prepared, but it is stated that having a pure end and a true desire to do the will of God is enough to come with confidence, regardless of sensible devotion or personal satisfaction.

Preparation for Interior Souls and the Mystical Science

- The second preparation for interior and spiritual souls involves living with greater purity and self-denial, taking oneself off from the world, and practicing inward mortification and continual retirement, in order to grow better and better with each passing day.
- It is emphasized that one can receive the mystical Science every day with humility, a desire to do the divine will, and the leave of their confessor, and that true sanctity does not consist only in rigid penances, but rather in subjecting one's judgment to their spiritual fathers and rooting out self-love.
- The text also touches on the idea that God's infinite majesty can be received by a miserable creature, but only through humility, acknowledging one's unworthiness, and looking upon one's misery, and that the divine love suffers itself to be mean in order to be communicated and united with the individual.
- Ultimately, the goal is to keep the heart strongly united with [God](#), annihilating it to the world and its imperfect liberty, and to remain united with the sovereign Lord, as expressed in the prayer to keep the heart strongly and never return to its imperfect liberty.

Excessive Penances, Humility, and the Sweetness of Christ's Yoke

- The use of excessive and severe penances can lead to a bitterness of heart towards oneself and others, which is contrary to the true spirit of [Christianity](#), as it focuses on the asperity of penances rather than the sweetness of Christ's yoke and charity, as noted by Kempis.
- When the [soul](#) begins to retire from the world and vice, it is necessary to tame the body with rigor, using tools such as haircloth, fasting, and discipline, to remove the roots of sin, but once the soul enters the way of the spirit, corporal chastisements should be relaxed, as the spirit already suffers enough.
- The ideal state is one of loving fear of God, contempt of oneself, and true hope in God, as described in Book Three, where the more one is humbled with true contempt and knowledge of oneself, the more one pleases God and arrives at a singular respect and veneration in His presence.
- The continual exercise of those who have achieved this state is to enter into themselves, in [God](#), with quiet and silence, to know God and receive His divine influence, with fear and loving reverence, and to retire into the interior and secret center of the soul, rather than focusing on speaking of God.
- According to S. Bernard, to serve God is nothing else but to do good and suffer evil, and one must not expect sweetness and consolation from God, but rather desire to end one's life for His sake, in the state of true obedience and subjection, following the example of [Christ](#), who said "He that will come after me, let him deny himself, and let him take up his cross and follow me".
- The soul that would be united to Christ must be conformable to Him, following Him in the way of suffering, and few are the souls that arrive at this happy state, because few are willing to embrace contempt, and suffer themselves to be refined and purified, as the Lord said, "This inward Way is tread by few; tis so high a Grace, that none deserves it".

Suffering and Affliction in the Spiritual Journey

- The text from 'Journal314_1-6' discusses the importance of suffering and affliction in the spiritual journey, highlighting that being subdued, poor,

despised, and afflicted can be a source of great happiness and riches for the [soul](#).

- It is stated that all knowledge and union with [God](#) arises from suffering, which is the truest proof of love, and that being constant and quiet in the fire of tribulation can lead to finding oneself rich in heavenly gifts.
- The text warns that the path to spiritual growth is not easy, and one can expect to experience a range of negative emotions, including passive dryness, darkness, anguish, contradictions, and vehement temptations from the Enemy, leading to feelings of sorrow, heaviness, and desperation.
- Despite the intense suffering and desolation, the text encourages the reader to remain quiet, resigned, and patient, with a true knowledge of their nothingness, trusting that God's omnipotence can produce wonders in the soul created in His own image and likeness.
- The text also quotes [St. Augustine](#), emphasizing that true good luck consists not in enjoying worldly pleasures, but in suffering with quiet and resignation, and that all good consists in being silent, suffering, and holding patience with rest and resignation.
- Ultimately, the text suggests that embracing suffering and affliction can lead to a deeper union with God and a greater understanding of one's own spiritual nature, as expressed in the phrase "what a Happiness of Happinesses is it to be Crucified with [Christ](#)".

Spiritual Growth Through Suffering and Tribulation

- The text from 'Journal314_1-6' discusses the importance of suffering and tribulation in achieving spiritual growth and union with [God](#), as emphasized by various spiritual leaders, including [Teresa](#), who appeared after her death to a certain [Soul](#) and shared her experiences of pain and reward.
- According to the text, pure and perfect love consists in self-denial, resignation, humility, poverty of spirit, and a low opinion of oneself, and that many people who dedicate themselves to prayer may not truly experience God's presence because they are not mortified or attentive to God after their prayers.
- The text also highlights the need for tribulation to make a person's life acceptable to God, and that those who are perfect should always be desirous of

dying and suffering, as stated by philosophers like Kierkegaard, who notes that the soul must come to understand its own misery and weakness in order to obtain precious peace.

- Additionally, the text quotes [Leo Tolstoy](#), who says that the infallible rule for a spiritual life is to have no care about worldly life, and that true faith is not a means of obtaining temporal advantages, but rather a way of living according to one's doctrine, even if it means enduring violence, hunger, and cold.
- The text emphasizes the importance of resignation, courage, and gallantry in the face of suffering, and that perfection can only be achieved through fire, martyrdom, grief, torments, punishments, and contempt, as experienced by those who are accomplished and perfect, like Teresa, who had to endure tremendous spiritual martyrdom and painful torment to arrive at a state of high contemplation and loving union.
- Ultimately, the text suggests that the goal of spiritual growth is to die to oneself, to be lost and denied in one's life, sense, knowledge, and power, and to be transformed totally with God, which can only be achieved through a deep understanding of one's own misery and weakness, and a willingness to suffer and endure with courage and humility.

The Doctrine of Jesus vs. the Doctrine of the World

- The doctrine of [Jesus](#) is considered preferable to the doctrine of the world because it acknowledges that life cannot be made secure and that death is inevitable, allowing individuals to focus on the true meaning of life rather than struggling for existence.
- According to philosophers such as Tillich and Spong, as well as [Vivekananda](#), the pursuit of security and happiness in life is ultimately futile, and individuals who prioritize these goals are often left unfulfilled and discontented.
- The quotes from Vivekananda highlight the absurdity and meaninglessness of an isolated personal life, where individuals are never content with their circumstances and constantly strive for more, ultimately leading to a life of overwork and suffering.
- The author notes that even when individuals appear to be content, it is often because they are motivated by a desire for wealth and security, rather than a

genuine desire for simplicity and virtue.

- The text also touches on the theme of spirituality and faith, with the author distinguishing between true faith and the use of religion as a means to achieve worldly ends, citing the example of individuals who use faith to gain temporal advantages.

The Author's Search for Meaning and the Illusion of Worldly Passions

- The author reflects on their own experiences, describing how they were encouraged to pursue worldly passions such as ambition and pride, but were met with contempt when they expressed a desire for a virtuous life.
- The author realizes that they and those around them were essentially living in a state of madness, unaware of the true meaning of life and blindly following societal norms, and that it was only when they began to question these norms that they realized the depth of their ignorance.
- The author's search for the meaning of life is temporarily diverted by their family life, but they eventually return to this question, recognizing that it is a fundamental and essential one that must be answered in order to live a meaningful life.
- Ultimately, the author comes to the conclusion that they must understand the reasons for their own actions and the meaning of life in order to truly live, and that until they can do so, they are stuck in a state of existential limbo.

Existential Crisis and the Futility of Human Existence

- The narrator of the text, from the document 'Journal314_1-6', describes a state of existential crisis, where they feel a lack of purpose and meaning in life, and are unable to find fulfillment or satisfaction in anything they do, knowing that ultimately, everything will lead to suffering and death.
- The narrator explains that they have lost all desire and wish for anything, and even if they were granted all their desires, they would still be dissatisfied,

highlighting the futility of human existence and the inevitability of death and annihilation.

- The narrator recounts how they had to take measures to prevent themselves from harming themselves, such as hiding away a cord and ceasing to carry a gun, due to the overwhelming feeling of despair and hopelessness that had taken over their life.
- The narrator is astonished that they had not realized the meaninglessness of life earlier, given the premises that illness and death are inevitable, and that all human acts will eventually be forgotten, leaving nothing but decay and oblivion.
- The narrator questions the point of living and engaging in activities, given the cruel and absurd nature of life, and wonders how people can continue to live in ignorance of this truth, or in a state of intoxication that blinds them to the reality of their existence.
- The narrator also grapples with the idea of loving and caring for their family, knowing that they are also subject to the same conditions of suffering and death, and wonders whether it is cruel to bring them into this world, only to suffer the same despair that they themselves are experiencing.
- The narrator feels lost and desperate, like a man trapped in a wood, trying to find a way out, but unable to escape the reality of their situation, and is forced to confront the inevitability of their own mortality.

The Limitations of Knowledge and the Search for Meaning

- The narrator criticizes the branches of knowledge, such as physiology, psychology, biology, and sociology, for their inability to provide a solution to the problem of life, and for their obscurity, pretension, and contradictions, highlighting the limitations of human understanding in addressing the fundamental questions of existence.
- The narrator notes that while other branches of knowledge may be impressive in their own right, they ultimately ignore the question of life itself, leaving the narrator with a sense of despair and hopelessness.

Philosophical Perspectives on the Meaninglessness of Life

- The text discusses the meaning of life and the search for answers to fundamental questions, with various philosophers and thinkers, including [Socrates](#), Schopenhauer, [Solomon](#), and [Buddha](#), concluding that life is without inherent meaning and that death is the only absolute certainty.
- According to these thinkers, the pursuit of knowledge and understanding ultimately leads to the realization that life is fleeting and insignificant, and that the only way to truly be free is to be free from the burdens of life, with Socrates stating that "we approach truth only in the proportion as we are farther from life".
- The text also touches on the idea that the human desire for happiness and fulfillment is often an illusion, and that the reality of life is one of suffering, illness, old age, and death, with Schopenhauer describing life as "an evil, and a passage from it into nothingness is the only good in life".
- The author of the text seems to be in agreement with these philosophers, stating that they have come to the same conclusions through their own thinking and reasoning, and that the idea that life is meaningless and that death is preferable is not a result of mental disorder, but rather a result of thinking rightly and being in agreement with the conclusions of the most powerful intellects among mankind.
- The text also quotes various philosophers, including Socrates, who says that "the life of the body is evil and a lie, and so the annihilation of that life is a good for which we ought to wish", and Buddha, who says that "to live, knowing that sufferings, illness, old age, and death are inevitable, is not possible; we must get rid of life, get rid of the possibility of living".
- Overall, the text presents a pessimistic view of life, suggesting that it is a "stupid and ridiculous joke" and that the only way to truly be free is to accept this reality and find a way to live with it, as Solomon says, "everything in the world, both folly and wisdom, both riches and poverty, rejoicing and grief, all is vanity and worthless".

Nihilism, Faith, and the Terror of Existence

- The author of the text describes their experience with Nihilism, which led them to question the meaning of life and consider ending their own life, but ultimately, they did not go through with it because they had an inkling that their ideas were wrong.
- The author reflects on the fact that they, along with philosophers like Schopenhauer, understood the emptiness and evil of life, yet they continued to live, which they consider to be a foolish position, as it contradicts their own reasoning.
- The author comes to realize that they were searching for faith, which is not about believing without evidence, but rather about embracing the terrifying mystery of existence, and that this faith is essential for life, as without it, there would be no reason to live.
- The author notes that people around them, including those of the same social position, either did not understand the question of the meaning of life, or they understood it but chose to live on in weakness and despair, and that the answers provided by science were insufficient.
- The author recalls that they began to question their own explanations of the meaning of life and applied the tests of reason to them, only to find that they were worthless, leading them to a state of terror and confusion.
- The author mentions the idea that to live, one must either be ignorant of infinity or accept an explanation that reconciles the finite and the infinite, and that they had such an explanation, but it was no longer sufficient for them.
- The author references the thoughts of Schopenhauer and [Solomon](#), as well as the ideas of [Vivekananda](#), who preferred to hold on to metaphysics rather than give up on the search for meaning, highlighting the complexity and depth of their own search for faith and understanding.
- Ultimately, the author's reflections lead them to a turning point, where they begin to move away from renunciation and towards a new understanding of life, one that acknowledges the importance of faith and the mystery of existence.

Non-Resistance to Evil and the Teachings of Jesus

- The concept of a spiritually induced suicide is mentioned as a potential conclusion of the Nihilistic experience, and the text then transitions to quotes

and discussions from various authors, including [Leo Tolstoy](#) and [Friedrich Nietzsche](#), to explore the idea of non-resistance to evil.

- Tolstoy's writings, such as "[A Letter to a Hindu](#)" and "[My Religion](#)", are referenced to highlight the importance of recognizing the eternal truth inherent in all great religions, and the need to renounce worldly advantages and resist not evil, as exemplified by Jesus' teachings in the [Sermon on the Mount](#).
- Jesus' command "Resist not evil" is emphasized as the central point of his doctrine, and Tolstoy notes that this rule is not just a verbal affirmation, but a practice that is obligatory, and that the early disciples observed this rule, even in the face of misery and persecution.
- The text also touches on the idea that adopting the law of [Jesus](#) would lead to a life of solitude, unhappiness, and persecution, whereas following human law would bring peace, safety, and approval, and Tolstoy grapples with the choice between these two paths.
- Nietzsche's work, specifically "The Anti-Christ", is mentioned, and the text notes the similarities between Tolstoy and Nietzsche's ideas, particularly in their critiques of traditional religious practices and their emphasis on the importance of living according to Jesus' teachings.
- The text concludes by highlighting the disconnect between the professed beliefs of Christians and their actual practices, noting that while they perform elaborate ceremonies and rituals, they often forget to practice the commandments of Jesus, such as non-resistance to evil.

The Nihilistic Experience and the Doctrine of Jesus

- The nihilistic experience had a profound impact on the core views of two individuals, shaping their perspectives on the doctrine of Jesus and the concept of error, which includes empty idols such as [the Church](#), State, Culture, Science, Art, and Civilization.
- According to the text, Jesus' doctrine denounces all human errors, and his teachings, such as "Resist not evil," are often misunderstood or deemed vain by those who do not live a life filled with love and compassion for their fellow men, instead perpetuating horrors like war, punishment, and suffering.

- The author reflects on the life and teachings of [Jesus](#), stating that Jesus did not appeal to them as a prophet revealing the divine law, but rather as one who continued and amplified the absolute divine law that they already knew, and that they had complex notions about God, the [creator](#) of the world and of man.
- The author also critiques the social organization of their time, suggesting that instead of extolling the virtues of theatres, romances, and sumptuous methods for stimulating sensuous desires, people should teach their children that these distractions are vulgar and that true fulfillment comes from living a simple and compassionate life.
- The author notes that both sceptics and believers have a false conception of life, with sceptics believing in the idea of the rights of man to a life of happiness, and that this conception rests on the same foundation as that of the believers, and that true understanding can only be achieved by looking beyond these misconceptions.

Saving One's Life and the Reality of Death

- The author references the wisdom of various historical figures, including [Solomon](#), [Buddha](#), and Pascal, to understand the concept of "saving" one's life according to the doctrine of Jesus, and emphasizes the importance of acknowledging and confronting the reality of death, rather than hiding behind a screen of distractions.
- The text emphasizes the inevitability of death and the futility of attempting to escape or guard against it, as it is an inherent part of human existence, and quotes such as "Death threatens us every moment...Death awaits us at every moment" highlight this reality.
- The passage also explores the difference between the conception of human life in Jewish and [Christian](#) traditions, noting that while the Jews believed mortal life to be the true and supreme good, Christians believe it to be a fallen life that can be transcended through the doctrine of [Jesus](#), which emphasizes the renunciation of personal desires and the merging of individual life into the universal life of humanity.
- The text critiques the idea of individual immortality of the [soul](#), suggesting that it does not align with the teachings of Jesus, which instead emphasize the

importance of living for the greater good and renouncing personal desires, as echoed by philosophers such as [Vivekananda](#), Tillich, and Eckhart.

- The author argues that living for self alone is not reasonable and that humans have always sought a higher purpose, living for their children, families, nations, or humanity, and that true salvation can only be achieved by bringing one's personal will into harmony with the will of [God](#).
- The passage concludes by emphasizing the importance of renouncing self and serving humanity, as taught by Jesus, and notes that this message is consistent with other spiritual traditions, such as the Upanishads, and that the personal life is ultimately condemned to destruction, while a life conformable to the will of God offers the possibility of salvation.

Following the Doctrine of Jesus and the Search for Truth

- The author reflects on their life, considering it a "stupendous farce" that will end in a "stupid death," but believes that their life and death will have meaning for themselves and others if they follow the doctrine of [Jesus](#).
- The author criticizes those who pray, observe sacraments, and give charity, but do not truly follow the example of Jesus, as their actions are inspired by a different doctrine, and instead suggests that people are stuck in earthly thinking and prioritize faith over works.
- The author notes that people live without truth and without a desire to know the truth, and that the endeavor to find the truth that governs human life is considered useless, using personal anecdotes such as the "Cobra at the door" and "falling from the Empire State building" to illustrate this point.
- The author questions why life is full of evil and wrongdoing, and whether it is possible to abstain from participating in it, but is told that the desire to live well and help others is only a temptation of pride, and that the only option is to save one's [soul](#) for the future life.
- The author highlights the contradiction between the doctrine of Jesus and the teachings of [the Church](#), which suggests that it is impossible to practice the doctrine of Jesus in the world, and that one must either participate in the organized evil or renounce life and take refuge in a convent or monastery.

- The author argues that the belief that the doctrine of Jesus is excellent but impossible to practice is erroneous, and that the idea of retiring from the world to avoid temptation is foreign to the spirit of [Christianity](#) and the Jewish religion.
- The author notes that many people have suffered and died in the name of the doctrine of the world, but few have suffered or died in behalf of the doctrine of [Jesus](#), and that this fear of suffering is a puerile excuse that proves how little people really know of Jesus' doctrine.
- The author emphasizes that Jesus' teachings, such as taking up the cross and following him, are not being followed, and that people are not taking his doctrine seriously, instead using the fear of suffering as an excuse to not follow his command to bear submissively the lot apportioned to them.

Following Authority vs. Following Jesus

- The text from 'Journal314_1-6' discusses the idea that people are more willing to follow orders from those in power, such as military leaders, than to follow the teachings of Jesus, which emphasize the importance of living a simple and humble life.
- The author notes that people are accustomed to believing that happiness and security come from power, domination, and worldly goods, but this idea is contrary to the teachings of Jesus, who taught that true happiness comes from living a life of simplicity and detachment from material possessions.
- The author references the story of the ostrich hiding its head in the sand, as well as a similar idea expressed by [Vivekananda](#), to illustrate the foolishness of trying to make life secure through material means, when in reality, death and uncertainty are inevitable.
- The text also explores the idea that poverty, in the sense of living a simple and humble life, is a necessary condition for following the teachings of [Jesus](#) and entering into the kingdom of [God](#), and that it can bring a sense of freedom and happiness.
- The author emphasizes the importance of following the teachings of Jesus, including the five commandments: not being angry, not committing adultery, not taking oaths, not resisting evil, and not making war, and notes that these teachings are essential for achieving true happiness and welfare.

- The text concludes by highlighting the idea that enmity towards others, or anger against them, is the first temptation that can destroy happiness, and that Jesus has shown that it is possible to overcome this temptation and live a life of love and compassion towards all people.

Personal Transformation and the Importance of Humility

- The author reflects on their personal transformation, realizing that they can no longer foster anger and pride, and instead seek to make peace with others, acknowledging their own guilt and the importance of humility.
- The author recognizes that their previous judgmental and angry attitude towards others was a result of separating themselves from others and judging them as inferior, a mindset that they now understand was the principal source of their disagreements, and one that is also noted by [Vivekananda](#) and Tolstoy.
- The author has come to understand that true greatness lies in humility and servitude to others, and that the values they once held dear, such as honors, glory, and wealth, have become despicable to them, while values like rusticity, obscurity, poverty, and simplicity have become right and important.
- The author can no longer support anything that lifts them above or separates them from others, and has come to believe that labor for others, poverty, humility, and the renunciation of property and personal privileges are now right and important.
- The author has also come to realize that the distinction they once made between their own people and those of other countries is destructive to their welfare, and that true welfare is only possible when they recognize their fellowship with the whole world.
- As a result of this newfound understanding, the author's estimate of what is right and wrong has changed, and they now believe that love of country, love for those of their own race, and military exploits are detestable and pitiable, while renunciation of nationality and the cultivation of cosmopolitanism are right and important.
- The author has even come to see that being harmed by others, including foreign enemies or malefactors, can be a desirable and conforming to the

truth, as they recognize that these individuals are also human beings seeking salvation, and that the evil they do will ultimately be evil to themselves, and can only be good for the author, as it aligns with the doctrine of [Jesus](#).

Revealing Truth, Worldliness, and the Christian Perspective

- The text from 'Journal314_1-6' discusses various philosophical and religious ideas, including the importance of revealing truth and refusing to participate in evil, as stated by the author, who emphasizes the need to renounce war and do good to all people, regardless of their nationality.
- The text also quotes [G.K. Chesterton](#) from his book 'Orthodoxy', where he argues that a person who is dependent on the luxuries of life is corrupt, and that the main problem is finding a balance between being astonished at the world and feeling at home in it, which can be achieved by combining a sense of wonder with a sense of security and welcome.
- Chesterton further discusses the idea that people need a life of practical romance, which combines something strange with something secure, and that this can be achieved by viewing the world with a sense of wonder and an idea of welcome, rather than just being comfortable.
- The text also touches on the idea that thoroughly worldly people do not understand the world, and that they rely on cynical maxims that are not true, and that [Christianity](#) provides a unique perspective on the world, where nature is seen as a sister, rather than a mother, and that this perspective gives Christians a sense of pride and admiration for nature's beauty, without feeling the need to imitate it.
- Additionally, the text quotes Chesterton as saying that the main point of Christianity is that nature has no authority over humans, and that people should admire and appreciate nature's beauty, but not feel bound to imitate it, and that this perspective gives Christians a sense of lightness and frivolity in their enjoyment of the earth.
- The text also discusses the relationship between religion, philosophy, and insanity, with Chesterton arguing that imagination does not breed insanity, but rather reason can lead to madness, and that poets and creative artists are less likely to go mad than mathematicians and chess players.

- Overall, the text presents a range of ideas and perspectives on philosophy, religion, and the human experience, emphasizing the importance of balance, wonder, and a sense of welcome in achieving a fulfilling and meaningful life.

Mental Disorder, Materialism, and the Loss of Humanity

- The text discusses the concept of mental disorder and how individuals with mental disorders often possess a "horrible clarity of detail" and a heightened sense of logic, which can make them more convincing in arguments, but also lacking in good judgment, humor, and charity.
- The author criticizes the modern scientific society for discouraging people from thinking about death and for promoting a materialistic worldview that is overly simplistic and neglects the complexities and nuances of human experience.
- Materialism is seen as a form of "insane simplicity" that attempts to explain the world through a rigid and narrow framework, but ultimately fails to account for the richness and diversity of human emotions and experiences.
- The author argues that materialism can lead to a loss of humanity, including qualities such as hope, courage, poetry, and initiative, and that it can also lead to fatalism, which is not a liberating force.
- The text also explores the concept of reason and how it can be used in a way that is detached from reality, leading to a form of insanity, and how reason itself is a matter of faith that requires a certain level of trust in its ability to accurately describe the world.
- The author critiques the idea that reason and faith are mutually exclusive, and instead suggests that reason is itself a form of faith that requires a certain level of trust in its ability to accurately describe reality.
- The text also touches on the concept of evolution, which is seen as a potentially self-destructive idea that, if taken to its logical conclusion, could undermine the very foundations of rational thought and lead to a form of intellectual nihilism.
- Ultimately, the author suggests that a balanced approach that takes into account both reason and faith is necessary to avoid the pitfalls of materialism and the dangers of unchecked rationalism.

Objective Truth, Madness, and the Example of Joan of Arc

- The text discusses the idea that if everything is in a state of flux and there are no fixed things, then it is impossible to think or have a standard for improvement, as argued by philosophers like Nietzsche, who claimed that men once considered evil to be good.
- The author agrees with pragmatists that apparent objective truth is not the only consideration, but argues that a belief in objective truth is a necessary component of the human mind, and that without it, one cannot rebel against anything in a meaningful way.
- The author criticizes philosophers like Schopenhauer, Tolstoy, Nietzsche, and Shaw, stating that their philosophies are leading to a kind of mental helplessness, which can be defined as madness, and that they are using mental activity to reach a state of mental emptiness.
- The author uses the example of [Joan of Arc](#) to illustrate a different approach, one that combines the noble aspects of Tolstoy's and Nietzsche's philosophies, such as a reverence for the poor and a desire for ecstatic equilibrium, but with the added component of action and courage, as Joan of Arc endured poverty and fought for her beliefs.
- The author argues that there is no inconsistency between having love for humanity and having hatred for inhumanity, and that it is possible to rebel against injustice without losing one's right to do so.
- The text also touches on the idea of the Laws of Nature, arguing that they are not necessarily unalterable or based on a clear formula, but rather are based on associations and sentiment, and that the ordinary scientific man is often a sentimentalist who is swept away by these associations.

The Human Condition and the Need for Both Love and Hate

- The author reflects on the human condition, noting that people have forgotten who they are and cannot remember their true selves, despite being able to

understand the cosmos, and this is a universal mental calamity that affects everyone.

- The author discusses how modern thought contradicts the basic creed of his boyhood, which was founded on fairy tales that taught him to be modest and submit to the limitations of the world, and to see the world as a wild and delightful place.
- The author argues that a person must be able to both love and hate the world, and be a fanatical pessimist and optimist at the same time, in order to truly change it and make it worth changing, and that this combination is what makes the irrational optimist succeed.
- The author criticizes the idea that certain creeds or philosophies can only be believed in certain ages or times, saying that this is an imbecile habit that has arisen in modern controversy, and that a philosophy can be believed at any time if it is true.
- The author discusses how he used to call himself an optimist to avoid being labeled a pessimist, but that he has come to realize that true optimism is based on the fact that humans do not fit into the world, and that this is what makes [Christian](#) optimism unique and poetic.
- The author notes that Christianity is often criticized for being either too pessimistic or too optimistic, but that it is actually able to combine these two opposing views by keeping them both and keeping them both furious, and that this is what makes it so powerful and unique.
- The author uses the examples of St. Francis and St. Jerome to illustrate how Christianity can encompass both extreme optimism and extreme pessimism, and how these passions can be free and kept in their place, allowing for a more nuanced and balanced view of the world.
- The author concludes that the key to truly living is to seek life in a spirit of furious indifference to it, and to desire life while also being willing to accept death, and that this is what allows people to escape the limitations of the world and to truly find themselves.

Spiritual Detachment and the Importance of Contempt for Worldly Things

- The text presents a philosophical and spiritual discussion, contrasting the views of an optimist and a pessimist, emphasizing that while one can praise or criticize the circumstances of a fight, they must not call it needless or hopeless.
- The text then quotes St. [John](#) of the Cross, who teaches that the doctrine of [Christ](#) emphasizes contempt for all worldly things, allowing individuals to receive the reward of the Spirit of [God](#), and that the earth and all its contents are nothing compared to God.
- According to St. [John of the Cross](#), the whole creation, including wisdom, sweetness, goodness, liberty, and riches, is nothing when compared to the infinite Being of God, and the [soul](#) that sets its affections on created things is nothing before God.
- The text highlights that loving anything alongside God is wrong, and that those who love anything more than God are misguided, and that once an individual has experienced the sweetness of the Spirit, worldly things become unappealing.
- St. John of the Cross also explains that God leads humanity to perfection through a natural process, elevating individuals from what is vile and exterior to what is interior and noble, and that created things, along with the affections bestowed upon them, are a hindrance to spiritual transformation.
- Ultimately, the text suggests that the soul that is attached to worldly things will never comprehend God, just as one in darkness cannot understand light, emphasizing the importance of spiritual detachment and devotion to God.

Purging Affections for Created Things to Possess God

- The text emphasizes that until our [soul](#) is purged of affections for created things, we shall not possess [God](#) in this life in the pure transformation of love, nor in the life to come in the beatific vision, as stated in the document 'Journal314_1-6'.
- The creation, compared to the infinite Being of God, is considered nothing, and the soul whose affections are set on created things is also nothing, and even less than nothing before God, because love begets equality and likeness, and even inferiority to the object beloved.

- The text highlights that all the goodness, sweetness, riches, and glory of the world are, in comparison with God's infinite goodness, sweetness, and riches, considered wickedness, pain, torment, and supreme poverty, and that the soul whose affections are set on these things is wicked, poor, and mean before God.
- The Divine Wisdom bewails men because they make themselves loathsome, mean, wretched, and poor through their love for the things of the world, and God calls those who set their affections on these things "little ones" because they make themselves little like the object of their love.
- The text emphasizes that it is supreme ignorance to think that one can attain to the high estate of union with God before casting away the desire for natural and supernatural things, and that the doctrine of [Christ](#) is contempt of all things, that we may thereby have power to receive the reward of the Spirit of God.
- The journey to union with God is a perpetual struggle with our desires to make them cease, and the more earnest we are, the sooner we shall reach the summit, and spiritual persons must raise up their desires above trifles and forego earthly satisfactions to have the sweetness of all things in the pure food of the Spirit.
- The text warns that those who seek spiritual food but are not content with [God](#) only and intermingle carnal and earthly satisfactions will lose the good things of the Spirit, and that they might have the sweetness of all things in the pure food of the Spirit if they would only forego them.
- The attainment of perfection and union with God requires the cessation of desires and the purification of the [soul](#) from all earthly affections and attachments, as stated by Jacob's three commandments, which must be perfectly fulfilled by those who aspire to reach the mount of perfection.

The Path to Union with God and the Casting Away of Earthly Attachments

- To achieve this state, one must cast away strange gods and earthly attachments, purify themselves from the impressions of desires, and change their garments, which is a process that God Himself will facilitate during the observance of the first two commandments.

- This process involves God infusing a new understanding and love of Himself into the soul, detaching the will from old desires and human satisfactions, and bringing the soul into a state of new knowledge and deep delight, ultimately transforming the soul into an altar of God where the sacrifice of praise and love is offered.
- The will of [God](#) is for the soul to be empty of all created things, allowing it to become a fitting altar of His Majesty, and this is achieved through the dark night of faith, which, although it may seem obscure, actually gives light to the soul and enlightens it.
- According to the prophet, if one does not make themselves blind to their old understanding and desires, they will not understand and will not have the high and supernatural knowledge that comes from faith, which is foreshadowed by the cloud that divided the Egyptians from the children of Israel at the entrance of the Red Sea.
- The teaching emphasized here is that faith, which is an obscure night, illuminates the [soul](#) that is in darkness, guiding it towards the pleasures of pure contemplation and union with God, as expressed by the Psalmist, "Night shall be my light in my pleasures," and this night of faith will guide those who seek union with God.

The Necessity of Darkness for Spiritual Light and Union with God

- The soul must be in darkness to have light and journey on the spiritual road, as stated in "The Abyss of Faith", which means it must be detached from its own understanding, sense, imagination, judgment, and will to be rightly guided by faith.
- The soul is greatly embarrassed on the road to Divine union when it relies on its own understanding, sense, or other habits, and it must release and detach itself from these to attain the union.
- To achieve this union, the soul must be detached from all created things, actions, and capabilities of its own, including its own understanding, taste, and feeling, so that it can attain to the receiving of God's likeness.
- The more the [soul](#) cleaves to created things and relies on its own strength, the less it is disposed for the union, because it does not completely resign itself into

the hands of [God](#) to be transformed supernaturally.

- The fitting disposition for this union is not that the soul should understand, taste, feel, or imagine anything about God, but only that it should have pureness and love, which is perfect resignation and complete detachment from all things for God alone.

Degrees of Union, Purity, and the Role of Faith, Hope, and Charity

- Every soul can attain to this union according to its measure, but not all attain to it in an equal degree, and only as God gives to each, with some seeing God more perfectly than others, yet all being satisfied and happy.
- The soul that does not attain to the degree of purity corresponding with the light and vocation it has received from God will never obtain true peace and contentment, because it has not attained to the requisite detachment and emptiness of its powers.
- Faith, Hope, and Charity all play a role in this process, with Faith deriving certainty but not clearness, Hope rendering the memory empty and bringing darkness, and Charity emptying the will of all things to compel us to love [God](#) above all.
- [Christ](#) our Lord has stated that to be His disciple, one must renounce all possessions, and that virtues can bring darkness to the [soul](#) if they are not accompanied by detachment from created things, as He says, "Every one of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth cannot be My disciple."
- Our Lord also teaches that the path to life is narrow and few find it, emphasizing the need for the soul to constrain itself and detach its will from temporal and sensual things, loving God above all, which is referred to as the night of the senses, and that only a few understand and desire to enter into this supreme detachment and emptiness of spirit.
- Some individuals consider retirement from the world and correction of excesses to be sufficient, while others persevere in prayer and mortification, but they do not rise to the level of detachment and poverty that our Saviour recommends, as they nourish their natural self with consolations instead of detaching themselves from it, and denying themselves in all things for God.

- True spirituality, as recommended by our Saviour, consists of the annihilation of all sweetness in God, in dryness, in distaste, in trouble, which is the real spiritual cross, and the nakedness of the spiritual poverty of Christ, and those who seek only delights and sweet communications in God are actually practicing spiritual gluttony and rendering themselves spiritually enemies of the cross of Christ.
- To love God truly, one must seek God in Himself, not seeking comfort and refreshment from God, but being willingly deprived of everything for God, and inclining oneself to will and choose for Christ's sake whatever is most disagreeable, whether proceeding from God or from the world, which is the essence of loving God and following Christ.
- Carrying the cross, as Christ's burden, requires an earnest resolution to seek and endure it in everything for [God](#), and those who submit themselves to this cross will find great refreshment and sweetness to enable them to travel along the detached road, desiring nothing, but those who cling to anything will miss their way and never be able to ascend the narrow path.
- Ultimately, giving oneself up to suffer for Christ's sake and annihilating oneself utterly is the sum and root of all virtue, and without this exercise, all other efforts will be profitless, notwithstanding great meditations and communications, as emphasized by [Christ](#) our Lord.

Spiritual Union, Humility, and the Limitations of Intellect

- The attainment of spiritual union with God is the highest and noblest estate achievable in life, and it can only be accomplished through the imitation of Christ and the cultivation of humility, as stated by the Psalmist, "I am brought to nothing, and I knew not."
- According to the text, many people who consider themselves friends of Jesus Christ are actually seeking their own comfort and satisfaction in Him, rather than embracing His sufferings and death, and this is particularly true of men of learning and dignity, and those who are slaves to ambition and honors, as they do not truly know Christ.
- The intellect is limited in its ability to comprehend [God](#), and all that it can understand is "most unlike unto God, and most disproportionate to Him,"

which is why the intellect must approach God through "not understanding rather than by seeking to understand," and by making itself "blind, covering itself with darkness," as described by S. Dionysius as a "ray of darkness."

- The concept of Mystical Theology, or the secret Wisdom of God, is a way of contemplating God that is beyond human understanding, and it is through faith, rather than intellectual comprehension, that God manifests Himself to the [soul](#) in the Divine light, which surpasses all understanding, as stated by S. Paul, "He that cometh to God must believe that He is."

Mystical Theology, Bodily Senses, and the Dangers of Exterior Experiences

- The outward bodily senses, such as seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and touching, can be affected in a supernatural way, with spiritual men occasionally experiencing representations and objects, such as seeing forms and figures of Saints or Angels, or hearing strange words, but these experiences should not be relied upon or encouraged, as they are exterior and can be occasions of error, presumption, and vanity.
- Aristotle's comparison of the eyes of the bat to the sun, which wholly blinds them, is used to illustrate the limitations of the human intellect in comprehending God, and the need to approach Him through faith and contemplation, rather than intellectual understanding, in order to attain the Divine enlightening.
- The soul is often led astray by its focus on material and palpable things, which excite the senses and cause it to abandon the secure guidance of Faith in its pursuit of union with [God](#).
- The spiritual man must reject all apprehensions and corporeal satisfactions that are liable to the exterior senses, and instead learn to abide with attention in loving waiting upon God in a state of quiet, without heeding the imagination or its operations.
- It is sad to see individuals disturb their own souls and draw them away from interior quiet, where God fills them with refreshment and peace, by compelling them to focus on outward things and abandon their spiritual goals.
- To achieve perfect union with God, the [soul](#) must be careful not to lean upon imaginary visions, forms, figures, and particular intelligible objects, as these

can serve as obstacles in the way and must be guarded against and rejected.

Spiritual Wrath, the Dark Night of the Soul, and the Purgation of Desire

- Some spiritual persons fall into spiritual wrath by becoming irritated at the sins of others and keeping watch on them with uneasy zeal, which is contrary to spiritual meekness, as noted by various spiritual thinkers, including Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Tolstoy, and Seraphim.
- These individuals have gained some degree of spiritual strength in [God](#), enabling them to refrain from creature desires and suffer a light burden and aridity without turning back, but they must still navigate the [Dark Night of the Soul](#), where God turns their light into darkness and shuts against them the door, leaving them in a state of uncertainty and dryness.
- In this night, the soul is unable to advance in meditation and finds insipidity and bitterness in spiritual things and good exercises, which is a challenging and transformative experience that requires patience, faith, and trust in God's guidance.
- The process of spiritual growth is described as God setting the [soul](#) down from His arms and teaching it to walk on its own feet, which can feel very strange and difficult for the soul as everything seems to be going wrong.
- The soul may experience a dark night where it finds no pleasure or consolation in the things of God or in any created thing, and this is a sign that God is quenching and purging its sensual desire.
- Another sign of this purgation is that the memory is ordinarily centered upon God, but with painful care and solicitude, thinking that it is not serving God, but is backsliding, because it finds itself without sweetness in the things of God.
- The soul is freed from these struggles when the night quenches all pleasures, whether from above or from below, and grants it numerous blessings in the acquirement of virtues, such as the quenching of desire and affection with respect to all things.
- The soul's journey through this dark night, which is described as the strait gate, allows it to detach itself from sense and establish itself in faith, which is a stranger to all sense, and ultimately leads to union with [God](#) in pure faith.

- The benefits of this journey are great, including the knowledge of oneself and one's misery, and although few people persevere on this narrow and difficult road, the benefits are far greater than those of the initial stage of spiritual growth.
- Our Saviour is quoted as saying that few people enter by the strait gate and journey on the narrow way that leads to life, but those who do are rewarded with great happiness and good fortune.

The Dark Night of Contemplation and the Knowledge of Self and God

- The soul's initial satisfaction and contentment with its pleasant experiences and feelings of serving God are replaced with a deeper understanding of its own misery and a more profound faith, as it journeys through the dark night of contemplation.
- The [soul](#), having donned the attire of aridity and abandonment, possesses a deeper understanding of itself through the virtue of self-knowledge, recognizing its own nothingness and inability to act on its own, and it is in this state that [God](#) enlightens the soul, granting it knowledge of its lowliness and the greatness of God.
- In this dark night of the desire, God cleanses and frees the understanding, allowing the soul to comprehend the truth, unobstructed by the pleasures and desires of the senses, which can darken and hinder the spirit, as noted by Isaias, who states that vexation and aridity can enlighten and quicken the understanding.
- The Prophet's words, "Thy light shall shine in the darkness," are fulfilled as the soul, emptied and disencumbered, is instructed supernaturally by God in His Divine wisdom through this dark and arid night of contemplation, which is a means to a knowledge of God and oneself, as exemplified by David, who attributed his knowledge of God's glory to the aridities and detachments of his sensual nature.

The Dark Night, Virtues, and the Analogy of a Sick Man

- This dark night, although leading to a knowledge of God of a different plenitude and abundance than the night of the spirit, is a necessary beginning, and by walking in darkness, the soul gains virtues, such as non-movement, quietism, earthly renunciation, and awareness of the Other, as referenced by philosophers like [Plato](#) and theologians like Tillich, who notes that doubt can be a sign of true faith.
- The dark night of contemplation absorbs and immerses the [soul](#) in itself, bringing it near to [God](#), protecting and delivering it from all that is not God, and restricting it to a diet of abstinence from all things, taking away its appetite for them, much like a sick man undergoing a cure, as described by the author, who uses this analogy to illustrate the soul's journey towards regaining its health, which is God Himself.
- The spiritual light of God is so immense and transcendent that it can blind and darken those who approach it, causing the soul to feel keenly the shadow of death, lamentations, and pains of hell, as if it is without God and unworthy of Him.
- The soul experiences a profound emptiness and impoverishment of temporal, natural, and spiritual goods, and is surrounded by miseries of imperfection, aridity, and emptiness, which is one of the chief pains it suffers in this purgation.
- God brings about this dark contemplation to purge the soul, annihilate its imperfect habits and affections, and consume its imperfections, much like fire consumes the mouldiness and rust of metal, causing the soul to suffer greatly.
- The Prophet describes the need for the soul to be annihilated and destroyed in order to purify and destroy the rust of its affections and imperfections, which have become natural to it, and this process is necessary for the soul's purification.
- The soul feels powerless and imprisoned in its darkness, unable to move or see, and believes that its director's advice contains no remedy for its troubles, until the Lord has completely purged it according to His will, and the soul is humbled, softened, and purified to become one with the Spirit of God.
- The severity and duration of the purgation vary according to the degree of union of love that God's mercy grants the [soul](#), and until then, the soul is left to suffer in its darkness, feeling scared and terrified that no one can help it, and that it may not even be understood.

The Dark Night of the Soul and the Inability to Connect with God

- The text discusses the concept of a [dark night of the soul](#), where an individual experiences a period of spiritual purgation, feeling unable to connect with [God](#) or pray, and is afflicted by distractions and forgetfulness, as described in Chapter 7 of the second book.
- During this time, the soul is unable to raise its affection or mind to God, and is hindered in its faculties and affections, leading to feelings of emptiness and disconnection, as expressed by the author who notes that they always feel that their mind is empty and that they do not know anything.
- The text references Divine Scripture and the story of Jacob, highlighting the secret and mysterious nature of the journey to God, which is different from human knowledge and understanding, and emphasizes the importance of losing oneself and becoming nothing in order to be united with God.
- The text also quotes Fr. [Seraphim Rose](#), who discusses the concept of Nihilism, noting that the [Christian](#) is, in a sense, a "Nihilist" because they believe that the world is nothing and God is all, and that true Nihilism proceeds from abundance, whereas the Nihilism of the world proceeds from the Abyss and places faith in things that pass away.
- Fr. Seraphim Rose emphasizes that the Christian's faith is placed in the one thing that will not pass away, the Kingdom of God, and that those who live in [Christ](#) may enjoy the goods of the world but are not needful of them, whereas those who do not live in Christ already live in the Abyss and cannot fill their emptiness with worldly treasures, and ultimately, the text poses the question of why men learn through pain and suffering, and not through pleasure and happiness.

Nihilism, Meaninglessness, and the Search for Truth

- The concept of nihilism is described as a universe where there is no point of orientation, and nothing has meaning, with no distinction between right and wrong, or true and false, as noted by philosophers such as Nietzsche, who is considered a prophet of nihilism but did not fully understand its ultimate meaning.

- The text suggests that the world is divided into two groups of people: those who lead meaningless lives without realizing it, and those who are aware of the meaninglessness and are driven to madness and suicide, with the nihilist being seen as "sick" and a testament to the sickness of the age.
- The idea that all truth is empirical or relative is self-contradictory, as the statement itself is not empirical but metaphysical, and the concept of relative truth is an absolute statement, highlighting the flaws in the nihilist perspective.
- The text argues that faith must be rooted in truth to avoid subjective delusions, and questions the foundation of scientific principles, such as the coherence and uniformity of nature, in absolute truth, rather than just unverifiable probabilities or experimental hypotheses.
- The concept of ultimate truth, whether conceived as the [Christian God](#) or the ultimate coherence of things, is seen as a metaphysical first principle and an absolute truth, which collapses the theory of the relativity of truth and reveals it as a self-contradictory absolute.
- The text notes that few people in positions of authority or influence today fully believe in absolute truth, or specifically Christian Truth, but still use the name of truth and retain the old forms, albeit with a new, quasi-nihilist content, and that atheist arguments against a weakened concept of God are irrefutable but irrelevant, as such a God is essentially the same as no God at all.

Liberalism, Realism, and the Rejection of Absolute Truth

- The foundation of Liberalism is flawed, as it is built upon the concept of Man rather than a higher deity, and this flawed foundation can lead to the explicit formulation of nihilist atheism, which is a more consistent and explicit expression of the underlying beliefs of Liberalism.
- In the Christian order, all activities in this life are judged in the light of the afterlife, which is eternal and has no end, whereas the Liberal view is focused solely on this world and earthly happiness, with no consideration for the possibility of an afterlife or higher truth.

- The idea of a "heaven" that is a compromise between [Christian](#) terminology and ordinary worldliness is unconvincing to both Orthodox Christians and consistent nihilists, as it represents a watering down of the true Christian message and a failure to acknowledge the ultimate reality of death and the afterlife.
- The Liberal belief that one can lead a civilized life without immortality is based on a flawed logic, as it ignores the full implications of the denial of immortality, which would render all human actions and values meaningless, and would ultimately lead to a world where "all things are lawful" and there are no restraints on human behavior.
- The nihilist view, which is characterized by a focus on earthly happiness and a rejection of higher truth, is a form of anarchy that can lead to a totalitarian kingdom of this world, where the only goal is earthly happiness and there is no consideration for higher values or ultimate truth.
- The Revolution, which is accompanied by disbelief and a rejection of higher truth, cannot be stopped halfway and will ultimately lead to a totalitarian regime, as it is a force that will not rest until it achieves its goal of establishing a kingdom of this world.
- The Liberal is focused on worldly ends and is indifferent to the reality of Heaven and Hell, and conceives of [God](#) as a vague, impersonal power, which is why they are unable or unwilling to think in terms of ultimate things and are consumed by worldliness.
- The search for absolute truth is essential, and no one has rightly sought the truth who has not encountered [Jesus Christ](#), the Way, the Truth, and the Life, who stands against the world and is a reproach to all worldliness, and the Liberal who thinks their universe is secure against this truth is like the rich man in the parable, overburdened by worldly interests and ideas.
- The academic system, which is founded upon untruth and promotes skepticism, is corrupting, and it is evil to live and work in an atmosphere that is totally permeated by a false conception of truth, where [Christian](#) Truth is seen as irrelevant to central academic concerns, and even those who believe in this truth can only sporadically make their voices heard above the skepticism promoted by the system.

Redefining Nihilism, Realism, and the Usurpation of God's Throne

- The concept of Nihilism is being redefined, contrasting with the traditional definition, as a philosophy that rejects all idealism and abstraction in favor of the concrete and factual, and is characterized by a belief in the "nothing-but" and the reduction of everything to the lower or "basic": matter, sensation, and the physical.
- The Realist world-view is described as being perfectly clear and straightforward, with open atheism and naked materialism, as opposed to Liberal vagueness, and is described as "scientism" which is the improper exploitation of scientific standards and methods.
- The text argues that those who take scientific knowledge for the only truth and deny what lies above it are Nihilists in the exact sense of the term, and that the Realist scholars and scientists are guilty of collective usurpation of the throne of [God](#), with their pride and faith in their research being more important to them than Divine Revelation.
- The difference between the Realist and the Liberal is not one of doctrine, but one of emphasis and motivation, with the Realist being driven by hostility to truth and fanatical devotion to the world, whereas the Liberal is indifferent to absolute truth due to excessive attachment to the world.
- The text references philosophers such as Nietzsche, who rebelled against a diluted form of [Christianity](#), and notes that both Christians and Realists share a love of truth and a passion for getting to the root of things, but the Realist mistakes Christianity for another form of idealism and becomes a fanatical devotee of the only reality that is obvious to the spiritually blind: this world.
- The text also mentions other thinkers, including [Vivekananda](#), Tolstoy, and Underhill, in the context of discussing the improper exploitation of scientific standards and methods, and highlights the importance of distinguishing between legitimate science and "scientism".

Materialism, Atheism, and the Impure Motives of the Realist

- The text discusses the concepts of materialism, atheism, and realism, stating that even the most charitable views cannot recognize a love of truth in the devoted materialist and atheist, as their pursuit of truth has become a disease and ended in its own negation.
- The motives of the Realist are deemed impure, as they have an ulterior motive and place worldly values above truth, with the task of realism being to annihilate higher truths concerning [God](#) and the spiritual life, often through [Logical Positivism](#).
- The text also critiques Liberalism for obscuring higher truths with "tolerance" and agnosticism, and notes that Realists, who may claim to follow [Christian](#) ideals, are often unaware of the consequences of their worldview and instead promote earthly values.
- The concept of Vitalism is introduced, with examples including the lament of W.B. Yeats over the loss of his childhood religion, and the ideas of Tolstoy and [Vivekananda](#), who believed that religion is simply what people are already doing, and that people desire simple salvation.
- The text argues that much of what passes for "spirituality" today is actually a "new spirituality" born of Nihilism, which attaches itself to healthy organisms to destroy them from within, and that Vitalism presupposes a rejection of Christian Truth along with a pseudo-spiritual pretension.
- The author notes that popular culture, including the cult of the automobile, television, cinema, and music, serves as an escape from reality, boredom, and the emptiness that results from abandoning God and Revealed Truth.
- The cult of "awareness" and "realization" is also seen as a form of Religious Vitalism, with examples including the devotees of modern art, [Zen Buddhism](#), and the use of drugs to stimulate "religious experiences".
- The text concludes by stating that Vitalism must be defined and exposed for its Nihilist character, and that both Liberalism and Realism have contributed to the undermining of truth, with Liberalism retaining the prestige of its name while Realism attacks truth in the name of a lesser, partial truth.

Vitalism, Humanism, and the Death of God

- The concept of Vitalism is unrelated to truth and instead focuses on a different order of things, as it devotes its whole concern to something entirely different

from truth.

- The humanist attitude, influenced by Vitalism, is characterized by the axiom that the "love of truth" is never-ending because it can never be fulfilled, and this is often disguised as an acknowledgment of the "provisional" nature of all knowledge or as part of the process of "evolution" or "progress".
- According to Nietzsche, creativity requires the destruction and smashing of accepted values, which is a key principle of Nihilism, where positive values are replaced with negative notions of morality.
- The "death of [God](#)" means that modern man has lost faith in God and the Divine Truth, leading to an apostasy to worldliness, and this is evident in both atheists and those who have simply lost their sense of spiritual reality.
- Nihilism is characterized by an "anxiety" and "abyss" of nothingness, which is the result of denying God and, consequently, denying one's own creation and being, and this nothingness is the center of the Nihilist's world, making it incoherent and absurd.
- The Nihilist's god is nothingness itself, not just the absence or non-existence of something, but the "corpse" of the "dead God", and this is a self-contradictory and suicidal concept, as no man can live without a god.
- The idea of a world founded upon nothingness is absurd, and the Nihilist's rejection of God leads to a state of chaos and disorder, where the world fails to hold together and is incoherent in every detail.
- The quote from Nietzsche, "We have killed him (God), you and I", highlights the idea that modern man has collectively rejected God, and this has led to a state of uncertainty and disorientation, where men feverishly pursue "progress" without a clear reason or direction.

Nihilism as Spiritual Disorder and the Pursuit of Worldly Concerns

- The concept of nihilism is described as a spiritual disorder that can only be overcome by spiritual means, and it is described as the absolute despotism of worldliness where all human energy is devoted to worldly concerns.
- The idea of seeking [Christian](#) ideals in this world is considered idolatry and is associated with the Antichrist, and the pursuit of total peace is seen as a

utopian ideal that raises profound questions about the distinction between earthly and otherworldly concerns.

- The author discusses the concept of Christian action and social responsibility, arguing that while Christians should manifest the truth of the [Gospel](#) in all aspects of their lives, including social and political spheres, the ultimate goal of Christianity is not to create a Christian society but to transform individuals.
- The author references Thomas Merton in a letter, highlighting the importance of spiritual means in overcoming nihilism and the need to prioritize personal transformation over social change.

Christian Action, Social Responsibility, and the True Kingdom

- The text also touches on the idea that true Christian acts are those that are done for personal reasons, such as feeding a hungry brother, and that these acts are a form of preaching the Kingdom that needs no words, as they are done because the person in need is seen as a representation of [Christ](#).
- The author critiques the notion that communist doctrine and nihilistic ideologies prioritize production and worldly concerns above all else, creating a system that is devoid of ultimate purpose and meaning.
- The author expresses a sense of desperation and unworthiness, feeling the need to write or tell someone something, but struggling with feelings of inadequacy and the fear that their life's work may be ignored or mocked after their death.
- The text discusses the concept of a "political crusade" to abolish social evils, such as hunger, and how it can become wrapped in a cloak of "idealism" that prioritizes worldly ideals over spiritual truth, as noted by [Vivekananda](#) in [Karma Yoga](#).
- The author argues that while individuals participating in such crusades may act in a [Christian](#) way, the overall project can become focused on outward results and social responsibilities, rather than inward spiritual growth and acceptance of God's will, which is a key principle of Karma Yoga as mentioned by Vivekananda.
- The author quotes Vivekananda, stating that one must carefully consider whether their actions are motivated by a lofty worldly ideal or something

greater, and notes that many people, including Catholics and Orthodox Christians, prioritize social Christianity over dogmatic, ascetic, and contemplative Christianity.

- The author questions the emphasis on "action" and "projects" in social Christianity, suggesting that it detracts from the importance of prayer, penance, fasting, and preaching the true Kingdom, which is the central need of our time, as emphasized by Vivekananda's concept of Karma Yoga.
- The author believes that the only social responsibility of a Christian is to live a life of faith, and that any positive social impact that results from this is secondary, citing Vivekananda's idea that true Christianity is not about outward results, but about inner transformation.
- The author criticizes the idea of a "new Christianity" that prioritizes outward results and social transformation over inner spiritual growth, and argues that true Christianity can never be outwardly "successful" in the world, as it is not of this world, a concept that is in line with Vivekananda's teachings on Karma Yoga.
- The author concludes that Christianity can only be "successful" if it renounces the true Kingdom and seeks to build a kingdom in the world, which is a denial of Christ's teachings, and that true faith requires living a life of faith and speaking of it less, as inspired by the principles of [Karma Yoga](#) and the quotes from [Vivekananda](#).

The Earthly Kingdom, the Problem of Man, and the Importance of Spiritual Life

- The modern mentality is focused on building an "Earthly Kingdom", which is not a [Christian](#) goal, but rather a worldly objective that some Christians, including Catholics and Orthodox, are unintentionally contributing to, often with good intentions.
- The author criticizes "prophets" like Berdyaev and Tolstoy, who are seen as semi- or pseudo-Christians, for being too worldly and not emphasizing the central "problem of man", which is death and its answer, [Christ](#).
- The author believes that Christians should focus on showing the world that the "problems of the age" are insignificant compared to the problem of death

and the afterlife, and that by living their faith authentically, they can offer something new and meaningful to contemporary society.

- The involvement of Christians in social idealism projects is seen as a way of compromising their faith and implying that their Kingdom is not of this world, but rather a distant and unattainable goal, and that building a reign of peace, justice, and brotherhood on earth is more important.
- The author argues that what is needed is not more action or busyness, but rather a deeper spiritual life, with more fasting, prayer, and penance, and that if Christians truly lived their faith, everything else would follow naturally, without the need for compromise or watering down their beliefs.
- The author references literary figures like Dostoyevsky and his character the "Grand Inquisitor", to illustrate the dangers of a "new Christianity" that prioritizes social ideals over spiritual discipline and the pursuit of God's Kingdom.

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