

Authentic Spiritual Growth 7

In the last two Notes a woman began to pray for grace to overcome her addiction to alcohol. God did give her grace. But later she experienced a time of darkness which, eventually, she realized was God's hand drawing her toward his heart. She had been viewing God primarily as a means towards the end of achieving another idol, that of recovery.

St. John of the Cross says that such "dark" or "obscure" nights are " ... a very special gift, signaling the advent of a deeper way of prayer and relationship with God. This deepening characterizes all authentic dark-night experiences but because of the obscurity of the process, it seems instead like something has gone wrong."

-- *Gerald May*, in *ADDICTION AND GRACE*.

I think all serious followers of Christ experience such "dark nights," even multiple times. I have. During the darkness of not understanding what is happening, I cry out and long for it to end. But later I thank God for these times sent to draw my focus away from transient, worthless idols and toward God's heart.



Coffee/tea thought: "Whom have I in heaven but you? I desire you more than anything on earth."
Ps. 73.25 NLT1996

John

真实的灵命长进7

上两次AO讲到一个女人开始祷告以求恩典来克服酗酒。神的确恩待了她。但之后她经历了一段属灵的黑暗，最后她意识到神要带领她与自己有更亲近的关系。她发现她在把神当作一个工具而去事奉另一个偶像，戒瘾。

十架若望说这样暗昧的黑夜是个特别的恩赐，预示要进入更深刻的祷告及与神的关系。这个过程因其难度而伴随着真实的黑夜经历，好像似乎出了什么问题。——杰拉德·梅

我想所有认真跟随基督的人都会经历这样的黑夜，甚至多次经历。我也经历过。在那黑夜中不明白发生了什么。我呼求并渴望它快快结束。但之后我为这些经历感谢神，因它们使我的注意力集中在神上，而不是那些转瞬即逝的偶像身上。

随想：“除你以外，在天上我有谁呢？除你以外，在地上我也没有所爱慕的。”诗篇73:25

史建恩