



Sermons of Meister Eckhart

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Johannes Eckhart - (ca. 1260-1327), German Dominican mystic

Meister Eckhart (in English, Master Eckhart; born Johannes Eckhart; also called Eckhart von Hochheim; also spelled Eckehart) was a theologian, a writer, and the greatest German mystic of the Middle Ages. His writings focused on the relationship of the individual soul to God.

Born in Hochheim, Eckhart joined the Dominicans at the age of 15 and continued his theological studies as a member of the order. He received a master's degree in theology from the University of Paris in 1302 and then served as prior at Erfurt and as Dominican vicar-general for Bohemia. He was a professor of theology in Paris in 1311, and between 1314 and 1322 he taught and preached in Strasbourg and was also a preacher in Cologne, where he was respected for both his administrative ability and his sermons.

Eckhart's theology followed that of another Dominican, St. Thomas Aquinas, but it also incorporated much Neoplatonic thought. His teachings on the union of the soul with God led to accusations of pantheism, a charge also made against the Rhineland mystics who followed him. In 1327 the Avignonese pope John XXII summoned Eckhart to defend himself against accusations of heresy. Eckhart recanted on some 26 articles (or propositions), but a papal bull issued in 1329 to condemn Eckhart's teaching named 28.

Modern scholars consider Eckhart's mysticism generally orthodox, although surviving sermons and tracts are usually thought to have been edited by Eckhart's friends and foes. *Talks of Instruction* (1300?), *The Book of Divine Consolation* (1308?), and a score of sermons are considered among the most authentic works.

Eckhart had a profound influence on the development of the German language, as he wrote in German as well as in Latin. The German idealists looked to Eckhart as a forerunner of their movement, and modern scholars have traced his influence in the development of Protestantism and existentialism.

Sermons of Meister Eckhart Details

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From Reader Review Sermons of Meister Eckhart for online ebook

Jonathan Widell says

Meister Eckhart turned out to be pretty much what I expected him to be but now I can understand him a bit better. Meister Eckhart's mysticism is not so much about experiencing something supernatural as it is about understanding that God is beyond time and space while we as humans *are* limited by time and space. Therefore our ascent to God is as much an intellectual as a spiritual exercise. The study of metaphysics and some (then) familiar Scriptures will guide us to God if undertaken in the right spirit.

But Meister Eckhart's mysticism goes even further than that. He emphasizes that being in touch with God is not to remain passive but to be active. Sainthood and the presence of the Holy Spirit will manifest themselves in outward works.

Here, as elsewhere, Meister Eckhart makes his point by referring to Scriptures. Instead of barraging us with a maximum number of Bible quotes he digs deeper to each of the passages. He seems to suggest that just as the visible world can take us to God but also lead us away from Him, the study of the Bible can lead us away from God if not done properly. Meister Eckhart's mission, then, is to help us to achieve that right understanding.

Joseph Delcourt says

amazingly up to date
brilliant & inspired
a life companion

Phil Calandra says

The fundamental philosophy of Meister Eckhart is that the "Absolute" or "Abstract Unity" or "God" is devoid of all attributes and that we are formed by means of a "spark" of the "Divine". This spark enlivens and sustains us and is the basis of our consciousness. In contrast, our finite self which is an outgrowth of our eternal self, is represented by our mind and body. Unfortunately, we often identify with these finite expressions instead of the eternal aspect of our "Self". This is not an easy book to understand and does not go into the depth of Meister Eckhart's spirituality as some of his other books; however it is inspiring and well worth the read.

Dennis says

I picked up the kindle version of this book after seeing it on Bishop Robert Barron's reading list for spiritual theology. It's a very short read, consisting of seven sermons from Meister Eckhart, a 13th/14th century German priest of the Dominican order.

Each sermon is based on a particular Bible verse or chapter he singled out. The list of Chapters is as such and i've also included some of my favorite quotations:

I - The Attractive Power of God (John 6:44)

The Father draweth with the might of His power, the Son draweth with His unfathomable wisdom, the Holy Ghost draweth with His love. Thus we are drawn by the Sacred Trinity with the cords of Power, Wisdom and Love, when we are drawn from an evil thing to a good thing, and from a good thing to a better, and from a better thing to the best of all.

The second means of attraction which He used is Emptiness, as we see when we place one end of a hollow pipe in water, and draw up it by suction; the water runs up the stem to the mouth, because the emptiness of the pipe, from which the air has been drawn, draws the water to itself. So Our Lord Jesus Christ made Himself empty that He might wisely draw all things to Himself. Therefore He let all the blood that was in His Body flow out, and so attracted to Himself all the compassion and grace that was in His Father's heart, so completely and profitably as to suffice for the whole world.

II - The Nearness of the Kingdom (Luke 21:31)

In similar fashion our salvation depends upon our knowing and recognizing the Chief Good which is God Himself.

If the soul is to know God it must forget itself and lose itself, for as long as it contemplates self, it cannot contemplate God. When it has lost itself and everything in God, it finds itself again in God when it attains to the knowledge of Him, and it finds also everything which it had abandoned complete in God. If I am to know the highest good, and the everlasting Godhead, truly, I must know them as they are in themselves apart from creation. If I am to know it as it is in itself, not as it is parceled out in creatures.

No man desires anything so eagerly as God desires to bring men to the knowledge of Himself. God is always ready, but we are very unready. God is near us, but we are far from Him. God is within, and we are without. God is friendly; we are estranged.

III - The Angel's Greeting (Luke 1:28)

I affirm that had the Virgin not first borne God spiritually He would never have been born from her in bodily fashion.

When man humbles himself, God cannot restrain His mercy; He must come down and pour His grace into the humble man, and He gives Himself most of all, and all at once, to the least of all. It is essential to God to give, for His essence is His goodness and His goodness is His love. Love is the root of all joy and sorrow. Slavish fear of God is to be put away. The right fear is the fear of losing God.

IV - True Hearing (Ecclesiasticus/Sirach 24:22)

Three things hinder us from hearing the everlasting Word. The first is fleshiness, the second is distraction, the third is the illusion of time. If a man could get free of these, he would dwell in eternity, and in the spirit, and in solitude, and in the desert, and there would hear the everlasting Word.

The man who abides in the will of God wills nothing else than what God is, and what He wills.

V - The Self-Communication of God (John 14:23)

The Will draws thought and all the powers of the soul after it in its train, so that the soul becomes one with God by grace, as the Holy Ghost is one with the Father and with the Son by nature. In God it is more worthy to be loved, than it is in itself.

While I am here, He is in me; after this life, I am in Him. All things are therefore possible to me, if I am united to Him Who can do all things.

VI - Sanctification (Luke 10:42)

Many teachers also praise humility as a virtue. But I set sanctification above humility for the following reason. Although humility may exist without sanctification, perfect sanctification cannot exist without perfect humility. Perfect humility tends to the annihilation of self; sanctification also is so close to self-annihilation that nothing can come between them. Therefore perfect sanctification cannot exist without humility, and to have both of these virtues is better than to have only one of them.

The man who is wholly sanctified is so drawn towards the Eternal, that no transitory thing may move him, no corporeal thing affect him, no earthly thing attract him. This was the meaning of St. Paul when he said, "I live; yet not I; Christ liveth in me."

Although God is Almighty, He can only work in a heart when He finds readiness or makes it. He works differently in men than in stones. For this we may take the following illustration: if we bake in one oven three loaves of barley-bread, of rye-bread, and of wheat, we shall find the same heat of the oven affects them differently; when one is well-baked, another will be still raw, and another yet more raw. That is not due to the heat, but to the variety of the materials. Similarly God works in all hearts not alike but in proportion as He finds them prepared and susceptible. If the heart is to be ready for the highest, it must be vacant of all other things.

VII - Outward and Inward Morality (1 Cor 15:10)

Grace is from God, and works in the depth of the soul whose powers it employs. It is a light which issues forth to do service under the guidance of the Spirit. The Divine Light permeates the soul, and lifts it above the turmoil of temporal things to rest in God. The soul cannot progress except with the light which God has given it as a nuptial gift; love works the likeness of God into the soul. The peace, freedom and blessedness of all souls consist in their abiding in God's will. Towards this union with God for which it is created the soul strives perpetually.

Fire converts wood into its own likeness, and the stronger the wind blows, the greater grows the fire. Now by the fire understand love, and by the wind the Holy Spirit. The stronger the influence of the Holy Spirit, the brighter grows the fire of love; but not all at once, rather gradually as the soul grows. Light causes flowers and plants to grow and bear fruit; in animals it produces life, but in men blessedness. This comes from the grace of God, Who uplifts the soul, for if the soul is to grow God-like it must be lifted above itself.

I found that each sermon has many nuggets of wisdom and I spent a lot of time highlighting for later review. Sermon six on the topic of sanctification was very interesting with all the reading of St. Francis de Sales that I've been doing lately. De Sales speaks a lot on the virtue of humility and Meister Eckhart argues that humility is such a major part of sanctification but yet it does not supersede it. Sermon number seven stood out to me the most. I practically highlighted every single page in that chapter!

I highly recommend this short easy read to every Christian.

Frits Haverkamp says

I wouldn't say everything Eckhart writes is amazing...at least to me...but who am I to judge? However, there was some profoundly good pearls in these sermons that made them worth the read. They are short and easy to get through and it is 'fun' to connect to the a past preacher.

Lani says

The Way to live? Sanctification!

Daily I am being fed by Meister Eckhart's wisdom and highly recommend this book. Great inspiration is found on every page but particularly in his detailed guidance on "how" to grow closer to Oneness with God.

Donatella says

Libro molto complesso, lo prendo e lo lascio da molti anni
