

Discerning from the Oneness of Love
Discernment in Julian of Norwich and the Cloud of Unknowing Seer
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“Prayer ones the soul to God,”¹ Julian reminds us so simply. The Christ says to us “I am the ground. it is my will, my desire.” It is the desire of the Christ that we turn every part of our being into the Christ within us, and awaken within the vibrancy of eternal love knot within the depths of our heart. Here we are “knit in a knot and *oned* in the *oneing* and made holy in the holiness.”² In this love knot we are one. We are whole. For Julian, this fecund word “oneing” whispers something about the eternal mutual interpenetration of human beings knit and oned in the hidden depths of God and the ongoing intensifying of this union. In Julian’s showings, this every day Middle English term, points to the essential principle of mystical union that holds her revelations together. At the same time, the energy of our oneing in the divine, folds, enfolds, ripples and swells in our heart-mind, inviting a unitive awareness of our personal, lived experience of oneing. We only discover this oneing by withdrawing from the centre of our consciousness from identification with our discursive mind, turning into the depths of our heart, into the invitational, vibrational ground of oneing in Christ, in the Trinity.

In this responsive turning, we yield into the amazing vitality of oneing within the enclosing-beclosing, enclosed-beclosed circular flow of Trinitarian loving. In this reciprocal enclosure, the dynamism of our oneing continues to deepen and expand in the ever-creative outpouring of love unmade, made and given. Within this flow, our consciousness from within the original divine-human love-knot, increases. We become more stable in seeing from within the creativity of being oned in the oneing. Thus, we only know this oneing, by being the oneing, being a flow of love, unmade, made and given love. In yielding into the ground of our original point of oneness, into I-I intimacy the awakening of this originating consciousness initiates an awareness that the inner eye which beholds the oneing of boundless love, is itself the oneing of boundless love. Oneing is not something separate to us, or that happens to us. We are one, oned and in the endless oneing in a holistic flowing movement, that ones our substance and sensuality, fusing, intensifying, expanding, grounding, increasing our wholeness in Christ in the Trinity in the oneness of boundless love. Importantly, oneing is not a loss of distinction in identity, rather we discover our true substantial-sensual identity, oned in Christ and become freely and uniquely ourselves.

¹ See Nicholas Watson and Jacqueline Jenkins eds. *The Writings of Julian of Norwich*, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University, 2006. Revelation 14. Chapters 42 and 43. Translations are my own.

² Revelation 14. Chapter 53.lines 53-54.

In inviting us to discern the stirrings of love in this being oned in this oneing, Julian writes us an icon of discernment within the depths of our soul, towards the end of her showings. She draws us into our soul's depths within our heart, picturing our soul as like a city, that is Christ's homeliest home and everlasting winning (dwelling). As words form in her understanding from the ground of beholding within her soul, she speaks of being: "stirred within to seek the high (transcendent) place where the Christ wonneth."³ Like the Cloud author, Julian uses the word "stirred," frequently, with all the delicate nuance of an inner perception within her spirit of the resonance of presence, of the currents of silence, shimmerings of stillness, and the flow of love in Love. Julian gives us an insightful clue into the understanding that emerges about discerning these stirrings, inviting us into the depths of our soul within our heart, giving us some valuable insights into the movement within our soul. She sees that: "when our soul comes into itself, it does not abide in the beholding of itself, but all the beholding is blissfully set in God, who is the maker, winning within. For in humanity's soul is God's very winning."⁴

Notice the energy of winning within our soul that holds the dynamism of our soul being God's oneing place, and the stillness, the permanence of God's winning, or indwelling. The stirrings occur within the winning, the indwelling, so that as we attend to the stirrings of love, and our soul, comes into itself, we behold our soul beholding. A new level of reflexive conscious awakens. Our soul sees that it does not behold itself, our beholding is "set" in God. The beholder who beholds our beholding is in God. "Set in God," emphasises the permanence, the stability of our soul oned in God beholding. Subsequently, Julian sees that the brightest light that we see shining within our soul beholding is the "glorious love" of the crucified and risen Christ.⁵ This beholding from within, being set in God in our soul exudes joy. Joy in Julian, and joy in the Trinity. Our soul who beholds our beholding is illuminated with the risen light of Christ. This Christic beholder in us, who sees from within being knit and oned in Christ exudes the deep wisdom of the Trinity. This is where we must discern from, the light shining from the depths of our oneness in Christ. Therefore, in order to discern wisely we must awaken the beholder of the beholder in us, and see with this luminous Christ consciousness. This luminous beholding in Christ exudes joy.

Discerning from the Depths of Oneing

In discerning, beholding the stirrings of love in the depths of our spirit, is also central in the Cloud author's writings, as he teaches us to behold blindly, within the depths of our spirit from within our naked self in God. He seeks to direct us to nothing more "than the mind of good God only, with a reverent stirring of lasting love; so that means you get nothing but God."⁶ What is central in all he teaches about discerning the stirrings of the Spirit within us is that we may be ever so softly within the depths of our spirit, within the mind of God.⁷ In order to discern the desire of God for us, our

³ 14.68.22-23.

⁴ 14.68.25-27.

⁵ 14.68.29.

⁶ *Discernment of Stirrings*, in *Deonise Hid Divinite*. ed. Phyllis Hodgson. Early English Text Society. London: Oxford University Press, 1955, page 75. Lines 10-11. Translations are my own.

⁷ *Cloud of Unknowing*, in *The Cloud of Unknowing and the Book of Privy Counselling*. ed. Phyllis Hodgson. London: Early English Text Society, 1944, page 88. Line 20. Translations are my own.

active conceptual mind⁸ needs to be softly knit into the depths of our spirit, into the intimacy of being “knit to God in spirit, and in oneness (oneheed) of love and accordance of will.”⁹ In other words, we turn our conceptual awareness within the depths of our heart into where we are knit to God in the oneness of love, so intensely that our will accords with the divine will. And like Julian, this mystic draws on the image of the love-knot to describe this ground of our knitting as being “knit in a spiritual knot of burning love, in spiritual oneness and according of will.”¹⁰ This point of the love-knot of shared identity within the heart of our heart, that is so concentrated it is aflame with love, is where we must discern from within.

This discerning author, gives us the most specific instructions on discernment in his letter, *The Discretion of Stirrings*, where he guides us into the depths of this flaming knot of love. He counsels:

If thou keep whole the stirring of love that you feel by grace in your heart, and do not scatter from your beholding, then the stirring will tell you when you should speak and when you should be still. This stirring of love will govern you discreetly in all your living, and teach you mistily.¹¹

These misty words give us some wonderful insights into the nature of this way of discerning from our oneness in God in love. Importantly, he is showing us that although our beholding has a dark, meek, blind, character, this is not a darkness, an emptiness that is totally absent of spiritual sense awareness. We can be aware of intensely subtle stirrings within our spirit. He is often misinterpreted as being so apophatic, that all inner awareness is totally obscured. On the contrary, although all the writings of the Cloud author affirm the importance of unknowing, of awareness beyond all conceptual ways of knowing, they are also essentially affective, they awaken our *affectus*, the aspect of our spirit where we darkly sense God’s loving within us.¹² as when he says: “by love God may be gotten and held, but by thought never.”¹³ And, when he focuses on discernment, he adds some important nuances to the way in which we receive loving participatory spiritual knowledge within the depths of our spirit when we behold and lean listily into the stirrings. He sensitise us to the wisdom infused in our *affectus* by the spiritual senses, especially the spiritual sense of touch, by awakening the naked energetic field of transcendent awareness. The sensitivity in how the Cloud author describes how our intellect gives way into the wisdom of unknowing infused by blind beholding, into the most intimate and affective sense of the touch of loving stirrings in our

⁸ It is important to stress that this conceptual mind is not another being to heart-mind, though it is limited, diminished, partly blinded, so that it operates on a different level to the heart.

⁹ C 32.15-16. See also “oned to God in spirit and in love and in accordance of will.” C 120.7-8.

¹⁰ C 88:47.17-18; See also *Letter of Prayer*, page 56:13-14. Lines 16-22.

¹¹ DS 75.10-18.

¹² See, *Carthusian Spirituality: The Writings of Hugh of Balma and Guigo De Ponte*. Translated by Dennis D. Martin, *Classics of Western Spirituality*. New York: Paulist Press, 1997, 1997, 7. This resonates with Hugh of Balma, who quotes Vercelli about Deny’s Mystical Theology ...They (Pagan Philosophers) thought the highest cognitive power was found in the intellect, when there is another power that exceeds the intellect no less than the intellect exceeds reason and the reason exceeds imagination. This power is the principal *affectio*, which is the spark of *synderesis* (the highest part of the human person) and which alone can be united to the Holy Spirit. 145.

¹³ C 26.5.

spirit is astounding.¹⁴ In his *Letter of Prayer* he describes how we are: “touched in affection by the sensible presence of God as God is in God’s self.”¹⁵ And we see the inter-relationship between the sensible presence of a stirring and the touchings of the Spirit in *Privy Counselling* when the author affirms: “God’s goodness stirs and touches.”¹⁶ The touch of grace is the real presence of the Holy Spirit that invites us to blindly see and nakedly feel the loveliness of God within the affectivity of our spirit.¹⁷ Our author emphasises that we must enter into the depths of our heart, behold the stirrings of love and “keep the stirring whole.” We must resist trying to observe the stirrings as an object, or dissect, or analyse the meaning of the stirring. We must be subjectively within the stirrings.

Stirrings of Love

True stirrings are always “plain.” They arise from God without cause, either from without or within.¹⁸ These heart stirrings are origin-less, transcendent, because they arise from the unmade, naked being of God. Sometimes stirrings can feel like they spring from God like a spark from coal, into our spirit,¹⁹ with all the power of a sudden spark to ignite and set fire our affections. Mostly though, stirrings have a meek, passive quality that is quietly, “deep and pleasing.”²⁰ Stirrings infuse a sense of: “great ease, true spiritual peace and a foretaste of endless rest.”²¹ Evocative adjectives, randomly applied throughout all his letters, help us further sensitize to the qualities of these divine stirrings. He describes “a meek blind stirring of love,”²² “a devout and pleasing stirring of love,”²³ “a secret love,”²⁴ “a perfect stirring of love,”²⁵ “a little blind love,”²⁶ “a meek blind stirring of love,”²⁷ “a true stirring,”²⁸ “a great stirring of love,”²⁹ “a liking stirring.”³⁰ All these delicately nuanced descriptors

¹⁴ There is a probable influence of Thomas Gallus here, who makes a distinction between the spiritual knowing that emerges from seeing compared to touching. Boyd Taylor Coolman, in *The Spiritual Senses: Perceiving God in Western Christianity*, Paul L. Gavrilyuk and Sarah Coakley eds. Cambridge University Press. Kindle Edition, 40, shows how in reflecting on Exodus, Thomas Gallus describes how God refused Moses’s request for face-to-face vision as in: ‘no one can see God and live’; but in 1 Corinthians, Paul contrasted the clouded knowledge of God ‘in a mirror darkly’ of this present life with the full ‘face to face’ vision of God in the life to come. Gallus resolves the difficulty with an appeal to a form of spiritual sensation: This [seraphic] refreshment does not occur through a mirror (speculum), but through the experience (experientiam) of divine sweetness, because taste and touch are not accomplished through a mirror..., even though scripture says 1 Cor. 13: 12: now we see through a mirror, John 1:18: No one ever sees God; [and] Exod. 33: 20: you will not see me and live, [Scripture] does not say: you will not taste God or touch God. Thomas describes a spiritually sensuous experience, couched in the language of taste and touch in contrast to intellectual or rational knowing analogous to physical sight, which allows for some form of perception of God.”

¹⁵ P 54.5-9.

¹⁶ *Book of Privy Counselling*, 155: 9-14

¹⁷ Wolfgang Riehle. *The Middle English Mystics*. Translated by Bernard Standring. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981, 104, affirms that in Middle English texts the language of the mystical senses is not simply metaphorical. They convey a spiritually felt sense of the presence of grace and yet, at the same time, draw us beyond the spiritual sense touch.

¹⁸ C 70: 23-24; 71:1.

¹⁹ C 22: 7-8.

²⁰ C 26: 9.

²¹ DS 76.18-20.

²² C 22:18.

²³ C 26: 9.

²⁴ C 34: 9.

²⁵ C 52:21.

²⁶ C 58:8.

²⁷ C 22: 18; 44: 20.

²⁸ DS 68:18.

characterize the natural, pleasurable, inviting, luminous, transcendent quality of a stirring. “It is marvellous the number of stirrings that may occur in the soul who is disposed to this work,” the dialogue continues, “as many as there are atoms in an hour.”³¹ Yet, in one stirring full of peace, we may suddenly and perfectly forget all created things.³² One stirring from the fire of love, sparks our heart, and draws us to be single heartedly present in the sovereign point of union in God. “Direct all your beholding into this meek stirring of love in your will,” he advises.³³ Notice how our beholding is directed into the stirring. The beholder beholds blindly, enters into the spiritually felt sense of the stirring, and is moved beyond, beyond into the origins of the stirring, into God. Within the depths of our spirit we apprehend through the oneing itself. The stirrings of love draw us into their origins in divine love, into an ineffable unknowing of the divine desire for us. We “know knittingly,”³⁴ we know from being knit within the depths of our spirit, in the knot of burning love, where our will is one with the divine will. Here we are one in love.

Thus we can say that with its origin in God, a stirring is an expression of the overflow of the ecstatic love of the Trinity, flooding our heart in love. It flows from the love of God, reveals the loveliness of God, and draws us into a deeper relationship of becoming one in love in God. A stirring is of love, about love, and for love. It points us towards love and results in our loving more freely and fully. “Take good keep of stirrings of love,”³⁵ our author invites. “Lean listily into this meek stirring of love in your heart, and follow it forever-after.” He advises. “It will be a guide in this life, and bring you to bliss in the other. It is the substance of all good living, and without it no good work may be begun or ended.”³⁶

False Stirrings

These ever trustworthy stirrings of love are in stark contrast to the false stirrings that occur in our conceptual mind and seek to attract our attention away from the ground of unknowing. Very early in the *Cloud of Unknowing*, this wise teacher warns of the emotional and psychological tricks that can plague our mind, once we decide to truly respond to the desire of God, and so he gives some helpful descriptions of false stirrings that can come and go as we seek to discern. Colourfully, he personifies these disturbing stirrings as like a fiend, who uses clever trickery to captures our attention and scatter our mind. The cause of scattering, he reminds us, is that we become embroiled in our thoughts, receive them and answer them, rather than simply notice thoughts and press them into a cloud of forgetting.³⁷ He has a very traditional emphasis on not engaging with thoughts as he knows that a diffuse, scattered mind is always confused and untrustworthy. Our author also warns against straining, or trying too hard to make a decision, or to be right. “Do not strain your heart rudely,” he says bluntly.³⁸ “Work more with a list then with brute strength. For the more listily, the more meekly

²⁹ P 50: 20.

³⁰ PC 166:14.

³¹ Also: “For even so many willing or desirings - and no more nor no fewer - may be and are in one hour in your will, as are atoms in one hour.” C 18:3-7.

³² C 22:11

³³ C 93: 11-12.

³⁴ This way of knowing “knittingly” is knowing that is beyond the curious searching of our wit. PC 144:3.

³⁵ C 22. 5.

³⁶ C 92. 14-17.

³⁷ C 27: 9-4.

³⁸ C 87:5- 6.

and spiritual. The more rudely, the more bodily and beastly. Therefore beware.”³⁹ He also cautions us to beware of false stirrings that masquerade under as an angel of light, warning: “it is necessary and helpful to know its quality and not to forget its doleful deceptions. For sometimes it will, that wicked cursed thing, change its likeness into an angel of light that it may, under the colour of virtue, do more harm.”⁴⁰ Any stirrings that have their source outside ourselves, or in our conceptual mind, that are demanding, impatient, or draw us away from our centre, are counter movements. These illusive stirrings always sow the seeds of discord, disharmony, even though they seem ever so holy, or fair at first glance.

Choose What is Hidden Between

Thus our wise teacher says that when we need to make a choice between two options, “I pray you, leave them both.”⁴¹ He urges us to leave the curious beholding and searching of our analytical mind which sees from within a dualistic framework and looks to see which is better. He then becomes decisively directive: “But do this! Set one decision in one hand and the other in the other hand and choose the thing which is hidden between.”⁴² He repeats: “God is hidden between them and may not be found in any of the works of the soul, but only by love in your heart.”⁴³ Trustworthy discernment will only be found in our heart, by the love of our heart. This directive to place one decision in one hand and one in the other and “choose the thing which is hidden between” is at the heart of this way of discernment. We choose “the thing hidden between” by entering the cloud of unknowing, drawing within into our heart, into the “deepest point of our spiritual beholding.”⁴⁴ The words “hidden between” hold the paradox of how in order to awaken into the mind of Good God only, we must allow ourselves to yield beyond the control of our conceptual conscious mind that sees us as separate from God, and drop into the “in-between” vast abyss-like void of unknowing. This liminal darkness of unknowing, dulls our discursive mind that sees us as separate from God’s desire, until blindly, nakedly, we are in the oneness of love in God, within the divine desire. This oneness in love is felt obscurely, unconsciously within our spirit, as a blind stirring of love. In leaving aside all decisions, closing down our conscious mind and lovingly entering into the dark ground of our heart, into God, the amorizing energies of Love arise from our unconscious depths in God. Love then take us beyond the alternatives of a dualistic response, into the shining wisdom of trinitarian creativity.

Love’s stirrings draw us into the ground of the threefold flow of Trinitarian consciousness, into the unitive movement of the Holy Spirit drawing us deeper, beyond the initial dualistic choice, beyond into enlightened wisdom. In these inner depths of our heart, we are one in spirit, one in the enflaming knot of love. Loving within the knitting of the union of our will, within the divine will, a spark springs from the divine being. This spark of enlightenment that emerges from this hidden ground of our oneness, where there are no dualisms, no opposites, is totally trustworthy as it arises from within the naked being of God. This is where we discern from within, the naked awareness of the flaming knot of love within us. In leaving all conceptual awareness in a cloud of forgetting, while

³⁹ C 87:5- 9.

⁴⁰ DS 85:16-20.

⁴¹ DS 71. 3-6.

⁴² DS 71. 6-9.

⁴³ DS 71.22-24.

⁴⁴ DS 72: 5-6.

blindly beholding and single pointedly piercing through the cloud of unknowing, into the point of our spirit, in the Holy Spirit, a heightened perceptivity emerges of our soul knit and oned to God in spiritual wisdom.⁴⁵ We choose God. The path we must follow emerges in the unknowing of oneing wisdom, with a surprisingly vivid clarity. This Wisdom, that flows from the divine depths, knitting and oneing within our spirit always has a free, humble, unknowing, quality about it, as we flow in harmony with the movement of the Holy Spirit within us.

This is the ground of creative freedom that Beatrice Bruteau speaks about that she identifies as essential for us to access if we are to actively participate in the incarnating of the Christ at this phase of our evolutionary journey. We recall her words: “So when we come into being as our experience of God’s union with us, or when we attain our destiny as an experience of union with God, what is happening in both cases are the two self-giving activities are confluent.”⁴⁶ In this convergence, in this oneing, we exist “as a unitary overflowing act.”⁴⁷ In these hidden depths of our oneing, where we exist as a unitary overflowing act, we can be confident of the wisdom that emerges and be a continual creative act of divine loving. The wisdom and eloquence of this humble author magnifies, as he creates a melodious and memorable passage about discerning from the stirrings within this hidden ground of love:

It is God for whom you should be still, if you should be still;
and for whom you should speak, if you should speak;
and for whom you should fast, if you should fast,
and for whom you should eat, if you should eat;
and for whom you should be alone, if you should be alone,
and for whom you should be in company, if you should be in company,
or whatever it may be.
For silence is not God, nor speaking is not God;
fasting is not God; nor eating is not God;
being alone is not God; nor is company God; nor any other contraries.⁴⁸

After dissolving all the dualisms of opposing choices, our author then takes us into the hidden ground of the mind, or consciousness of God, into the luminosity of Love’s oneing. Echoes abound of our being: “hidden in Christ in God” (Col3:3). His words rise from this hidden inner intimacy in one another:

God is hidden between them
and may not be found in any of the works of the soul,
but only by love in your heart.
God may not be known by reason.
God may not be thought, held nor traced by understanding.
But God may be loved and chosen with the true lovely will of your heart.
Choose God; and you are silently speaking and speakingly silent,
fastingly eating and eating fastingly

⁴⁵ PC 145.3-6.

⁴⁶ Beatrice Bruteau, *The Grand Option*, Indiana: University of Notre Dame, 2001,75-76.

⁴⁷ *Grand Option*,116.

⁴⁸ DS 71:13-22.

and so forth...⁴⁹

In this hidden ground, within the heart-womb, of Love's eternally spacious heart-womb, we indwell within an endless flow of being in one another, within an abiding, a union, a oneing that flows into every particle of our being. This oneing is like an in-spiriting, serene flow of light, disclosing a sense of being light infused matter. In this exquisite being hidden within, perception arises from within the secret of inner silence, the privy wisdom of innermost stillness, and flows into the point, where our discursive mind turns into the mind of my heart, as it turns into the hidden ground of Christ. Here, we are at home in the ground of our essential being. When we enter into this secret hiding place within our heart, into the unity of the hidden point of our oneing, we yield beyond into pure presence in one another. In this creative-union of our shared identity, we are the oneing.

And so these delightful, harmonious words, that give voice to unutterable aspirations of love, call forth what is deeply hidden within our spirit as it sings of the joy of this lovely choosing of God. This wholistic consciousness of always choosing God in love, shifts our sense of what is important, making our oneness in God the critical central principle. This means that any decisions we make should enable us to evolve in becoming an expression of the divine, becoming more one, more whole in Christ, in God. "It is God," "choose God" rings like chimes in the cosmos. He affirms:

such a lovely choosing of God, wisely letting go and seeking God with the pure will of a true heart, between all choices, leaving them both when they come, and offering them to the point and prick of your spiritual beholding is the worthiest tracing and seeking of God that may be had or learned in this life.⁵⁰

Therefore the purpose of discernment is to single heartedly focus on the point of our oneness in God so that we may have the mind of good God only. We seek to awaken our heart mind in God and to respond ourselves with a stirring of love. Both Julian and the Cloud author invite us to be the oneing that creates communion and awakens communion consciousness.

Implications of Discerning from Oneness for Spiritual Direction

The gift of discerning wisdom is so desperately need at this time in our evolution, as we seem so caught in a dualistic mind-set that creates a demarcation between our everyday consciousness and our heart awareness. These writings of Julian and the Cloud author take us beyond this level of conceptual consciousness into the heart-mind of God, into the hidden ground of oneing awareness. Though there are many consequences for discernment and the role of the spiritual director in supporting discernment, I will draw five essential implications.

First, this way of discernment invites us to enter into the ground of our heart and awaken the luminous mind of our heart, with all its sensitivity that arises from our being one in Christ in the oneing of the Trinity. This means that all discernment must take place with the context of contemplation. Our role is to cultivate a silent, still, loving awareness that naturally arises from the ground of our heart and to become more stable in seeing from within the creativity of being oned in the oneing. Thus, we only know this oneing, by being the oneing, being a flow of love, unmade, made and given love.

⁴⁹ DS 71:22-72:1-2.

⁵⁰ DS 72: 3-7.

Second, intentional kenosis is critical in discernment. Our desire to choose God in all things must always be our only motivation. Judy Cannato drawing on the research of Lynn McTaggart reminds us that, “the most essential ingredient in creating our universe is the consciousness that observes it.”⁵¹ Quantum physicists are telling us that a subatomic particle remains in a state of probability until an observer is involved and the observer helps to bring about that which is observed. This suggests that our desire to choose God, and our preparedness to live in this loving kenosis of living from the ground of our heart and being an expression of the divine mind, the divine desire, helps to foster the ongoing revelation of the divine desire for ourselves and our world. Our intention emits light waves (biophoton omissions), that morph, create patterns of energy, and form a morphogenic field of light and love. Our intention to choose God continues the creativity of the divine incarnating in creation.

Third, these wise mystics highlight the difference in the energy field between oneing and scattering. There is a stark contrast between the controlled analysis of the conscious mind that seeks to distinguish and separate, compared to the deep, dark blind beholding in the hidden ground of love. In this way of discerning choices are made beyond conscious awareness in the ground of the stirrings of the love of the Trinity. Beatrice Bruteau speaks so powerfully of the illusive nature of the discursive-mind that is innately scattered, diffused and reactive, that controls our environment, while our personal and collective heart-mind frequently lies dormant. In this highly established negation cycle, Beatrice explains, we see and make choices through the dualism of subject-object perception. Moreover, although we can observe a situation, examine possible desirable outcomes and objectively choose amongst alternatives, the stimulation comes from within our discursive mind, activating what Beatrice identifies as a “choice freedom,” it looks like we are choosing, but we are blind to the categories that limit our capacity to choose freely. This “choice freedom,” is always limited and though it manifests under the guise of discernment, it is not discernment. This choice freedom arises from a subject-object mentality, abstractly, from outside our centre hidden in Christ, in God.⁵² Without even being consciously aware, we find ourselves locked in this negativity and impotent within the reaction net of the karma trap of reproducing unhealthy patterns of behaviour.⁵³ This negation cycle perpetuates a pattern of distinguishing, excluding and dominating.

Fourth, the Cloud author encourages us: “Blissful is the one who finds this oneing wisdom that abounds in this glorious working, with a lovely, wise and prudent spirit.”⁵⁴ Both he and Julian invite us to live in this bliss, to be luminous beings who glow with oneing wisdom that arises from the ground of the threefold flow of Trinitarian consciousness. This triune unitive flow draws us beyond dualistic choices into the harmony of ever creative enlightened wisdom. Choosing love from within the freedom of the union of our will, within the divine will is so full of the evolutionary potential of being and living as a new creation. The spark of enlightenment that emerges from the fire of divine love is totally trustworthy.

⁵¹ Judy Connato, *Field of Compassion*, Notre Dame: Sorin Books, 2010, 135.

⁵² Beatrice Bruteau, “Teilhard and Creative Freedom,” *Prabuddah Bharata*, 1981, 457.

⁵³ See, GO, 79.

⁵⁴ PC 145: 15-19. See “Happy the one who discovers wisdom, who gains discernment: gaining her is more rewarding than silver, more profitable than gold.” (Prov. 3:13-14). Cf. “My child hold to sound judgment and to prudence, do not let them out of your sight; they will prove the life of your soul. (Prov. 3:21-22a).

Finally, In Teilhard's *Human Energy*, he asks the question: "Could we not conceive of a universe inclined forward and supported by the birth of a still potential unity in the future?"⁵⁵ And he wonders is not possible for us to already experience the presence of this union. This way of discernment, that we see in Julian and the Cloud author, takes us into this ground of our original union, into the creativity of the future of our potential fuller oneness in Christ, in God. It is in this ground of the heart that we discover a confidence that we can be the union that imparts flowing light. We can be a hollow heart-womb of creative freedom that loves as we choose beyond dualisms. This way of discerning from within the hidden depths of God invites spiritual companions to encourage directees to centre in the ground of their hearts, enter into the subjectivity of the divine beholding, into the sensations of the divine stirrings within our hearts and to follow the movements that draw us into God. All stirrings that flow from the divine desire are imbued with a sense of divine intimacy, freedom and personal well-being as they create more oneness, more unity, more wholeness in God.

May we pray with the prophet Daniel, "And now we put our whole heart, into following you, into loving you, and seeking your face." Daniel 3:41

⁵⁵ Teilhard de Chardin, *Human Energy*, London: Collins, 1969, 69-70.