



Growing into God: A Beginner's Guide to Christian Mysticism

John R Mabry

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For many people, the word mysticism conjures up occult, secretive rituals held after midnight in some dark cave. But true mysticism isn't at all sinister or secretive, says author John Mabry, an Anglican-rite Congregational minister. In fact, mysticism is at the heart of an authentic Christian life. It is nothing more and nothing less than the pursuit-and enjoyment-of union with God, which is the goal of all Christian spirituality. Christian mysticism is the discipline of growing the soul into God--shedding illusory identities, deepening prayer, seeing God in all things, and acting as Christ in the world.

Mabry's great passion is to bring theology to everyday life by explaining complex ideas in everyday language that anyone can understand and find useful. In *Growing into God*, he "demystifies" mysticism, providing a friendly and accessible entry point to some of the teachings, practices, and experiences of the Christian mystical tradition. Mabry explores the classic mystical journey, which begins with the Awakening of a unitive consciousness that experiences everything as Divine and interconnected. The journey continues with Purgation, in which we empty ourselves of illusion; Illumination, in which we begin to see God in all things and all things in God; and, finally, Union, in which we marry our lives with God's life. Our hands become God's hands, our lips become God's lips, our touch becomes God's touch, in order to bring help, comfort, and healing to the world.

,p>Along the way, and with an entertaining teacher's clarity, Mabry recounts the stories of many Christian mystics, including inspiring quotations. He also enriches each chapter with questions and answers to simplify points as well as experiential practices to help readers embark upon the mystical journey themselves

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