

Turning to the Mystics



T.S. Eliot

Session 3

with James Finley and Kirsten Oates

Jim Finley: Greetings, I'm Jim Finley. Welcome to Turning to the Mystics. Greetings everyone, and welcome to our time together turning for guidance to the teachings found in TS Eliot's poem, Four Quartets. We're now turning to the third of the four poems, which is titled, Dry Salvages.

And in the explanatory note in my edition explains that Eliot, because his parents, when they left England and settled in America, in the summers they vacationed in New England. And in New England off the coast of Cape Ann, Massachusetts, there's a small cropping of rocks in the distance, which are called the Salvages, and it has a little beacon or a little lighthouse in it to warn the ships going by so they don't crash and sink on the rocks.

And so he's going to use that as the place for the poem around time and eternity. And really what the poem is about deeper down are the ways in which we in time, especially in the time of technology and engineering and achieving things, it's really about the ways that we interface with the primordial, with the primitive. There's a saying, that nature is God's first scripture. It's the world.

And so there's the primordial world and then there's the effect of technology and engineering and science about being exiled from the primordial and also the primordial depths of ourself. That's really the poem. And how do we be healed from that exile? So the poem begins first stanza.

I don't know much about gods, but I think the river is a strong brown God. Sullen, untamed, intractable, patient to some degree, at first recognized as a frontier, useful, untrustworthy as a conveyor of commerce. Then only a problem confronting the builder of bridges. The problem once solved, the brown God is almost forgotten by the dwellers in cities ever however implacable, keeping his seasons and rages destroyer reminder of what men choose to forget. Unhonored, unpropitiated by worshipers of the machine, but waiting, watching and waiting.

I'd like to reflect on this. It's really true that in the ability to build bridges over the river, traffic can move freely, and once the bridges are built, the river is forgotten and moves on. In terms of conditions of comfort and practicality, it's true. But not completely forgotten because the river has its own primordial time in which floods occur and homes and streets and so on just filled with water, destroyer, this way. And we're shocked when that happens. And then it drains off until it happens the next time.

And so he's talking about this kind of estrangement from the primordial, but it's not just the strange way in which technology really keeps us safe from the destructive powers of the primordial, and it could not just be water here, it could also be tornadoes, earthquakes, fires. The realm of nature reminds us we're not in complete control.

There's a deeper problem that he sees in this. And the deeper problem is what happens is what's not recognized by worshipers of the machine, but the primordial force of nature of the river is waiting, watching and waiting. His rhythm was present in the nursery bedroom in the rank ailanthus of the April dooryard in the smell of grapes on the autumn table.

So, I want to reflect on this for a minute. That really the infant's bedroom is primordial because the infant is primordial, and that's why I use this image. I've used it before in these

reflections where a mother is holding her newborn infant and she holds it, it's so limited. It can't sit up by itself, dress itself, feed itself, talk, anything. It's like the essence of limit. And yet, with the imperial strength with which her infant is clasping her extended little finger, it all but carries her heart away.

She knows that if she were to die in the act of saving the infant, she would die in the truth. What's also true is this infant in the limitless nature of its limits reveals her to herself as capable of seeing that, which is the primordial. And she also knows underneath the layers of all the things she is able to do, there's also a limitless limit within her to see the sacred that never dies. We're touching on a big theme now we'll be looking at in further sessions with later mystics, William Blake, the poet, the Jesuit poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins on beauty and nature.

He says he has a poem. He says, "If you're holding a leaf in your hand, know that of all the trillions of leaves throughout the whole world, only the leaf you're holding is that leaf. And the leaf is saying in effect, 'I came here to be me,'" inside of Duns Scotus.

And we also see it in Martin Heidegger. The people on their farms in Germany, he said after the war there were so many refugees after the war. But on the farmland, there's people sitting in their farmhouse that the father lived in, the grandfather, the grandfather, the great-grandfather, great-grandfather... And the primordial darkness is falling about the house, but they don't even know it because they're huddled around their radio.

They were exiled from technology by the primordial depth, which really is the divinity of the concreteness of everything. It takes it deeper. The river is within us, the sea is all around us. The sea is the land's edge also. The granite into which it reaches, the beach is where it tosses its hints of earlier another creation.

See, the river is within us. We have our body, we're doing fine, but then we get sick. Where we fall down and we have to go to the hospital, where we get a terminal diagnosis. So here the primordial mystery of the body, the primordial, is within us. And we're exiled from the primordial depths of it all.

What's wrong? Not that we shouldn't try to fix it, we should. Good luck with that. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. Eventually it doesn't because we all die. So although eventually the body that is in time dies by discovering and sitting deeply with the fact that it's endlessly ending, we can come upon within the beloved, within ourselves, that which never ends, like the divinity of ourself.

And the poem is really inviting us to be stabilized in this sensitivity, which is a meditative state to be conscious not to be in time. This hints of earlier creation. So, we're walking along the beach. The starfish, the things we see there walking along the shoreline, the horseshoe crab, the whale's backbone, the pools where it offers to our curiosity, the more delicate algae and the sea anemone. It tosses up our losses, the torn seine, the shattered lobster pot, the broken oar, the gear of foreign dead men.

The sea has many voices, many gods and many voices. The salt is on the briar rose, the fog is in the fir trees. The sea howl and the sea yell are different voices often heard together. I'm going to skip down some lines now.

Are all sea voices and the heaving groaner, and a groaner is a whistling buoy that floats in the water to warn ships about the shoreline and so on, rounded homeward and the sea guilt and under the oppression of the silent fog, the tolling of the bell out on, clang, clang, a warning about the rocks and the oceans. Measures time, not our time rung by the unhurried ground swallow, but a time older than the time of chronometers.

A chronometer, looked this up, are clocks that keep steady time in the midst of movements. So they're used on ships at sea. So there is a time that's older than the time kept by what? Like a timeless time, older than the time counted by anxious... Now he's going to bring it now to an experience of meditative mind.

Older than the time counted by anxious, worried women lying awake, calculating the future, trying to unweave, unwind, unravel and piece together the past and the future between midnight and dawn when the past is all deception and the future futureless before the morning watch when time stops and time is never ending. And the groundswell that is and was in the beginning clangs the bell.

I like to reflect on this. It's the experience of insomnia. Let's say you're lying there at night, and also it's women lying at night worrying about their husbands or the sons out in the open sea, about returning, and she can't sleep. And the ego in time knowing the sleep that is missing would like to get back to sleep. But here's the thing, sleep is primordial, sleep is primordial.

But here's also the inability to sleep is primordial. It's the primordial nature of your own body, and our ego and time, understandably we don't like this, we don't like it. But instead of resisting it, we would quietly listen to it. It's the gate of eternity, and that's the meditative state. It's like the discomfort of the very place that lets us go deeper if only we would give it a chance to take us there.

I was giving a retreat somewhere and a person talked about insomnia, "Never waste a sleepless night." He called it "power lounging," this way. Insomnia, sleep is so mysterious, it's primordial, but not being able to sleep is primordial. So if instead of trying to get to sleep, we would line the dark and think about the mystery of insomnia, like insomnia and you would ponder your insomnia, you'd probably be asleep in three minutes.

So it's like to give up the resistance to the deeper place which carries us beyond the edges of sequential time. See, it's where time stops, namely when the dawn comes, the time and night stops, you get out of bed. But the time this stops doesn't stop because then you go through the time of the day. It goes on and on and on.

Part two of the poem, section two, where is there an end of it? The soundless wailing, the silent withering of autumn flowers dropping their petals and remaining motionless. Where is there an end to the drifting wreckage? The prayer of the bone on the beach, the unprayable prayer of the calamitous enunciation. There is no end but addition the trailing consequence of further days and hours while emotion takes to itself the emotionless years of living among the breakage, what was believed in as the

most reliable, and therefore, the fittest for enunciation.

There is the final addition, the failing pride or resentment at failing powers. The unattached devotion which might pass for devotionless and a drifting boat with a slow leakage. The silent listening, the undeniable clamor of the bell of the last enunciation. I want to reflect on this.

See where is there an end to all that is perpetually ending and our struggles with it? It never ends. It's the endless nature of endlessness of everything ending in the midst of our toil, and emotion takes to itself the emotionless, because when we sit very deeply with it's beyond affect. That is, there's no emotion that's adequate to it.

And also an unattached devotion, which could pass for devotionless, it could be as if you don't care, but it's an unattached devotion. Namely, it's a deep kind of in the eternal depths like a devotional sincerity in the midst of the eternity of the passing away of everything that lays bare that in us it never passes away. And a drifting boat with a slow leakage.

Zen Buddhists talk about what's it like being a human being? It's out in the middle of the ocean and our little rowboat and the boat's leaking, see, it's going down and that's us. The silent listening to the undeniable clamor of the bell, the last enunciation, the ending of everything inevitable ending on and on it goes. I'm going to skip down a few stanzas.

There is no end of it. The voiceless wailing, no end to the withering of withered flowers to the movement of pain that is painless and motionless, the drift of the sea and the drifting wreckage, the bones prayer to death. It's God. Only the hardly, barely prayable prayer of the one Enunciation. And there, enunciation is capitalized, because it's the angel Gabriel announcing to marry the birth of Christ. And when the enunciation was used earlier is in lowercase letters.

Next stanza, it seems as one becomes older that the past has another pattern and ceases to be a mere sequence or even development. The latter a partial fallacy encouraged by superficial notions of evolution, which becomes the popular mind a means of disowning the past, progress. The moments of happiness, not the sense of well-being, fruition, fulfillment, security or affection or even a very good dinner. But the sudden illumination, we had the experience but miss the meaning.

There was the experience but we missed the meaning, and this is the meaning, that in the very cutting edge of that which even now is passing away, is being laid bare that which never passes away. We're experiencing it but we miss the meaning of what we're experiencing until in a state and consciousness when we're not in time, which are these moments of meditative awakening and which in sitting with the poem, he's trying to invite us to stay there. The poetic elegance of this depth dimension, of the eternity, the passing away of all that never passes away, and to approach the meaning restores the experience.

But if we look back at the past experience and the light of this meaning, it restores the true nature of the experience, because we see it in the light of eternity. Skipping

down a few lines. This is not the experience that one life only but of many generations not forgetting something that's probably quite ineffable.

This isn't just us, it's always been this way. Down through the Middle Ages, down through the centuries, people were living their lives, now long gone. Just like someday we'll be long gone. Not only will we be gone 10,000 years from now, but the people who remembered us will be gone 10,000 years from now. But then also they'll be gone. It goes on endlessly this way, and yet spiritually none of us are gone because nobody dies spiritually.

The backward look behind the assurance of recorded history, the backward half-look over the shoulder towards the primitive terror. Now, we come to discover that the moments of agony, whether or not due to misunderstanding, having hoped for the wrong things or dreaded the wrong things, is not in question, are likewise permanent. When I look back at my life, there were things that I was hoping for, but having grown older over time, I was hoping for the wrong things.

Because they were perpetuating the very thing I was trying to be free from and I was dreading the wrong thing, because the very thing that I dreaded, and no wonder I dreaded it. It was the very thing that set me free when I passed through it. And that's going on right now in this moment. With such permanence as time has, we appreciate this better in the agony of others, nearly experienced evolving ourselves than in our own.

When we love someone and our empathy with them, when they're suffering and we see their fragility, it helps us to see this. Because in the fragility that's very real, we see shining out in our love for them that which never dies.

III, I'm moving down to the next part. I sometimes wonder if that is what Krishna meant, among other things, or one way of putting the same thing that the future is a faded song, a royal rose or a lavender spray of wistful regret for those who are not yet here to regret. Pressed between yellow leaves of a book that has never been opened and the way up is the way down, the way forward is the way back. You cannot face it steadily. But this thing is sure that time is no healer. The patient is no longer here.

I would now like to stop because here, he's referring to Krishna and what he's referring to is the Bhagavad Gita. So I'd like to read this passage in the Bhagavad Gita, when these beautiful mystical passages in the Hindu tradition and the Upanishads. What's the Bhagavad Gita is about is a person in a chariot is going into battle, because of a conflict of the clans in India at the time, there's going to be this battle.

And with him in the chariot is the Lord Krishna. And so the first part of the poem is he asked Krishna to lead him out into the middle of the battlefield so he can look around to see what's happening. And here, it's his own relatives, his own family, his own cousins and family, the clan members. And he said, "I don't want to do it. I don't want to kill these people and I don't want to die either," which is understandable. He's in time.

And then here's Krishna's answer to him. "Krishna said to Arjuna as if smiling, 'You mourn those Arjuna who do not deserve mourning. The learned mourn neither the living nor the dead. The words only sound wise. Do not think that I did not exist. That you do not exist, that all these kings do not exist. And it is not that we shall ever cease to exist in the future.'

“To the embodied Atman, the embodied Atman, the Hindu God, a Brahman, Vishnu and Shiva that Vishnu sends avatars, sends messengers to Earth to reveal the eternity of time to people. And Krishna is an avatar of Vishnu. They also believe Jesus is an avatar of Vishnu, like an incarnate presence of the divine. To the embodied Atman, boyhood, maturity and old age continue imperceptibly and just that happens with the acquisition of a new, this has not confused the steady soul.

“Heat, cold, pain, pleasure, these spring from sensual contact, Arjuna, they begin and they end. They exist for the time being. You have to learn to put up with them. The man whom these cannot distract is the man who is steady in pain and pleasure is the man who achieves serenity. The untrue never is. The true never isn't. The knowers of truth know this, and the self that pervades all things is imperishable.

“Nothing corrupts this imperishable self. Once I see,” I'll put it in Christian language, “that I'm see that I'm created by God in the image and likeness of God. I'm the beloved, that God contemplated me in Christ before the origins of the universe. And for all of eternity, God will continue to contemplate me in Christ, in eternity, in divinis, in God.

“Therefore, the very mystery of myself, the divinity of myself, that I'm subsisting in God like light subsists in flame, it never ends. So, I discover that which never ends in the deep acceptance of that would ceaselessly ending. So don't be afraid.”

So it was so interesting, he's saying, “Look, go to battle. Don't worry how many people you kill, nobody dies. And don't worry if you're going to die, you don't die either.” Because the atman is eternal, as long as the war is just. That is, as long as you're fighting for a good cause, fight well. It's honorable, it's holy, don't worry about it.

But notice, for Jesus practiced nonviolence, see, the one who lives by the sword, dies by the sword. He refused to defend himself, and so Dr. Martin Luther King, see following Gandhi to overcome the enemy with self-suffering, sincerity and truth, Gandhi practiced. That so inspired Martin Luther King and the movement that started the whole Civil Rights movement of the beloved community. “You can't make us stop loving you,” you say to the people, the white people that are hurting you.

So it's very different but it's very different in the same ulterior understanding, don't fight because the people that are doing this to you, God's infinitely in love with every one of them. And if you fight, you become part of the problem. Don't do that. And the other side of it, in vita, like everything is God, like the self is boundaryless. Don't worry about how many people die, don't you see? Nobody dies, and that's what it means to be awakened at Veda.

Now, he goes to a specific moment in time as an example of this, where people are caught in time. There's something he's inviting them to see. When the train starts and the passengers are settled to fruit periodicals and business letters and those who saw them off have left the platform, their faces relax from grief into relief to the sleepy rhythm of a hundred hours. Fair forward travelers not escaping from the past into different lives or into any future.

You are not the same people who left that station or who will arrive at any terminus. While the narrowing rails slide together behind you, watching the furrow that widens behind you,

you shall not think the past is finished or the future is before us. At nightfall in the rigging and the ariel is a voice descending though not to the ear, the murmuring shell of time and not in any language.

I like to reflect on this. So let's say you get on the train and you're going to go off on this journey. Don't think that you are who you were, the person who got on the train, and don't think you used to be the you that got on the train and you no longer are. And don't think that you're the you who's going to arrive and get off the train and don't think you're other than the you that's going to get off the train.

See, the passageless passage of time, see fair forward traveler into the timelessness of the present moment that never ends. I use this image before, I'm going to do it again here poetically, that if we understand the present moment as the way the moment concretely is right now. So if you would take a picture of me with my hands held in a certain position, click, and that's the present, that we cannot make the present last as it yields to what we call the future, namely as I move my hands down.

We cannot make the moment last as it yields to what we call the future. And in doing so it's becoming what we call the past, but the not lasting moment of the present moment forever lasts. The Buddhists say it's like a flame that burns through the night, all through the night it's one flame, but second by second it never is the same flame. The passageless passage of time to see the eternity that never passes away in the midst of everything passing away.

Part four, I was jumping down to part four, I'm thinking now of the image of the Dry Salvages and the beacon, but now he's going to use an image of Mary, mother of Jesus, lady who shrine stands on the promontory, pray for all those who are in ships, those whose business has to do with fish and those concerned with every lawful traffic and those who conduct them.

Repeat a prayer also on behalf of women who have seen their sons or husbands setting forth and now returning. "Figlia del tuo figlio," Queen of Heaven, and that's from Dante, *The Divine Comedy*. That there's pictures of Mary and it says that Mary is the child of the child that she's holding. In this sense, that Jesus as incarnate person, the historical Jesus, it's her child.

But Jesus is the second person of the Trinity. God is her father. The child that she's holding is her father. She's being fathered by the child that she's holding and that's us too, so the intermingling of time and eternity. Queen of Heaven also pray for those who were in ships and ended their voyage on the sand in the sea's lips or in the dark throat, which will not reject them or wherever cannot reach them, the sound of the sea bells perpetual angelus.

The angelus is a prayer that was she said three times a day like a bell. When I was in the monastery, we said the Angelus. So when the Angelus rings in the morning, there's a prayer, and the angel appeared unto Mary like the enunciation. Then you say the Hail Mary, and the word became flesh and dwelt among us. And you say the Hail Mary. Then there's a third phrase, then you say the Hail Mary. Then there's a prayer, and you do that three times a day.

So it's like the timelessness of time, like the eternity of time, the clanging of the bell tolling through time. So when I was in the monastery, when we said the Angelus, we turned

towards the church, knelt down on the floor and bowed over and touched our knuckles to the floor. And we all bowed over and said... So if you're out in the fields picking strawberries and the Angelus rang, you bowed over and touched the...

You said the Angelus in the middle of the strawberry patch. There was a lot of woods surrounded the monastery and there was a forest fire. And Merton had us go as a novices to fight the forest fire with shovels and so on to stop it. And as we were out beating away the flame, we heard the Angelus ringing and the tower clock of the monastery, he says, "See that, kneel down."

So we all knelt down, bowed over, touched our knuckles to the floor as the flames were raging, saying the Angelus, that's the eternity of time passing this way. It's a great moment.

V. Last section. To communicate with Mars, Mars is the God of war. To communicate with Mars, converse with spirits. To report the behavior of the sea monster, describe the horoscope, haruspicate or scry. Observe disease and signatures. Evoke biography from the wrinkles of the palm and tragedy from fingers.

Release almonds by sortilege or tea leaves. Riddle the inevitable with playing cards, fiddle with pentagrams or dissect recurrent image into pre-conscious terrors to explore the womb or tomb or dreams. All these are usual pastimes and drugs and features of the press and always will be. Some of them, especially whether on the shores of Asia or on the edge ware road, men's curiosity searches past and future.

So horoscopes, pentagrams, palm reading, fingerprints, all these things are trying to decipher what the future's going to happen or how to decode the past. I'm going to jump down now a few sentences, but to apprehend the point of intersection of the timeless with time is an occupation for the saint. No occupation either, but something given and taken in a lifetime's death in love.

I'd like to reflect on this. We're always trying to figure out what's going to happen in the future. We're always trying to explain the past, but the intersection of time and eternity is the occupation of the saint and not an occupation either. It's a calling. So I'd like to share this image.

Imagine we draw horizontal line. We were doing this in the earlier segments also, that we draw a horizontal line and that's our experience of ourself and ego consciousness and our passage through time. And imagine that right in the middle of this passage from birth to death, there's the vertical line of eternity that intersects the horizontal line. As a matter of fact, it's pouring itself out as the reality, the horizontal line itself, as it manifests in eternity.

And so you're living your life in sequential time, but in moments of consciousness and moments of meditation and moments of deep prayer, there's a moment where the silent, attentive prayer can become so deep and quiet, you pass through the intersection of time and eternity. It's the place prior to the difference between time and eternity, which is a state of enlightenment or a state of divine awareness.

And as you pass through it out the other side, you go, "Wow, what was that?" And if you're not careful, you get caught up in time again, like it never happened. But what can also

happen is this, you're so taken by the depth and beauty of the intersection prior to the difference. You want to find a way to find someone to help you live there, because you get a sense that, actually, it isn't in that moment something more was given.

In that moment, I taste what every moment this moment is. This is the intersection of time and eternity. So how can I learn to be habitually stabilized in the timelessness of time? In the divinity, Jesus says, "You have eyes to see and you do not see." There's your God-given capacity to see your God-given godly nature and you don't see it.

This is a source of all your sorrow. This is a source of all your fear. This is a source of all your confusion. This is a source of all the traumatizing things you do yourself and to each other. And so our prayer is Lord, that I might see. Lord, that I might see through my eyes where you saw in everything that you saw, the divinity of the immediacy of everything passing away, it never passes away, which is the end of sorrow. It's the end of peace.

How can I do this? And that's lectio, that's the prayer. I cannot make the moment... We are serendipitously quickened. But I can choose the stance that offers the least resistance to being overtaken by what we can. We cannot attain it, because there's no it to it. But in the deep acceptance, we're powerless to attain it. It attains us in our inability to attain it, which is the gift of tears, is the quickening.

And this is where this poem is a prayer because the poem is trying to hold us there, and the unfigure outable nonlinear fullness of things, just sit and live with this. Listen to it, like to befriend it and walk with it and let it have its way with us.

For most of us there is only the unattended moment, the moment in and out of time. The distraction fit, lost in a shaft of sunlight, the wild time unseen where the winter lightning, that could flash us forth here and there, where we're already late for the meeting. We don't even stop long enough to see that which never passes away. Where the waterfall or music heard so deeply, that it is not heard at all but you are the music while the music lasts.

Son of the Cross talks about silent music, Meister Eckhart, he says using this image from Reiner Sherman on Eckhart. He says imagine you go to a concert and in the concert you're sitting there looking around, you're settled. So you're in time.

And then the violinist starts to play and the violinist is so lost and giving himself or herself over to the music, is they're channeling it. It's not coming from the musician. They're surrendered over and they're channeling the beauty of the music. And you, if you listen, you become so enchanted and so surrendered over, that the violinist so given over and you so given over to the listening.

It's no longer true that the violinist is on one side and you're the listener on the other. There's only the song that enraptures us, and that's us and God, while the music lasts. We are the music. We are the song. God sings this way. And so the whole poem is that we might take a moment of time, which is the timer sitting with this poem, we might take a moment of time to settle down into the timelessness of the eternal love of God.

That's ribbon through and through and through the timeless nature of time, the eternity of our life as the beloved. Or the waterfall or the music heard so deeply is not heard at all. But

you are the music while the music lasts. There are only hints and guesses, hints followed by guesses, and the rest is prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action.

The hint half-guessed, the gift half-understood is incarnation. Yes, you know what... It's like a guess and it's half understood. But the intimacy of my half-understanding is the incarnation of what I don't quite understand. God's the infinity of the intimacy of the inability to not quite understand the holiness of it because it's unfigure-utable. Because it's boundaryless in all directions.

Here, the impossible union of spheres of evidence is actual. That is the impossible union of time and eternity of the uncreated and the created is actual. Here, the past and the future are conquered and reconciled, here, and what is the here? The here is a moment we're sincerely given over to the intimacy of what we can't grasp, we can't attain, but it's unexplainably attaining us in our inability to attain it, and we rest in the quiet certainty in our heart that is true.

And right there, like the holiness of that. Where action, where otherwise movement or that which is only move. See, if there's only that which is move, which is creation. God's the unmoved mover. When God said, "Let there be light," God begins the beginning. But to begin the beginning, God had to be there before the beginning to be begin the beginning.

But it's the beginningless beginning, because every moment is the virginal newness of the beginninglessness of God. Beginning what? The newness of this present moment. It's like the eternity of now this way endlessly. And it has in it no source of movement because it is itself the essence of movement itself. This without a source... It's close to Buddhism too.

Driven by mnemonic sonic powers and right action is freedom. Right action is an important phrase from Buddhism. Now what does right mean? It means it's right and effective and awakening nirvana. So what is the action that's right? It's the action that awakens the timelessness of time. So what is that action? We might say it in very broad terms, all things considered, what's the most loving thing I can do right now for my body, my mind, this person that I love, this animal, my community, this moment of prayer, all things considered. And that's right action.

And I'm going to incarnate it by committing myself to it with love, the timelessness of love is freedom. It's freedom from past and future also. For most of us, this is the aim never here to be realized. We never quite get there for most of us, like it's right ahead of us. But it is the holiness of the sincerity of seeking it for most of us. Never here to be realized.

We're only undefeated because we have gone on trying. The only reason we're not defeated is we haven't given up. That's why we're not defeated. But we're not going to give up in what we're not able to do for most of us. But there are some who have been graced with a great liberation of being undefeated in the unfolding of the eternal fullness, unveiling itself and giving itself to us.

Merton said it beats in our very blood whether he want it to or not. And there's a moment, not just where we're fleetingly graced that it's true, but there are those who are habitually established like the mystical.

I also think this one turned to TS Eliot as a mystic teacher. I think when we're in the presence of an awakened... Like we sense in the depth of his voice that he didn't get this out of books. So in the presence of the teacher, we know our heart has not deceived us, because we're sitting in the presence of someone in whom it's been realized. And if we sit with the sincerity in which this master or in the presence of lives, what might unfold in us is what's obviously unfolded in the master. And this is the unfolding of this realization within ourselves.

We content at the last, if our temporal reversion nourish. That is, if we're willing in time to keep revising what we thought it was, endlessly. Not too far from the yew tree, the life of significant soil and the yew tree are as large trees, poisonous, and it was often seen because it's poisonous as a death and resurrection. So they would often plant them around cemeteries.

So the oneness of death and life in the yew tree, and not too far from the yew tree, the life of significant soil that is the soil out of which we live our life, out of this timeless, eternal mystery of the unfolding of our lives and of all things. And so we'll end with meditation.

Again. We'll sit for one minute, but on your own at home, sit as long as you're moved to do so. So I invite you to sit still, sit straight, fold your hands and bow and repeat after me, "Be still and know I am God, be still and know I am, be still and know, be still, be."

And bow.

We will slowly say the Lord's prayer together. Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Mary, Mother of Contemplatives, pray for us. St. John of the Cross, pray for us, Julian of Norwich, pray for us. Blessings til next time.

Thank you for listening to this episode of Turning to the Mystics, a podcast created by the Center for Action and Contemplation. We're planning to do episodes that answer your questions. So if you have a question, please email us at podcasts@cac.org or send us a voicemail. All of this information can be found in the show notes. We'll see you again soon.