



7. An Evolving Spirituality: Mysticism

Barbara Rossing

A transcendent moment that, briefly, banishes every dividing line of tradition and practice, leaving us in a boundary-less space...sacred space... shared only with the sense of the Divine presence and the Mystery that we associate with that presence.

For me [Rossing] such moments have happened most in nature

Can also happen in moments of pain and vulnerability, or breaking bread with another person... that deep "ah ha" experience of glimpsing the very heart of God

We rarely find such thin places in the "reasoning" part of us

Megan McKenna

Hubble telescope pictures have changed the way we look at the world!

97.9% of the universe is invisible

"What the hell do we know about anything?" (Carl Sagan)

"Certainty is heresy" (Karl Rahner)

When we forget that we're immersed in mystery, everything gets out of whack!

Philip Clayton

What would an evolutionary spirituality look like?

Jan Phillips

Spirituality based on a commitment to oneness, unity - an evolved sense of spirituality

Commitments would be formed out of regard for all of creation and the cosmos - even parts that can't be seen or understood

Willing to live one's life out of reverence, in adoration and awe for the beauty that's around one's life

Gretta Vosper

Inclusive language

Reimagining God - different images for the Divine

Michael Morwood

What is prayer? Is it primarily about addressing a listening Deity?

Reimagining prayer

Phillips

How do you harvest your life's experience?

Morwood

Story about God as a child - a disconnected God

Christology - a theology focussed on the notion of a separation from God ("institutional theology")

However, if God is everywhere, then no group can claim to have exclusive access to God. All you can claim is a heightened awareness of the Mystery

Matthew Fox

Science is rediscovering the depth of the mysteries of God

Gaston Bachelard - the three i's:

Experiences of immensity, intensity, and intimacy

...expresses what a mystical experience is.

Einstein was a mystic! ...was struck by awe.

Photons in atoms, so there is light in everything... Christ in everything! (That is, the risen presence of Jesus - not the historical being)

Archetypal language about life, death and resurrection, and what we know about galaxies and stars, all beings participate in - not just Christians, not just human beings.

The Cosmic Christ: the image of God in all beings

Phillips

The most important moment of all moments: this moment, now!

Clayton

Quotes Brian Swimme: "we do not know what awaits us in the very next moment. But we will be astonished and enchanted.

The entire universe sprang into existence from a single, numinous speck. Our origin is mystery. Our destiny is intimate community with all that is, and our common species aim is to celebrate the great joy which has drawn us into itself."

We journey together when we come together as faith community - with those like us, and those unlike us!

Morwood

If I believe that the Divine breath is always moving and giving voice to all, then it is important to listen to the many voices of men and women... in many cultures and places

This voice says: Work together, cooperate, be neighbour, love one another.

Fox

No religion has all the answers, and religions are profoundly intertwined with the cultures in which they develop

Forms dying and new forms being born

Creation Spirituality (paths that are taken)

1. Awe
2. Silence
3. Creativity
4. Transformation (and justice)

Clayton

Do not neglect ordinary transcendence around you

John Shelby Spong

There's a difference between the God experience and the way the God experience was explained historically

Rachel Held Evans

Quotes Rainer Maria Rilke: "Have patience with everything that remains unsolved in your heart. Try to love the questions themselves, like locked rooms, like books written in a foreign language.

Do not now look for the answers.

They cannot now be given you because you could not live them.

It is the question of experiencing everything.

At present, you need to live the questions.

Perhaps, you will gradually - without even noticing it - find yourself experiencing the answer some distant day."

Fox

Quotes Thomas Aquinas: "A mistake about Creation is also a mistake about God."

Morwood

In our time, we can look at patterns in the universe and make some sense of it

The story of evolution: things come together and cooperate

Closing

Rossing

Nighttime sky: calls us to silence and awe, seems to connect us with the Divine

Stars have also disclosed a new story over time - telling of a cosmic work in progress

We are creations of a creative world