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## Contemplative Prayer (Image Classics)

Von Thomas Merton

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**Von Thomas Merton : Contemplative Prayer (Image Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Contemplative Prayer (Image Classics):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen4 von 4 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Deeper understandingVon FrKurt MessickThis book, 'Contemplative Prayer', was Thomas Merton's last book. A prolific writing on spiritual topics, Merton was perhaps in an ideal setting to be able to write about the ideas and methods of contemplative prayer, being a Trappist. Trappists devote themselves to prayer, adding the disciplines of silence and

solitude, things that are needed for the contemplative side of things to emerge. In the introduction by Merton's friend, Thich Nhat Hanh, there is a nine-fold prayer that relates to many of Merton's ideas about contemplative prayer. However, it is a mistake (and both Hanh in the introduction and Merton in the text mention this) to think that prayer is something in and of itself - Christians and Buddhists tend to have the understanding that prayer without practice lacks efficacy. Merton traces a strong history of contemplative prayer, from the earliest Christians (particularly the Desert Fathers and early monastics) to the latest theologians (Hahn relates Merton's ideas to Paul Tillich, and without mentioning him by name, Merton also seems to strive for that same purity that was the pursuit of Kierkegaard). Merton concentrates especially on various 'via negativa' methods and theologies - St. John of the Cross is but the most powerful example, but Merton draws on Gregory of Nyssa, John Chrysostom, Catherine of Siena, Meister Eckhart and others. This is not a how-to manual for contemplative prayer. This was a subject that was beginning to interest Merton more and more near the time of his death, and we can but wonder if he would have gone on to produce more practical writing on the topic after this piece. However, Merton, being a person with a good grasp for the authority and power of tradition and history, understood that the first task would be to understand what people have done before and how things have worked or not worked, before embarking upon a new subject for oneself. This is that product, and we are the poorer for not having a follow-up to the book. Reading Merton is never wasted time. This is perhaps less 'spiritual' and more 'academic' than much of his writing, but it still has characteristic Merton sensitivity to subject, and is worthwhile for any looking for a deeper understanding of contemplative practices.

1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. a gem among the spiritual classics  
Von Craig Chalquist, PhD, author of TERRAPSYCHOLOGY and DEEP CALIFORNIA  
Merton wrote this, his last book, to offer guidance to contemplatives, particularly with their inevitable encounter with inward times of darkness and barrenness. Citing many different monks, Merton has graced us with a work of incredible profundity and beauty--and in doing so put his final touch on the mission described so poetically by Blake: "We are put on earth for a little space to learn to bear the beams of love."

1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Changed my life  
Von Ein Kunde  
This book goes on my shelf with the top books I've ever read. Extremely intellectual, but very down to earth and easy to relate to for anyone who seeks to find a closer relationship with God that transcends the boundaries of conventional thought

**Kurzbeschreibung**  
In this classic text, Thomas Merton offers valuable guidance for prayer. He brings together a wealth of meditative and mystical influences from John of the Cross to Eastern desert monasticism to create a spiritual path for today. Most important, he shows how the peace contacted through meditation should not be sought in order to evade the problems of contemporary life, but can instead be directed back out into the world to affect positive change. Contemplative Prayer is one of the most well-known works of spirituality of the last one hundred years, and it is a must-read for all seeking to live a life of purpose in today's world. In a moving and profound introduction, Thich Nhat Hanh offers his personal recollections of Merton and compares the contemplative traditions of East and West. From the Trade Paperback edition.

.de This little gem of a book, newly issued with a foreword from the great Vietnamese Zen teacher Thich Nhat Hanh (who knew Merton in the 1960s) beautifully distills Merton's own reading and long experience with contemplation. Written close to the end of Merton's life, this book is not so much a "how to" guide as it is a kind of contemplation of contemplation. Immersed in the "negative theology" of St. John of the Cross and others--and influenced by his deep reading in Zen--Merton here stresses that in meditation "we should not look for a 'method' or 'system,' but cultivate an 'attitude,' an 'outlook': faith, openness, attention, reverence, expectation, supplication, trust, joy." God is found in the desert of surrender: this means giving up any expectation for a particular message and "waiting on the Word of God in silence," knowing that any answer will be "his silence itself suddenly, inexplicably revealing itself to him as a word of great power, full of the voice of God." --Doug Thorpe.com

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