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The Cloud of Unknowing (English Edition)

Von Anonymous

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Von Anonymous : The Cloud of Unknowing (English Edition) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Cloud of Unknowing (English Edition):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. May all be revealedVon FrKurt MessickIt is perhaps perfectly appropriate that the author of 'The Cloud of Unknowing' is himself or herself unknown. This is a spiritual classic, a masterpiece in the real sense of the word. The style of writing

is grand, well-versed and perfectly in concert with the subject; the ideas contained are some of the most sublime and inspired pieces of writing ever written in the English language. The book does not subscribe to any particular denominational or institutional framework, making it a piece of art and wisdom available to the whole of Christendom, and even appeals to those outside the formal bounds of Christianity. This work has been compared to the work of C.S. Lewis, Plato, and other Christian mystics and theologians, with good reason. 'The Cloud of Unknowing' is part of a chain, influenced by and in turn influencing many other mystical writers. This is not a work of philosophy or apologetics, as the author is not concerned to prove the existence of God or set up any sort of metaphysical framework which must be accepted. The world around us is a given, and God is a given, and our task is to order our attention and love toward God so that it incorporates and includes the reality that is around without distraction. One perhaps hears echoes of this in Tillich's ultimate concern? One of the things that makes 'The Cloud of Unknowing' a popular piece on an ongoing basis is this respect for reality. The author does not require super-human feats of contemplative power; this would be to deny the reality of the creature that we are, as God's creation. Contemplative work must be done in tandem and in cooperation with the rest of our life's needs. The virtuous life is one in accordance with nature (for the most part), making creation a blessing rather than a curse - one can hear echoes of Meister Eckhart here, perhaps; like Eckhart, the author of 'The Cloud of Unknowing' also looks not for enlightenment through rational means or higher attainments but through the depths of our souls. There we will find God, for if God is all, then we can certainly not be at the centre, even of ourselves. This edition of 'The Cloud of Unknowing' begins with a scholarly introduction. Unlike many other spiritual classics, there is no 'author' to highlight in a biography; while there is some virtue in not knowing the author, there has been a great deal of scholarship, both speculating on the identity of the author, and other work looking at the type of person the author would be and influences that might have impacted the author. The introduction gives some good information in this regard, not only with regard to the writer, but also to the one to whom this writing is addressed. Some have believed that it was intended for a communal audience. The main point of the writing is the development of prayer and contemplation as a discipline. There are other issues, to be sure, but they always return to this. The attainment of unity with the divine will is all important to the author; one might develop the line from the Lord's Prayer - thy kingdom come, thy will be done - as a mantra for the spirit of this book. This comes through deliberate and intentional choice, and not through artificial ascetic practices (which can be as distracting as enlightening) or intellectual pursuits (which edges toward gnosticism). Part of the development of these realistic practices is the incorporation of the chief virtues of Humility and Charity - the author of the 'The Cloud' will go so far as to say that one who has these has all that is needed. Even through this, humankind cannot reach God without God's willing it to be so, and yet God has made the desire known in many ways, scripturally and traditionally, as well as in the natural world, the author of 'The Cloud' would maintain. This is an inspiring book. 'The Cloud of Unknowing' itself is a relatively short work, but not one that can be read in short order, for the depth of its meaning and insights derived from it take a long time to be properly processed. May it be revealing to you.

2 von 2 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Gem of Western Spirituality Von Peter Uys A very interesting description of a contemplative discipline conveyed intimately from an unknown teacher to an unknown student. The text is a mystic exploration of the divine that rejects the use of the intellect and the imagination, preferring an inner knowing, like a numinous experience based on feeling, a gnosis of the heart. An important theme is the difference between the active and the contemplative personality; others include the awareness of self, death of the ego, and advice on leading the contemplative life. Although this writing is deeply embedded in Christian tradition and I disagree with many of these beliefs, I still admire the author's gentleness and sense of humor. All spiritually-minded people will benefit from a study of this almost poetic text. The most beautiful sentiment is this: "For it is not what you are nor what you have been that God regards with his most merciful eyes, but what you would like to be."

Kurzbeschreibung The Cloud of Unknowing was written in the late 1300s and is recognized as a masterpiece of medieval mystical writing. The author, a monk who remains anonymous, describes to the reader (his unknown ghostly friend) the techniques and discipline required to attain to union with God. The method is by no means orthodox with respect to medieval Church teachings, and requires the negation of normal reality, bound as it is to images and thoughts, a complete letting go of intellect so as to rise through the Cloud of Unknowing to spiritual enlightenment. The parallels with eastern religion are obvious and many have seen distinct echoes of Zen in the unknown writer's description of his trials and experiences on this path. But what sets the book apart from other manuscripts of this time is the delightful personality of anonymous author, his humanity and humor, and the clear, everyday prose he chooses to convey his spiritual truths. Written almost 700 years ago, The Cloud of Unknowing still speaks directly to the deepest longings of humanity today.

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