Practicing Paradise: Contemplative Awareness and Ecological Renewal

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Abstract
What would it mean for Christians to take seriously the idea that we are called to practice paradise, to inhabit the world as if “everything is in fact paradise”? In the Christian contemplative tradition, one finds recurring attention to the notion that paradise is somehow knowable, graspable, and inhabitable in this present reality, and that this experience of paradise can be incorporated into a meaningful spiritual practice. This essay asks whether, in a moment of deepening ecological degradation, the contemplative practice of paradise might help us learn again how to imagine the world as whole, inhabit it with tenderness and care, and contribute toward its renewal.

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