



The big river of God's providential love

What am I afraid of?

"Learn the unforced rhythms of grace" *Matthew 11:29*



Ansel Adams,
wikiart.org

Questions

In Richard Rohr's meditation he helpfully suggests regularly asking questions such as:

What am I afraid of?

Does it matter?

Will it matter at the end or in the great scheme of things?

Is it worth holding on to?

[R Rohr CAC meditation 4/2/16](#)

How do you find sitting with these questions affects your own physical posture. Do you relax, sigh, clench?

Where is my relationship to my day on the spectrum between 'clinging to the ground' and of 'nervously letting yourself down into the water'?

Reading material

Richard Rohr's Daily meditation: 4/2/16

Rainer Maria Rilke's poems *The swan* and *Gravity's law* (see *Rilke's Book of Hours: Love poems to God*, trans. Barrows and Macy)

D H Lawrence's poem *Pax*

Letting ourselves down into the water

The simple matter of trust is often not experienced as simple. It involves lots of subtle, possibly hardnosed negotiations and instantaneous or even prolonged assessments. Survival may be the goal, staying in the driving seat or ensuring that the status quo is maintained. To relinquish control, to hand over something we feel competent in, or have a vested interest in is a tricky business. We have responsibilities and they need to be taken seriously. Yet this can also be a great relief: determining not to cling but to in some sense let go and imagine there may be growth or progression through trust.

'Life is not about "you". It is part of a much larger stream called God. I believe that faith might be precisely that ability to trust the Big River of God's providential love.' *Richard Rohr*

The German poet Rilke injects this into a number of his poems. He reflects on the clumsy gait of the swan when land bound and contrasts it to its composure when allowing its weight to be taken by the water. The birds too have to patiently trust their own heaviness before they have to fly observes Rilke in *Gravity's Law*.

letting go
of the ground we stand on and cling to every day,
is like the swan when he nervously lets himself down
into the water, which receives him gaily...
the swan... is pleased to be carried,
each minute more fully grown ...
farther and farther on. *Rainer Maria Rilke*

Rilke provides us language and a physical sense for letting go and trusting by pointing us to the swan and the birds. We let ourselves down into current, allow our weight to be taken, carried and moved on by God's providential love.