

Two Poems

By John Berger

Merton's Time Management System

Some "things" must be done each day!
 Awake and up at 2:30 - Vigils -
 Hello to God in the stillness of pre-dawn
 Meditate!
 Essential essence of a hermit's life!
 Fully alert for dawn and sunrise Lauds
 Read, reflect, journal, write

Say "no" to the trivial
 "No" to the Prefaces,
 "No" to Reviews
 "No" to letters
 "No" to technology
 "No" to death
 "No" to whatever gets
 In the way of prayer!

"Yes" to good
 "Yes" to art
 "Yes" to life
 "Yes" to God in the natural play of
 Light and Dark.

Down to the Abbey once a day
 Mass and meals -
 Soul and body Eucharist!
 Rest, reflect, walk, meditate -
 Monk's work - prayer!
 Chop wood! Carry water!

Prayer is Love and
 Love is Prayer - mantra -
 Journal write/right thoughts -
 Thank God for Gifts of Life This Day!

To bed with Compline dusk
 No need for lights, late nights
 Not nature's way unless stalking -
 No need to stalk silence
 Dusk is time for quiet bedding -
 Copy the deer and quail.

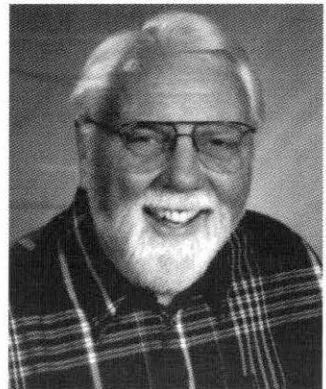
Manage time - no way!
 Can't package
 Make day/night sacred and
 Time exalts!

Tension, Thomas, Tension

Cool it man! Paradox is pleasure!
 Cambridge or Columbia?
 England or U.S.?
 Communist / Capitalist?
 Medieval or modern?
 Latin or English?
 God or godless?
 War or peace?
 Peace but at war with self!
 Silence or shouting?
 Solitude or society?
 Observer or participant?
 Hermit or activist?

Celibate or "S"?
 Gethsemani or Chile or . . .
 Alaska or California or Bangkok or . . .
 Authority or self?
 Abbot or me?
 No choice about Jesus.
 Life or death - too hot to decide!
 Just plug in the fan and . . .
 Cool it, Thomas.
 Paradox is pleasure!

John Berger is a teacher in Sacramento, California. He has recently published *The New ABC's: Education Reform and the Arts, Business, and Community* for the California Legislature. He has also written about the 100 years of Benedictine presence in Tanzania for the Alliance for International Monasticism (AIM). AIM sponsored the Bangkok conference Merton was attending when he died.



John Berger