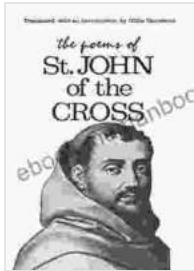


# The Poems of St. John of the Cross: A Journey into the Mystical



## The Poems of St. John of the Cross by Willis Barnstone

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 567 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Print length : 128 pages



St. John of the Cross was a 16th-century Spanish mystic and poet. He is considered one of the greatest spiritual writers of all time, and his poems are known for their beauty, their depth of spirituality, and their exploration of the mystical experience.

John of the Cross was born in Fontiveros, Spain, in 1542. He joined the Carmelite Order at the age of 21, and he soon became a leading figure in the movement for Carmelite reform. In 1577, he was imprisoned by the unreformed Carmelites for his support of reform, and he spent the next nine months in a dark and cramped cell. During this time, he wrote some of his most famous poems, including the *Dark Night of the Soul*.

After his release from prison, John of the Cross continued to write and teach about the spiritual life. He died in Úbeda, Spain, in 1591. He was canonized by Pope Benedict XIII in 1726.

John of the Cross's poems are written in a variety of styles, but they all share a common focus on the mystical experience. John of the Cross believed that the mystical experience is a gift from God, and that it is a way to come closer to God. He also believed that the mystical experience is a difficult and challenging one, but that it is ultimately worth the effort.

One of the most famous poems by John of the Cross is the *Dark Night of the Soul*. This poem describes the experience of a soul that is going through a period of spiritual darkness and doubt. The soul feels abandoned by God, and it struggles to find its way back to God. However, the poem also ends on a note of hope, as the soul eventually finds its way back to God and experiences a new level of spiritual understanding.

Another major theme in John of the Cross's poetry is the importance of love. John of the Cross believed that love is the most important force in the universe, and that it is the only way to truly know God. He also believed that love is a difficult and challenging force, but that it is ultimately worth the effort.

John of the Cross's poems are a valuable resource for anyone who is interested in the mystical experience. His poems are full of wisdom and insight, and they can help us to understand the nature of the mystical experience and the importance of love.

## **Major Themes and Motifs in the Poetry of St. John of the Cross**

- **The mystical experience:** John of the Cross's poems are all about the mystical experience. He believed that the mystical experience is a gift from God, and that it is a way to come closer to God. He also believed

that the mystical experience is a difficult and challenging one, but that it is ultimately worth the effort.

- **The Dark Night of the Soul:** The Dark Night of the Soul is a term that John of the Cross used to describe the experience of a soul that is going through a period of spiritual darkness and doubt. The soul feels abandoned by God, and it struggles to find its way back to God. However, the Dark Night of the Soul is also a time of great growth and transformation. The soul eventually finds its way back to God and experiences a new level of spiritual understanding.
- **Love:** John of the Cross believed that love is the most important force in the universe, and that it is the only way to truly know God. He also believed that love is a difficult and challenging force, but that it is ultimately worth the effort.
- **The spiritual journey:** John of the Cross's poems often describe the spiritual journey. He believed that the spiritual journey is a difficult and challenging one, but that it is ultimately worth the effort. The spiritual journey leads to a greater understanding of God and a deeper love for God.

The poems of St. John of the Cross are a valuable resource for anyone who is interested in the mystical experience. His poems are full of wisdom and insight, and they can help us to understand the nature of the mystical experience and the importance of love.

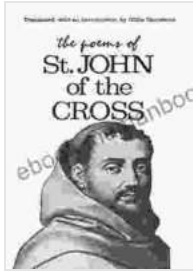
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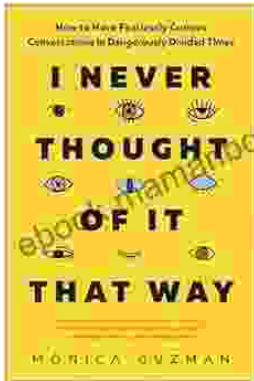
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