

st john of the cross dark night

St. John of the Cross Dark Night: Exploring the Spiritual Journey of the Soul

st john of the cross dark night is a phrase that has captivated the hearts of many who seek a deeper understanding of spiritual transformation and the path toward union with the divine. Rooted in the mystical poetry and writings of the 16th-century Spanish mystic and Carmelite friar, St. John of the Cross, the concept describes a profound and often challenging phase in one's spiritual life. It is a metaphorical "dark night" that the soul must pass through to reach enlightenment and spiritual maturity.

If you've ever wondered what the dark night truly signifies or how it applies to modern spiritual practice, this article will guide you through the origins, meanings, and practical implications of St. John of the Cross's dark night. We'll also explore how this spiritual crisis can be seen as a necessary step for growth and deeper faith.

The Origins of the Dark Night of the Soul

St. John of the Cross (1542–1591) was a Spanish mystic, poet, and a key figure in the Catholic Reformation. His writings, particularly "The Dark Night of the Soul" and "The Ascent of Mount Carmel," provide a vivid description of the stages the soul undergoes on its journey to divine union.

What Is the Dark Night?

The phrase "dark night" refers to a period of spiritual desolation, doubt, and inner turmoil. It is not merely sadness or depression but a deep sense of emptiness where the soul feels abandoned or disconnected from God. St. John described it as a purgative process — the soul is stripped of all attachments, illusions, and false comforts in order to be purified.

This experience is often marked by:

- A feeling of spiritual dryness or barrenness
- Loss of consolation previously found in prayer or religious practices
- Intense inner suffering and confusion
- A sense of being lost or abandoned by God

This "dark night" is paradoxically a gift, because through this painful purification, the soul is prepared for a more profound and intimate union with the divine presence.

Understanding the Spiritual Journey Through the Dark Night

The dark night is part of a larger spiritual progression that St. John of the Cross describes as the

ascent of the soul toward God. It involves two primary phases: the “night of the senses” and the “night of the spirit.”

The Night of the Senses

In this initial phase, the soul undergoes detachment from worldly pleasures and sensory experiences. The individual might still engage in prayer and spiritual practices, but these no longer bring the same joy or fulfillment. This stage teaches the soul to rely less on external consolations and more on faith.

The Night of the Spirit

The second and more profound stage is the night of the spirit, where the purification targets the soul’s deeper attachments, including pride, ego, and spiritual complacency. This phase is often more intense because it involves the stripping away of one’s sense of self and spiritual identity. The soul experiences a feeling of complete emptiness but moves closer toward divine union through this surrender.

Why Does the Dark Night Happen?

Many people wonder why such a painful experience is necessary or why God would allow the soul to endure such suffering. St. John of the Cross teaches that the dark night serves a transformative purpose.

Purification and Transformation

The dark night purifies the soul by removing imperfections, attachments, and false dependencies. Just as a diamond must be cut and polished to reveal its brilliance, the soul must undergo trials to shine in its purest form.

Detachment from the Ego

One of the primary lessons of the dark night is detachment from the ego and false self. This detachment helps the soul to embrace humility, surrender, and trust in God’s will. It is only through this surrender that the soul can experience true freedom and peace.

Deepening Faith and Trust

During the dark night, faith is tested and refined. Without the usual spiritual consolations, the soul learns to trust God beyond feelings and circumstances. This deepened faith often results in a more

resilient and mature spiritual life.

Modern-Day Relevance of the Dark Night

Though St. John of the Cross wrote about the dark night centuries ago, its themes resonate strongly with contemporary spiritual seekers. Many people today face spiritual dryness, existential crises, or feelings of abandonment that mirror the dark night experience.

Recognizing the Dark Night in Your Life

Here are some signs that you might be experiencing a spiritual dark night:

- A persistent feeling of emptiness despite efforts to find meaning
- Loss of interest or joy in spiritual practices
- Questions about your faith or spiritual path
- Inner restlessness or longing for something deeper

Understanding that this experience is part of a transformative process can provide comfort and hope.

How to Navigate the Dark Night

If you find yourself in this difficult phase, consider these practical tips inspired by St. John of the Cross's teachings:

1. **Practice Patience:** The dark night is often prolonged and mysterious. Accepting the process without rushing to escape it is crucial.
2. **Maintain Spiritual Discipline:** Continue prayer, meditation, or other spiritual practices, even when they feel dry or unrewarding.
3. **Seek Guidance:** Spiritual directors or mentors can provide valuable support and perspective during this time.
4. **Embrace Detachment:** Let go of expectations and attachments, focusing instead on surrender and trust.
5. **Reflect on the Purpose:** Remember that this period is a purification, not punishment, leading to deeper spiritual growth.

St. John of the Cross Dark Night in Literature and Culture

The phrase “dark night of the soul” has transcended its religious origins to become a widely used metaphor in literature, psychology, and popular culture. It represents moments of crisis, transformation, and existential questioning.

Influence on Psychology and Self-Help

Psychologists and spiritual counselors sometimes refer to the dark night when discussing spiritual crises or periods of intense personal growth. It parallels concepts like the “midlife crisis” or “existential crisis,” where individuals confront the meaning and purpose of life.

In Poetry and Art

St. John of the Cross himself was a masterful poet, and his dark night poems remain some of the most beautiful and profound mystical poetry written. Artists and writers continue to draw inspiration from the dark night to explore themes of suffering, transformation, and hope.

The enduring power of the dark night metaphor lies in its universal applicability to the human experience of struggle and renewal.

Final Thoughts on Embracing the Dark Night

The journey through the dark night as described by St. John of the Cross is not an easy one. It involves confronting the unknown, surrendering control, and enduring spiritual aridity. Yet, it also offers an invitation to profound transformation and union with the divine.

For those navigating this path, the dark night exemplifies the paradox of spiritual growth — sometimes the greatest light emerges from the deepest darkness. By embracing this journey with faith and patience, one can emerge with a renewed sense of purpose, peace, and a closer connection to the sacred.

Whether you are familiar with St. John of the Cross’s writings or encountering the concept for the first time, the dark night remains a timeless guidepost on the spiritual path, reminding us that even in moments of despair, the soul is being prepared for greater illumination.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who was St. John of the Cross and what is the 'Dark Night' he describes?

St. John of the Cross was a 16th-century Spanish mystic and poet who wrote extensively about the spiritual journey. The 'Dark Night' refers to a phase of spiritual purification and trial where the soul experiences a sense of emptiness and desolation, ultimately leading to a closer union with God.

What are the main stages of the 'Dark Night of the Soul' according to St. John of the Cross?

St. John of the Cross describes two main stages in the 'Dark Night': the Night of the Senses, where the soul is purified from attachment to worldly things, and the Night of the Spirit, a deeper purification involving detachment from spiritual consolations, leading to inner transformation and union with God.

How does the 'Dark Night' experience contribute to spiritual growth?

The 'Dark Night' serves as a process of purging the soul of imperfections and attachments, allowing for deeper humility, surrender, and reliance on God. This purification prepares the soul for a more profound and intimate relationship with the divine.

Is the 'Dark Night of the Soul' unique to Christian mysticism or found in other traditions?

While St. John of the Cross's 'Dark Night' is rooted in Christian mysticism, similar concepts of spiritual trials and purification appear in other religious and spiritual traditions, such as Buddhism's period of spiritual crisis or the 'dark night' experiences described in Sufism.

How can someone recognize if they are going through a 'Dark Night' experience?

Signs of a 'Dark Night' include feelings of spiritual dryness, loneliness, doubt, and a sense of abandonment by God, despite a desire for closeness to the divine. It often involves a loss of consolation and emotional comfort in prayer, signaling a transformative phase in one's spiritual journey.

Additional Resources

St. John of the Cross Dark Night: An In-Depth Exploration of Spiritual Transformation

st john of the cross dark night is a profound spiritual concept that has intrigued theologians, scholars, and seekers of mystical experiences for centuries. Originating from the writings of the 16th-century Spanish mystic and poet, St. John of the Cross, the "Dark Night" metaphor encapsulates a

journey of spiritual purification and transformation. This phenomenon is often described as a period of intense inner turmoil and desolation, which paradoxically leads to a deeper union with the divine. Understanding the nuances of St. John of the Cross Dark Night provides valuable insight into the human soul's quest for meaning beyond suffering.

The Historical and Theological Context of St. John of the Cross Dark Night

St. John of the Cross, a Carmelite friar and a pivotal figure in the Catholic Reformation, composed his treatise "Dark Night of the Soul" as an allegorical guide to the spiritual trials one encounters on the path to divine union. The term "dark night" itself refers to two distinct phases: the "dark night of the senses" and the "dark night of the spirit." Both stages involve a stripping away of attachments, desires, and illusions that obscure the soul's connection to God.

From a theological perspective, the dark night is not merely a state of despair but a necessary purgation. It is a divinely permitted trial that facilitates purification and detachment. St. John's writings emphasize the transformative power of suffering and abandonment, presenting the dark night as a passage through which the soul ascends toward spiritual maturity.

Defining the Dark Night of the Senses

The first phase, the dark night of the senses, concerns the detachment from worldly pleasures and sensory gratification. During this period, individuals may experience a loss of consolation in prayer and spiritual practices. Physical and emotional discomfort often accompany this stage, as the soul is tested and refined.

This stage is crucial because it challenges the reliance on external stimuli and superficial faith. The soul learns to seek God beyond feelings and sensory experiences, cultivating a deeper, more resilient spirituality. The dark night of the senses acts as a foundation for the subsequent spiritual purification.

Understanding the Dark Night of the Spirit

Following the sensory purification, the soul enters the dark night of the spirit, which is a more profound and intense phase of spiritual desolation. This stage involves a sense of abandonment by God, where even the soul's deepest desires for union seem unfulfilled. It is characterized by an interior emptiness and silence that can feel like spiritual death.

Despite the apparent absence of divine consolation, this phase is essential for the soul's transformation. St. John of the Cross describes it as a preparation for the mystical union, where the soul is stripped of all self-will and ego. The dark night of the spirit fosters humility, surrender, and total reliance on God's grace.

Literary Significance and Poetic Expression

St. John of the Cross was not only a theologian but also a masterful poet. His poetic works, especially "The Dark Night," are considered masterpieces of Spanish literature and mystical poetry. The poem vividly portrays the soul's journey through darkness toward divine light, using rich symbolism and evocative imagery.

The poetic articulation of the dark night experience has contributed significantly to its enduring relevance. Through metaphor and allegory, St. John captures the paradoxical nature of spiritual growth—the simultaneous experience of loss and gain, sorrow and joy, death and rebirth. His poetry invites readers to contemplate the mysteries of faith and the depths of human suffering as pathways to transcendence.

Comparative Perspectives: Dark Night and Other Spiritual Traditions

While St. John of the Cross's dark night is rooted in Christian mysticism, the concept resonates with spiritual themes found in other traditions. Similar notions of spiritual desolation and purification appear in Buddhism's "dark night" experiences of meditation, Sufism's trials of the soul, and even existentialist reflections on meaning and suffering.

However, the Christian dark night uniquely frames these experiences within the context of God's loving providence and the promise of mystical union. This theological dimension distinguishes it from secular or non-theistic interpretations, emphasizing grace as the ultimate source of healing and transformation.

Psychological and Contemporary Interpretations

In modern times, the dark night of the soul has gained attention beyond religious circles, often being interpreted through psychological lenses. Psychologists and spiritual counselors recognize the dark night as a metaphor for existential crises, depression, and profound personal growth.

This broader interpretation highlights the universal aspects of St. John's insight: that periods of suffering and emptiness, although painful, can catalyze self-discovery and a reorientation toward authenticity. The dark night serves as a reminder that spiritual and psychological development often require embracing discomfort and uncertainty.

Pros and Cons of the Dark Night Experience

- **Pros:** Facilitates deep spiritual growth, promotes detachment from unhealthy attachments, encourages humility and surrender, leads to a more authentic and resilient faith.
- **Cons:** Can cause intense emotional and psychological distress, may be misinterpreted as

abandonment or failure, requires strong support systems to navigate safely, risks leading to spiritual discouragement if misunderstood.

Practical Implications for Spiritual Seekers

For those embarking on a spiritual path, understanding the St. John of the Cross Dark Night is crucial for contextualizing experiences of doubt, dryness, and suffering. Recognizing these phases as transformative rather than punitive can foster patience and perseverance.

Spiritual directors and counselors often reference St. John's framework to guide individuals through challenging periods. Emphasizing the temporary nature of the dark night and its purpose in purifying the soul can provide reassurance and hope.

Additionally, integrating contemplative practices, prayer, and community support can mitigate the risks associated with prolonged spiritual desolation. The dark night, while arduous, is ultimately a passage toward greater spiritual freedom and intimacy with the divine.

The enduring legacy of St. John of the Cross's dark night lies in its capacity to articulate the paradox of spiritual transformation: that through profound darkness, the soul can emerge into the light of divine love, renewed and sanctified.

[St John Of The Cross Dark Night](#)

st john of the cross dark night: Dark Night of the Soul Saint John of the Cross Staff, 2012-10-03 Dark Night of the Soul by Saint John of the Cross: — A Catholic Classic by a Doctor of the Church! — Includes a Biography of Saint John of the Cross, Preface and Introduction — Includes over 300 Footnotes, an Index of Scripture References and Latin Words Publisher: A Kindle Edition is also available. A spiritual classic, Dark Night of the Soul was written by a 16th-century Spanish poet and Roman Catholic mystic, Saint John of the Cross. The treatise is a theological commentary on a poem, explaining its meaning by stanza. Saint John of the Cross' poem narrates the journey of the soul from its bodily home to its union with God. The journey is called The Dark Night, because darkness represents the hardships and difficulties the soul meets in detachment from the world and reaching the light of the union with the Creator. There are several steps in this night, which are related in successive stanzas. The main idea of the poem can be seen as the painful experience that people endure as they seek to grow in spiritual maturity and union with God. The poem is divided into two books that reflect the two phases of the dark night. The first is a purification of the senses. The second and more intense of the two stages is that of the purification of the spirit, which is the less common of the two. Dark Night of the Soul further describes the ten steps on the ladder of mystical love, previously described by Saint Thomas Aquinas and in part by Aristotle. The text was written while John of the Cross was imprisoned by his Carmelite brothers, who opposed his reforms to the Order. Publisher: Catholic Way Publishing — Click on the Publisher Name in the Title for more Catholic Paperback and E-Books — Go to our website: CatholicWayPublishing dot com for more Catholic E-Books We hope you enjoy this release!

st john of the cross dark night: Dark Night of the Soul St John Of The Cross, 2019-12-31

Complete edition of the Dark Night of the Soul by Saint John of the Cross, translated by E. Allison Peers. This edition includes over 176 footnotes, creating a study edition for readers to better understand St. John's roadmap to deeper intimacy with God. Read with an open heart, this book is helpful to refine and anchor the reader through various stages of life. On a dark night, Kindled in love with yearnings--oh, happy chance!-- I went forth without being observed, My house being now at rest. No student of thought should be without this historic book. This edition is provided in a slim volume with full text at an affordable price.

st john of the cross dark night: Dark Night of the Soul - Saint John of the Cross (Scanned PDF) Saint John Cross, 2012-08-06 A spiritual classic, Dark Night of the Soul was written by a 16th-century Spanish poet and Roman Catholic mystic, Saint John of the Cross. The treatise is a theological commentary on a poem, explaining its meaning by stanza. Saint John of the Cross' poem narrates the journey of the soul from its bodily home to its union with God. The journey is called The Dark Night, because darkness represents the hardships and difficulties the soul meets in detachment from the world and reaching the light of the union with the Creator. There are several steps in this night, which are related in successive stanzas. The main idea of the poem can be seen as the painful experience that people endure as they seek to grow in spiritual maturity and union with God. The poem is divided into two books that reflect the two phases of the dark night. The first is a purification of the senses. The second and more intense of the two stages is that of the purification of the spirit, which is the less common of the two. Dark Night of the Soul further describes the ten steps on the ladder of mystical love, previously described by Saint Thomas Aquinas and in part by Aristotle. The text was written while John of the Cross was imprisoned by his Carmelite brothers, who opposed his reforms to the Order. Included is a Preface by Gabriela Cunningham Graham.

st john of the cross dark night: Dark Night of the Soul St John of the Cross, E. Allison Peers, 2017-06-14 2017 Reprint of 1953 Edition. Originally published in 1953 as Volume One of the The Complete Works of Saint John of the Cross, Doctor of the Church, translated and edited by E. Allison Peers from the critical edition of P. Silverio de Santa Teresa published in 1935. In this work, a spiritual masterpiece and classic of Christian literature and mysticism, the author addresses several subjects, among them pride, avarice, envy, and other human imperfections. His discussion of the Dark Night, which considers afflictions and pain suffered by the soul, is followed by an extended explanation of divine love and the soul's exultant union with God. The Dark Night (from which the spiritual term takes its name) narrates the journey of the soul from its bodily home to union with God. It happens during the night, which represents the hardships and difficulties met in detachment from the world and reaching the light of the union with the Creator. There are several steps in this night, which are related in successive stanzas. The narrative explains the painful experience that people endure as they seek to grow in spiritual maturity and union with God. This fine translation by E. Allison Peers is considered one of the faithful that has appeared and a preferred rendering of the original Spanish.

st john of the cross dark night: Dark Night of the Soul Saint John of the Cross, Edgar Allison Peers, 1976

st john of the cross dark night: The Dark Night of the Soul Saint John of the Cross, 1916

st john of the cross dark night: The Poems of St. John of the Cross Saint John of the Cross, 1979 San Juan de la Cruz, the great sixteenth-century Spanish mystic, is regarded by many as Spain's finest poet. Passionate, ecstatic, and spiritual, his poems are a blend of exquisite lyricism and profound mystical thought. In The Poems of St. John of the Cross John Frederick Nims presents his superlative translation of the complete poems, re-creating the religious fervor of St. John's art. This dual-language edition makes available the original Spanish from the Codex of Sanlúcar de Barrameda with facing English translations. The work concludes with two essays--a critique of the poetry and a short piece on the Spanish text that appears alongside the translation--as well as brief notes on the individual poems.

st john of the cross dark night: Dark Night of the Soul , 2005-03-15 This new edition of the

Image classic, with more than 100,000 copies sold, brings E. Allison Peers's magnificent translation of St. John of the Cross's masterpiece *Dark Night of the Soul* to a new generation of readers and will renew the interest of those already familiar with its soaring poetry and timeless truths. The sixteenth-century Carmelite monk St. John of the Cross stands alongside St. Teresa of Avila as the West's best known and most beloved Christian mystic. As Peers writes in the Introduction to his definitive translation of *Dark Night of the Soul*, The most sublime of all Spanish mystics, he soars aloft on the wings of Divine love to heights known hardly to any of them... True to the character of his thought, his style is always forceful and energetic. *Dark Night of the Soul* follows the soul's journey from a state of abandonment and darkness to a loving union with God. In a voice at once grandiose and melodious, and a style that combines the systematic theology of St. Thomas Aquinas with rapturous poetry, St. John describes the process of moving away from routine religious rituals and embracing a Being who can be known only through love. His words, Peers writes, are a wonderful illustration of the theological truth that grace, far from destroying nature, ennobles and dignifies it, and of the agreement always found between the natural and the supernatural -- between the principles of sound reason and the sublime manifestations of Divine grace. One of the greatest contributions to the literature of mysticism, *Dark Night of the Soul* offers support and encouragement to all who seek oneness with God.

st john of the cross dark night: The Dark Night of the Soul (annotated) John Cross, 2014-03-07 Your Special Annotated edition includes:* Glossary of medieval Catholic terminology* Biography of St. John of the Cross* Narrative-Essay-The Incredible Account of St. John's Final Hours before Going Home to Behold our LordThe Dark night has been described as a point of deep spiritual crisis and the pathway Fray John lays out isn't merely to recover but to thrive and experience true union with God.This is mysticism with a purpose, to change your life right now, to become more like Christ every day. This is no bleak night but a bright light of hope lit on a clear path to living holiness by the premier spiritual master, St. John of the Cross.In a homily commemorating the martyrdom of St. John the Baptist, Pope Francis remarked I think of the dark night of the soul of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta and is inspired with the hope only Christ can give each of us.Together St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Avila are considered the founders of the Discalced Carmelites.

st john of the cross dark night: Dark Night of the Soul Saint John of the Cross, 2013-05 *Dark Night of the Soul* (Spanish: *La noche oscura del alma*) is the title of a poem written by 16th-century Spanish poet and Roman CatholicmysticSaint John of the Cross. Saint John of the Cross' poem narrates the journey of the soul from its bodily home to its union with God. The journey is called The Dark Night, because darkness represents the hardships and difficulties the soul meets in detachment from the world and reaching the light of the union with the Creator. There are several steps in this night, which are related in successive stanzas. The main idea of the poem can be seen as the painful experience that people endure as they seek to grow in spiritual maturity and union with God. The poem is divided into two books that reflect the two phases of the dark night. The first is a purification of the senses. The second and more intense of the two stages is that of the purification of the spirit, which is the less common of the two. *Dark Night of the Soul* further describes the ten steps on the ladder of mystical love, previously described by Saint Thomas Aquinas and in part by Aristotle. The text was written in 1578 or 1579, while John of the Cross was imprisoned by his Carmelite brothers, who opposed his reforms to the Order. The treatise, written in 1584-5, is a theological commentary on the poem, explaining its meaning by stanza.

st john of the cross dark night: The Dark Night of the Soul Saint John of the Cross, Gabriela Cunningham Graham, 1922

st john of the cross dark night: John of the Cross Saint John of the Cross, 1987 COPY 2
LOCATED IN STACK.

st john of the cross dark night: **The Dark Night: Psychological Experience and Spiritual Reality** Marc Foley, OCD, 2019-05-19 Reading St. John of the Cross's *Dark Night* can be daunting; living the dark experience of purification it describes can be much more so. The description of the dark nights (yes, there is more than one!) which St. John presents seems so stark and painful that

one might be tempted to just close the book and stop reading. On top of that, both the process St. John describes and the language he uses can be confusing and intimidating. The language of 16th-century scholasticism is not easily understood by 21st-century readers living in a completely different culture and context. Perhaps even more challenging is that fact that our modern lives, filled with the non-stop clutter of social media and technology, as well as comfort and ease, do not prepare most of us well to honestly look into our own depths to see who we are and who we are intended to become as fully alive human beings. Fortunately we now have this helpful book to guide us to that full life which St. John invites us to in *The Dark Night*. Father Marc Foley here combines his own theological and psychological background, as well as his experience as a spiritual guide, to help modern readers understand the experiences, challenges, and graced events of the purifying nights of sense and spirit. In addition to exploring certain key terms that John uses in Spanish and their meaning in the saint's time and today, Father Marc includes pertinent selections from a wide range of writers, ancient to modern, that illustrate the themes he covers. Each chapter concludes with insightful questions for personal reflection or group discussion. The book has a comprehensive index.

st john of the cross dark night: *St. John of the Cross' Poem "Dark Night": the Dark Night of the Soul, Or the Senses' Delight?* José C. Nieto, 1989

st john of the cross dark night: *Dark Night of the Soul* St John of the Cross, 2011-07-28 All Christians experience dark nights times when everything seems to be going wrong with them. Some wallow in despair, others learn in darkness. St. John explains the four benefits of the dark night: 1. Delight of peace. 2. Habitual remembrance and thought of God. 3. Cleanness and purity of soul. Practice of the virtues. 4. Practice of the virtues

st john of the cross dark night: Dark Night of the Soul St John Cross, 2007-08-31 St. John narrates this journey of the soul, which requires death to self and detachment from the world. In a step-by-step process, he shows how God can use this "dark night" to eventually bring our human spirits into great illumination, revealing: Divine wisdom and the passion of divine love. How the soul can walk...

st john of the cross dark night: The TAN Guide to Dark Night of the Soul John Of Cross, 2011-04 TAN Classics Made Simplebooklets are designed to give you an orientation course before you embark on an exploration of the great works of Catholic literature found in our best selling TAN Classics line.

st john of the cross dark night: *The Essential St. John of the Cross* St. John of the Cross, 2013-06-28 Collected here in this omnibus edition are all three of St. John of the Cross' major works as well as twenty of his magnificent poems. *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* is the third major work of St. John of the Cross and is considered to be the introductory work on mystical theology. *Dark Night of the Soul* is one of the greatest religious poems ever written. This masterpiece of Mystic Christianity examines faith and how to keep faith when all seems lost. Think of it as guide to making it through the dark night of the soul to the brighter, happier, faith filled tomorrow that awaits. In *A Spiritual Canticle of the Soul and the Bridegroom Christ*, St. John states: I do not purpose here to set forth all that greatness and fullness the spirit of love, which is fruitful, embodies in it. Yes, rather it would be foolishness to think that the language of love and the mystical intelligence - and that is what these stanzas are - can be at all explained in words of any kind, for the Spirit of our Lord who helps our weakness.

st john of the cross dark night: The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition Andrew Louth, 1983 Scholars of the patristic era have paid more attention to the dogmatic tradition in their period than to the development of Christian mystical theology. Andrew Louth aims to redress the balance. Recognizing that the intellectual form of this tradition was decisively influenced by Platonic ideas of the soul's relationship to God, Louth begins with an examination of Plato and Platonism. The discussion of the Fathers which follows shows how the mystical tradition is at the heart of their thought and how the dogmatic tradition both moulds and is the reflection of mystical insights and concerns. This new edition of a classic study of the diverse influences upon Christian spirituality

includes a new Afterword which brings the text completely up to date. Book jacket.

st john of the cross dark night: Collected Works of St. John of the Cross St John of the Cross, 2012-01-01 The Ascent Of Mount Carmel is part of four works by St. John dealing with the Dark Night of the Soul, when the individual Soul undergoes earthly and spiritual privations in search of union with God. The Ascent Of Mount Carmel is regarded as one of the greatest works of mysticism in Christianity. The book is divided into three sections and is presented as a commentary on four poetic stanzas by John on the subject of the Dark Night. He shows how the Soul sets out to leave all worldly ties and appetites behind to achieve nothing less than transformation in God. Dark Night of the Soul is a theological commentary on the poem explaining the meaning of St. John of the Cross' poem of the same name. The book describes its meaning by stanza. Dark Night of the Soul narrates the journey of the soul from bodily home to union with God. In A Spiritual Canticle of the Soul and the Bridegroom Christ, St. John states: I do not purpose here to set forth all that greatness and fullness the spirit of love, which is fruitful, embodies in it. Yes, rather it would be foolishness to think that the language of love and the mystical intelligence - and that is what these stanzas are - can be at all explained in words of any kind, for the Spirit of our Lord who helps our weakness. The Poetry of St. John of the Cross includes 25 of his most inspirational poems including What is Grace, By the Waters of Babylon, My Soul is a Candle, Within the Trinity and more. John of the Cross was a major figure of the Counter-Reformation, a Spanish mystic, Catholic saint, Carmelite friar and priest. He is considered, along with Saint Teresa of Avila, as a founder of the Discalced Carmelites. His poetry and his studies on the growth of the soul are considered the summit of mystical.

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