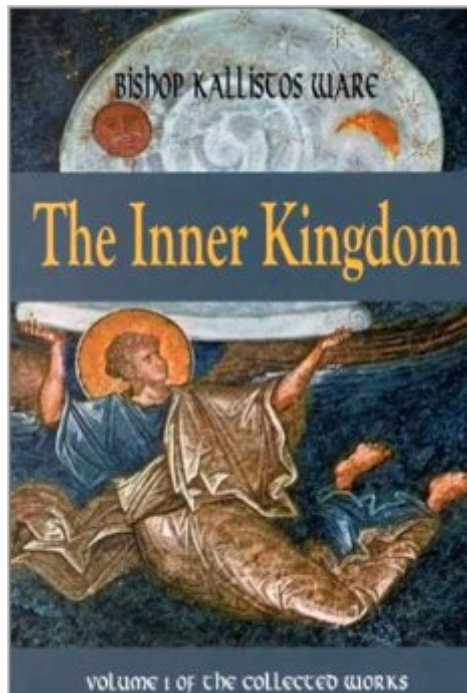


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The Inner Kingdom: Volume 1 Of The Collected Works



Synopsis

This is a revised and expanded version of a book that has appeared in French, Italian, and Greek. It focuses on themes central to Eastern Christian worship and spiritual life and serves as an introduction to the series of six volumes of Bishop Kallistos' collected works. The opening chapter recounts the author's journey to Orthodoxy. The next two chapters provide profound and illuminating insights on death, bereavement and resurrection in Christ, and on repentance. Chapters four through seven invite us into the world of the desert ascetics and hesychast monks. Combining scholarly rigor with practical counsels on prayers, Bishop Kallistos makes the wealth of the Orthodox tradition accessible to today's Christians. The next three chapters concern personal vocation, martyrdom, spiritual guidance, and the strange path of the fool for Christ's sake. There follows a brief essay on time and eternity. The final chapter is a challenging discussion of Origen and St Gregory of Nyssa, Isaac the Syrian and Silouan the Athonite, and in conversation with them Bishop Kallistos asks, 'Dare we hope for the salvation of all?'

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Customer Reviews

Like his other books, especially *The Orthodox Way*, Bishop Kallistos invites the reader to partake of the life-giving Water of Christ as found in the living Eastern Orthodox Tradition. I have waited for this series of six volumes to begin and here's number one! You will be moved both intellectually and spiritually by this work, guided by one of the leading Eastern Orthodox theologians in the English-speaking world. "This is a revised and expanded version of a book that has already appeared in French, Italian and Greek. It focuses on themes central to Eastern Christian worship

and spiritual life and serves as an introduction to the series of six volumes of Bishop Kallistos collected works."The opening chapter recounts the author's journey to Orthodoxy. The next two chapters provide profound and illuminating insights on death, bereavement and resurrection in Christ, and on repentance. Chapters four through seven invite us into the world of the desert ascetics and hesychast monks. Combining scholarly rigor with practical counsels on prayers, Bishop Kallistos makes the wealth of the Orthodox tradition accessible to today's Christians. The next three chapters concern personal vocation, martyrdom, spiritual guidance, and the strange path of the fool for Christ's sake. There follows a brief essay on time and eternity. The final chapter is a challenging discussion of Origen and St Gregory of Nyssa, Isaac the Syrian and Silouan the Anthonite, and in conversation with them Bishop Kallistos asks, 'Dare we hope for the salvation of all?' "The Inner Kingdom is the first of a planned six-volume collection of works by Bishop Kallistos. His thought combines depth and honesty with judicious wisdom and balance, expressed in a clear and direct style.

In the English-speaking world, Bishop Kallistos (Timothy) Ware is well-known as the author of *The Orthodox Way*, a justly famous overview of the history and doctrines of Eastern Orthodoxy. Now, in *The Inner Kingdom*, the first of a projected six-volume collection of his writings, Bishop Kallistos' occasional essays are collected for English readers. They're really magnificent. This first volume reprints 12 essays. Prefaced by an autobiographical account of his conversion, the essays explore death and resurrection, repentance, worship, wonderment in education, ceaseless prayer, hesychia, martyrdom, spiritual guidance, the fool in Christ, the metaphysics of time, and salvation. They're written with an easy fluidity that reminds one of C.S. Lewis's style: they're simply enjoyable to read. Yet they're also sophisticated in argument and informative. Reading them is an excellent introduction to Orthodoxy for the neophyte, and an equally excellent opportunity for reflection and renewal for those already familiar with or immersed in Orthodoxy. For my money, the best essay in the collection (and it was difficult for me to make this choice, since all the essays are so interesting) is also the longest: "The Fool in Christ as Prophet and Apostle" (pp. 153-180). Fools in Christ are "living icons" who proclaim the Gospel in such drastic--that is, with thoroughgoing loyalty to Jesus' teachings--ways that they appear mad or insane to the rest of the world (God's foolishness opposed to human wisdom, as St. Paul put it). But in choosing to live on the margins of respectability, holy fools liberate themselves to lead lives which rebuke the powerful, chastise the wicked, and inspire by their good deeds the faithful.

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