



1.4. The Inner World of Thoughts and Images



When we consider the human being as a whole, we know that thoughts arise in the neocortex - a relatively small part of the body.

But when we look at our state of consciousness, the image on the right gives a more accurate picture:

The human being is surrounded by a bubble of thoughts and images.

Most of our consciousness is trapped in this bubble, while only a smaller part is directed toward the reality of our body.

Observe this in yourself:

What percentage of your awareness is, in this very moment, engaged in perceiving reality through your five senses - and how much is caught up in your inner world of thoughts and images?

Yet reality lies outside this bubble - and this applies not only to physical reality but also to spiritual reality.

Spiritual reality is not found within this bubble. We cannot encounter God in the world of thoughts and images.

God is in the reality outside the bubble.

For many religious people, this is not clear. Buddhists, on the other hand, have a deep understanding of it - just as the Christian Church Fathers do, especially those whose voices are found in the [Philokalia](#).

They know that thoughts and the inner processes of the mind keep us from recognizing God and becoming aware of His presence.

Of course, the mind reflects spiritual movements. But if we want to meet God directly, we must direct our consciousness toward reality and free ourselves from the bubble of fantasy.

All thought enters the heart through a certain meaningful image. But it is only when the mind has withdrawn from all things and has become entirely free of imagery that the blessed light of the Divinity shines upon it.

The radiance of the divine light is revealed to the pure spirit through the absence of all thoughts...

Therefore, it is essential that the one who prays distance themselves from all thoughts that impress the mind through images. A mind that **beholds the Spirit** is formed and ordered differently than one that merely contemplates the **word** of the Spirit.

From this, we learn how spiritual insight separates the spirit from the thoughts that fill it with images. And when it no longer revolves around images, the spirit draws near to God....

...no imagination is of any use in approaching God.

Now that you know this, you must strive at all times to pray to God without sensory image, without form or figure - with a pure spirit and a cleansed soul, with all the fervor of your being.

[Kallistos und Ignatios Xanthopoulos](#)

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