

Mystery, Miracles, Magic and Montessori



Mystery

That which is not understood.
That which is not known.
That which is beyond understanding.
God.

Man's curiosity, both a blessing and a curse, was part of the temptation of the tree of good and evil. I am sometimes afraid that the goodness of God remains a greater mystery to us than the evil of mankind. The depth of mankind's depravity is itself a visible mystery to what man can sink to without God and that is where the danger of the curiosity of the occult enters. The scriptures admonish us to consider what is "true, noble right, pure, lovely, admirable, praiseworthy and excellent ..." and to be as innocent as doves but wise as serpents. Learning and leaning into the mystery of God leads to eternal life. The curiosity of evil leads to death. The embrace of the mystery of God leads us into a never-ending awe of our Creator.

Our liturgical friends hold to some mysteries that evangelicals seem to miss – the whole concept and reverence of the body and blood of Christ in communion for example. Evangelicals bask in that Jesus calls us His friends and we may lose some

of that awe of the mystery of His sacrifice. Yet friendship is a mystery of its own. Why are we drawn to certain people and they to us? (Friends are family that we choose for ourselves.) The mystery of friendship is much like the mystery of love which is truly a mystery God shares with us.



In God's love, we see the end results of this mystery but not its origin. Scripture tells us, "God is love" but it doesn't tell us why He chose to express Himself in love. In life we may experience the mystery of love – the "way of a man with a maid" says Proverbs. And we may experience the mystery of a mother's love or a father's love that comes on us so suddenly. There is also the mystery of the love of family, tribe, people and country. Again, we experience the results of love but not its origin.

Then, there are all the unanswered questions – the mysteries of God. Why does he love ME. Why does he choose ME. Why am I born here and now, in this land, in this time, in this family, in this culture? All mysteries known only to God.

Proverbs tells us, "It is the glory of God to hide a thing but it is the glory of kings to search it out." To search the unfathomable riches of God is to go deeper into the mystery of God without ever being able to exhaust those riches. To live without exploring the mystery of God is to miss the true awe of life. The scriptures are full of mystery and invite us to explore: the mystery of Godliness, the mystery of faith, the mystery of Christ, the mystery of the Gospel, the mystery of His will, the mystery of the kingdom of God. Our ability to be in awe is unlimited – if we search.

Now, we might consider the mystery of Montessori. Really, the mystery is why does it work? We find a key in concentration. We find a key in the senses. We find keys for independence. We find a key in the environment and the keys to movement and silence. We find keys in grace and courtesy and respect. And on and on. But why do the keys work? Why haven't people seen this before? Why now? Why you and me? Again, why do the keys work?



I can almost write your answer – sensitive periods, the nature of the child, respect, time, an aware observer and all of the other Montessori reflections. These are explanations of the keys but not why the keys work? In the end It is not about the keys – it is about the mystery of God's creation. Why did He create the child like He did? What is the mysterious image in which we are created? Our keys are not answers but only a means to enter deeper into the mystery and to be in awe of the Creator and the mystery of His creation.

