

Dorotheos of Gaza's Image of Contemplative Union

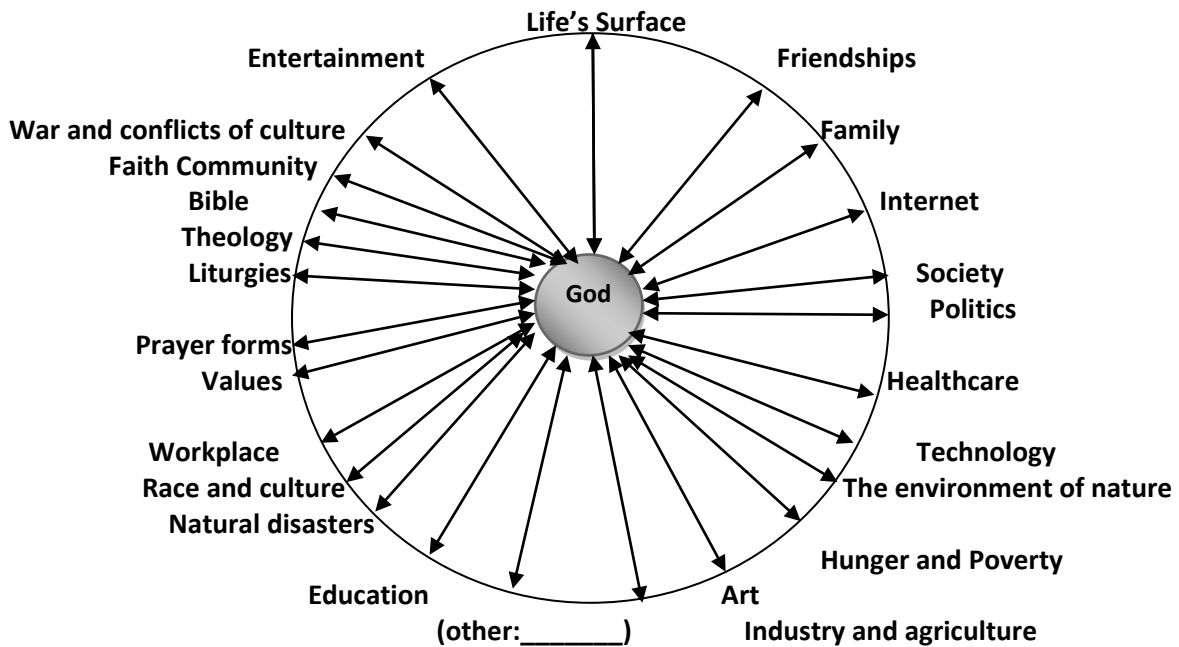
(Dorotheos of Gaza was a sixth-century Christian desert monk and teacher.)

The Poverties of conventional society Symptoms of Living on the Surface of Life and its Consequences

Poverty of wisdom	Scattered minds in sea of data/activity.... Inability to listen to God
Poverty of vision	Aimlessness without a center.....Loneliness/fear/suspicion
Poverty of Compassion	Self-centered passions and values.....Isolation/lack of community

**The focus of conventional society is on the surface of life.
Dorotheos of Gaza offers a more complete vision of life:**

Life is sacred because God's energy creates and sustains all life. This sacred dimension is its deep structure. The natural state of human life is goodness because we are created in the image of God. Life will be full when we integrate life on the surface with its deep structure. Sinful behavior (because of an unrestrained ego) alienates us from God and each other. Repentance returns our desire for God and as we draw closer to God we become closer to each other and our natural state of being is restored.



Contemplative solitude and silence draw us into the deep structure of life (God) and is the womb of union with all persons and compassionate engagement with the world. Our human vocation is to abide in God and be drawn to the center, while at the same time becoming the reality of God's presence on life's surface in a way that draws other people to the center in a sacred community of mutual love.