



The Cloud of Unknowing: and The Book of Privy Counseling (Image Classics)

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THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING and THE BOOK OF PRIVY COUNSELING are the first explorations in the English language of the soul's quest for God.

Written in Middle English by an unknown fourteenth-century mystic, THE CLOUD OF UNKNOWING expresses with beauty a message that has inspired such great religious thinkers as St. John of the Cross and Teilhard de Chardin, as well as countless others in search of God. Offering a practical guide to the life of contemplation, the author explains that ordinary thoughts and earthly concepts must be buried beneath a "cloud of forgetting," while our love must rise toward a God hidden in the "cloud of unknowing." THE BOOK OF PRIVY COUNSELING, also included in this volume, is a short and moving text on the way to enlightenment through a total loss of self and a consciousness only of the divine.

William Johnston, an authority on fourteenth-century mysticism and spirituality, provides an accessible discussion of the works, detailing what is known about the history of the texts and their author. In a new foreword, Huston Smith draws on his extensive knowledge of the varieties of religious experience to illuminate the relevance of these works for contemporary readers.

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