



Rainer Maria Rilke

ADULT EDUCATION SCHEDULE:
February 25 - Rainer Maria Rilke
March 11 - T.S. Eliot
March 25 - John O'Donohue
April 8 - Flannery O'Connor
April 22 - Chief Seattle
May 13 - Annie Dillard
May 27 - Wendell Berry

LIVE INTO THE QUESTIONS



Rainer Maria Rilke
1875 - 1926

LETTERS TO A YOUNG POET

*I want to beg you,
as much as I can...
to be patient toward all that
is unsolved in your heart
and try to love the questions
themselves like locked rooms
and like books that are written
in a very foreign tongue.*

*Do not now seek the answers,
which cannot be given you because
you would not be able to live them.
And the point is, to live everything.*

*Live the questions now.
Perhaps you will then gradually,
without noticing it,
live along some distant day
into the answer.*

- ♦ What does Rilke mean – “there is boundary to looking?”
- ♦ Is what we see all there is in the world?
- ♦ What is the work of our heart?
- ♦ What images are in us that need to be released? Positive? Negative?
- ♦ What image do you think God has of us?

FROM "THE TURNING POINT"

*For there is a boundary to looking.
And the world that is looked at so deeply
wants to flourish in love.*

*Work of the eyes is done,
Now go and do heart-work
on all the images imprisoned within you;
for you overpowered them:
but even now you don't know them.
Learn, inner man, to look
at your inner woman,
the one attained from
a thousand natures,
the merely attained but
not yet beloved form.*

- ◆ Are you patient with all that is unsolved in your heart?
- ◆ Do you have more questions than answers?
- ◆ What does it mean to live everything, including the questions?
- ◆ Have you ever lived with uncertainty and suddenly found answers?
- ◆ Jesus went about doing good. Apparently, part of the good Jesus did was to ask great questions that made people stop and think—
 - ◇ Who is my neighbor?
 - ◇ What are you looking for?
 - ◇ What do you want me to do for you?
- ◆ The temptation is to answer these questions quickly, yet they do not have quick nor easy answers.
- ◆ What would it look like to live out the questions Jesus asks?

BEFORE HE MAKES EACH ONE

*Before he makes each one
Of us, God speaks.*

*Then, without speaking,
He takes each one
Out of the darkness.*

*And these are the cloudy
Words God speaks
Before each of us begins:*

*“You have been sent out
by your senses. Go
to the farthest edge
of desire, and give me
clothing: burn like a great
fire so that the stretched-out
shadows of the things
of the world cover
me completely.*

*Let everything happen
To you: beauty and terror.*

*You must just go-
No feeling is the farthest
You can go. Don't let
Yourself be separated
From me. The country
Called life is close.
By its seriousness,
You will know it.
Give me your hand.”*

- ♦ What might it mean to be sent out by our senses?
- ♦ Are we willing to accept everything that happens to us?
- ♦ What does Rilke mean “No feeling is the farthest you can go?”
- ♦ How can we make sure we are not separated from God?