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## Emily Dickinson as a Spiritual Guide

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# Emily Dickinson as a Spiritual Guide



Emma Carlsen, Gabbi Shumway, Connor Coles

# How Does Dickinson Invite Her Audience To Follow A Religious Journey?



This World is not Conclusion.  
A Species stands beyond -  
Invisible, as Music -  
But positive, as Sound -  
It beckons, and it baffles -  
Philosophy, dont know -  
And through a Riddle, at the last -  
Sagacity, must go -  
To guess it, puzzles scholars -  
To gain it, Men have borne  
Contempt of Generations  
And Crucifixion, shown -  
Faith slips - and laughs, and rallies -  
Blushes, if any see -  
Plucks at a twig of Evidence -  
And asks a Vane, the way -  
Much Gesture, from the Pulpit -  
Strong Hallelujahs roll -  
Narcotics cannot still the Tooth  
That nibbles at the soul -

## “This World Is Not Conclusion”

- Five distinct sections:
  - a. Affirmation that something exists beyond
  - b. Allure of the world beyond
  - c. Strength of faith
  - d. Fickleness of faith
  - e. Criticism of religion

# “Within My Garden, Rides A Bird”

- A poem about overcoming faith and doubt
- This poem is not explicitly about religion but can argue that it touches on religious questions because it on the same sheet as “This World”
- Discovers evidence and overcomes doubt

“And I rejoin my Dog,-And He and I, perplex us- If positive, ‘twere we-Or bore the Garden in the Brain-This Curiosity- But He, the best Logician,-Refers my clumsy eye- To just vibrating Blossoms!- An exquisite Reply!”

McIntosh:

Nimble believing= “Belief for intense moments but not subscribing to a received system of belief, what she has faith in is left undefined and assumes it as untouchable.”

# “Is Bliss Then Such Abyss”

- Is about taking risks in order to discover the bliss associated with spiritual discovery
- The main point in this poem, though, is that the speaker does not risk soiling her boot. She doubts her own ability and retreats to safety.
- The speaker is so doubtful of achieving bliss that she refuses not run the risk of attaining it. She decides instead to live a safe life.

“But Bliss, is sold just one.-The Patent lost-None buy it any more-”

-An experience or opportunity cannot be replaced

- There were many risks associated with publicly declaring one’s religion.

# “After Great Pain, A Formal Feeling Comes”

- About trauma
- The speaker is not experiencing trauma but rather an observer who comments of the trauma associated with uncertainty regarding the presence of Jesus. Evident in lines 3 and 4 “The stiff Heart questions ‘was it He, that bore,’-And ‘Yesterday, or Centuries before?”
- The person described is spiritually at sea, in the thralls of doubt.
- The speaker experienced deep suffering and has doubts about Jesus’ presence as a source of spiritual nature.
- Dickinson’s lack of following social norms result in emotional isolation. Reflection of her feelings of being spiritually lost and frustrated.

# Other Fascicle Sheets - Sheet One

Theme: If people let themselves settle, they will never truly be content, they must let themselves be present.

*It's thoughts—and just One Heart—*

“It's thoughts—and just two Heart—

And Heaven—about—

At least—a Counterfeit—

We would not have Correct—

And Immortality—can be almost—

Not quite—Content—”

# Other Fascicle Sheets - Sheet Two

Theme: The desire to keep going despite the pain.

*He strained my faith—*

“He strained my faith—

Did he find it supple?

Shook my strong trust—

Did it then—yield?”

# Other Fascicle Sheets - Sheet Three

Theme: Why one desires to have a relationship with God.

*I envy Seas, whereon He rides -*

“That gaze upon His journey—

How easy all can see

What is forbidden utterly

As Heaven—unto me!”

# Other Fascicle Sheets - Sheet Five

Theme: Recognizes the distance individuals feel from God.

*My Reward for Being, was This -*

“When Thrones accost my Hands—

With "Me, Miss, Me"—

I'll unroll Thee —

Dominions dowerless — beside this Grace —

Election — Vote —

The Ballots of Eternity, will show just that.”

# Other Fascicle Sheets - Sheet Six

Theme: The complexities of music and how there is new music to be found.

*Better — than Music!*

“Better — than Music!

For I — who heard it —

I was used — to the Birds — before —

This — was different — 'Twas Translation —

Of all tunes I knew — and more —”

# Conclusion

- Dickinson refused to diminish the importance of the spiritual journey.
- Understanding of the spiritual may change but do not compromise in the pursuit of truth.
- Dickinson warns her audience that it will be hard and painful but worth the price.
- “This World Is Not Conclusion” talks about the journey of faith and through the rest of the poems Dickinson shows how we can make that journey.

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