



# Partakers of the Divine: Contemplation and the Practice of Philosophy (Emerging Scholars)

*Jacob Holsinger Sherman*

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One of the important ecclesial developments over the last century has been the extraordinary rediscovery, retrieval and reinvigoration of the Christian contemplative tradition, a recovery that has been extraordinarily influential. Theologians have begun to explore how aspects of the Christian contemplative tradition challenge certain prevalent views about the nature of God, the world, and persons, but this contemplative renaissance also raises crucial questions about a variety of more philosophical arenas such as how we construe the relationship between faith and reason, religious epistemology, theological metaphysics, philosophical hermeneutics and so forth. How might the theological and ecclesial renewal of the Christian contemplative tradition augment, challenge, and transform the practice not only of theology but also of philosophy itself? This book is an extended essay in 'contemplative philosophy,' the meeting of mystical and philosophical theology, of Christian contemplation and the philosophy of religion. It shows that, within the Christian tradition, philosophical and contemplative practices arose together and that throughout much of Christian history philosophy, theology and contemplation remained internal to one another. Contemplation was not something to be studied from the outside but rather transformed philosophical and theological inquiries from the inside. The relation of philosophy, theology, and contemplation to one another is of more than antiquarian interest, for it provides theologians and philosophers of religion today with a way forward beyond many of the stalemates that have beset discussions about faith and reason, the role of religion in contemporary culture, and the challenges of modernity and postmodernity.

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