

## Introduction to this Edition



**T**HIS SHORT BOOK ATTEMPTS TO EXPLAIN and encourage the effort toward a deeper unity with our Lord Jesus Christ. Such a unity with an immaterial being may seem farfetched when viewed against all the material attractions in this world. Yet each person possesses the capability of focusing intensely on Jesus in daily life amidst any number of powerful influences. What the author provides is a guide for deepening this unity, both in the midst of, and despite, an ordinary life in the middle of the world.

The self-portrait depicted on the book cover represents how this unity with Jesus can appear. The artist, Martin von Feuerstein (1858–1931) was a German professor and a painter. He shows

himself sitting at his desk, with a ghost-like, or spirit image of Jesus, who stands behind him and holds his right hand as if in blessing the painter's seated figure. It is an unusual self-portrait, in that it includes the Son of God. We can only imagine what the artist intended. But we can assume that a painter who includes someone else in a self-portrait makes a powerful statement about his relationship with that person.

This presentation of a person next to Jesus Christ is an unusual way to illustrate the point of this book. *One With Jesus, The Life of Identification with Christ*, emerged from the pen of Paul de Jaeger, S.J., (1880–1958). His purpose in writing was to explain St. Paul's doctrine of incorporation into Christ, the culmination of unity between the soul and God: "It directs the whole spiritual life towards transformation into Jesus and identification with him." (from the Preface). Rather than being satisfied with God "saving" their souls, the author praises those who generously turn themselves over to God. "God is the divine guest of my soul, dwelling

there day and night, desirous of receiving the unceasing homage of my intimate friendship and of my love.”

One man whose life was changed by reading de Jaegher’s book was Dom Eugene Boylan, the twentieth-century author of spiritual works. Boylan discovered in de Jaegher the key to unlocking the key to the interior life, which is to seek spiritual union with Jesus Christ, the Son of God. After reading *One With Jesus*, Boylan began his own writing career, often working during the only time he had, at night, which led to his first book, *Difficulties in Mental Prayer*, and followed up with his best-known book, *This Tremendous Lover*.

As the author of *One With Jesus* drew on the 17th century French mystical writers such as Pierre Lallemant, Pierre de Berulle, and others, so did Boylan adopt the ideas from *One With Jesus* for *This Tremendous Lover*. This present edition leaves out many of the lengthy original footnotes to other works or includes explanations in the text, in order to enable the reader to

follow more easily the author's flow of thought. In this slightly abridged edition, it is hoped that the author's original work can be re-presented to a new generation of readers.