



Jacques Ellul: Essential Spiritual Writings (Modern Spiritual Masters)

Jacob E. Van Vleet

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Thomas Merton is one of many who were deeply influenced by the work of Jacques Ellul (1912-1994), a French philosopher and lay theologian. A remarkable thinker and prophet of the twentieth century, he wrote over fifty books on a range of topics: law, history, sociology, theology, even poetry. Jacques Ellul: Essential Spiritual Writings is the first anthology of his work and provides an ideal work for those encountering Ellul for the first time as well as those already familiar with his thought.

Throughout his work Ellul spoke out against the "idols and myths" of the modern age, including technology, politics, materialism, and violence. His prophetic critique of modern civilization won an appreciative audience far beyond Christian circles. Yet this was only one half of a project that drew deeply on his Christian faith.

or nearly every sociological book he wrote, Ellul would write a theological or spiritual counterpart. And yet this other half of his work has received relatively little attention. This volume corrects the balance, highlighting spiritual gems on prayer, hope, and universal salvation. His call to reject the worship of the state and to embrace nonviolent activism has an abiding relevance and urgency, particularly in these times of protracted war and violence, gaping economic inequality, and enormous suffering.

Jacob E. Van Vleet is a lecturer in humanities and philosophy at Diablo Valley College, Pleasant Hill, CA, and serves on the Board of Directors of the International Jacques Ellul Society. He is author of *Dialectical Theology and Jacques Ellul* (Fortress Press, 2014).

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