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THE MARK

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SEEDS OF NEW LIFE

SEEDS OF NEW LIFE

BY PETER HAAS

The Jewish mystical text, *The Zohar*, speaks of God and the beginning of life as “the Concealed within the Concealed.” It seems to me that this is also a poetic way of expressing the mystery of what a seed is: the concealed within the concealed – possibility within possibility.

As a kid, I would peel open seeds looking for their secret within. What was *in* the within, I wondered? Where was the apple *in* the apple seed? I’ll never forget sitting at our yellow linoleum kitchen table on the second floor of our bungalow house on Hoffman Avenue in Brookfield, Wisconsin, looking out at the early Spring trees blooming. My mom told us that if we cut the apple open, we could see stars in the apple. I was five years old and astounded. I loved stars. I adored apples. This idea that stars could be in apples was too much for me! I think I started to jump up and down watching the apple in my mother’s hands. Sure enough, as she cracked the apple in half, there was the star pattern of the black seeds against the white flesh of the apple. The concealed within

the concealed! Later, we would plant those seeds and watch them be raised to life by the power of summer sunlight.

Children remember and feel this seed-mystery more easily than adults. They know we are all the concealed within the concealed. Mystery within mystery. Love within love. Your inner child still remembers. Perhaps in the silence, when feeling the sacredness of time stopping, as if in a miraculous moment of pure sunlit goodness: *I come from the stars...I am here to be cracked open too...that’s how the starlight gets out* (see Philippians 2.15).

As beings created in the image of God, we too are like seeds. The Work of Inner Christianity teaches us that humans contain within our being-ness deep possibilities for development, even to the point of *evolution as Christ*. In fact, the cosmological perspective of the Work situates humankind as a kind of germinating seed placed here on this planet for the sole purpose of developing and serving the larger process of unfolding life. This places us in relation to the wholeness of the cosmos, which we joyfully recognize in the Easter season with

alleluias in our hearts as the living, resurrected body of Christ; now that can put a smile in our hearts!

The beloved Vietnamese Buddhist teacher Thich Nhat Hanh was once asked, “How can I force myself to smile when I am filled with sorrow?” Hanh replied, “you must smile *to* your sorrow.” He went on to say, “a human being is like a satellite TV, capable of picking up countless channels. If we turn the joy channel on, we *are* joyful. If we turn the sorrow channel on, we *are* sorrow. If we turn the love channel on, we *are* love. If we turn the smile channel on, we *are* the smile. We are free to choose the channel we watch. We have the seed of everything in us, and we have the freedom to choose what we cultivate.”

Expressed metaphysically, Hanh’s ideas resonate with the phrase: what we hold in mind, happens in kind. And, of course, the biblical wisdom saying *we reap what we sow*. Applied spiritually, these principles point to the gift of human freedom: we are all free to choose what thoughts, feelings and sensations we identify with. Will

we tune into our heavenly source and destiny?

As extraordinary as it sounds, the truth is that no external, earthly situation, person, event or experience can ultimately imprison our interior freedom to choose where and what we give our attention to. Look up! Call upon your Heavenly Abba/Amma. We are open to a new interior future in this and every moment. That statement doesn't deny the facticity of any present suffering. Rather, it affirms our freedom to choose how we respond to the suffering that does occur.

Though a new interior life may not necessarily change our external situation, it will equip us with a new way of being in that situation, no matter what the externals of life may be. Yet, in many cases, shifting our attention often does change externals in positive, unexpected ways. For example, explore Thich Nhat Hanh's practical exercise for several minutes and notice how the interior and exterior interweave:

Breathing in, I calm my body
and mind.

Breathing out, I smile with joy.

Dwelling in the present,

This is the only moment.

The challenge is that while it's true we are little God-seeds, we can also be very human weeds – to ourselves and to one another. Like Jesus' parable of the sower, the seed and the soils, the weeds of

distraction and negativity grounded in our earliest programs for happiness can often grow around our mind, heart and body. This limits our flourishing. Weeds such as jealousy, laziness and anger, to list a few examples, tend to constrict our maturing and hinder our spiritual evolution. That's why it's so good to remember that it's as if God is our soul-gardener. The grace of God in Christ by the Spirit not only nourishes us with living light and water; but also, in the silence of Centering Prayer and the stillness of the Eucharist, gently removes the interior weeds crowding out the flow of divine energy to us. The poet Rilke reminds us to "be [patient] now like a thing ripened until it is real, so that [the one] who began it all can feel you when [Wholeness] reaches for you".

As I write this article, it's the middle of Lent. Out my widow, in the courtyard of Columbus House at Cedarbrake Retreat Center in Belton, Texas, I can see the redbud tree just now starting to burst out its purple buds, carefully and cutely carpeting the trunk and its otherwise bare limbs. I'm here for a Lenten ten-day Centering Prayer retreat, a retreat which often corresponds with the bursting forth of springtime blooms. All this beauty around me once began as a seed. So too each of our lives. By the time you read this, Lent and

Holy Week will have come and gone. This tree is a witness to me that within the cross, tears and tomb is also a hidden resurrection and ascension – yet to be revealed.

Our Lenten journeys and the Passion story of Jesus, help us remember that every season of suffering can lead us to a little bit of a resurrection. Our lifetime is a journey of germination. Under the right conditions, we crack open, connect into the Ground of our Being, reach for the light, and rise into an unexpected flourishing. Poet Anne Michaels, as if praying from the seed-depths of human existence, helps me remember also the Presence of love we are all drawn toward amidst the seasons of waiting and suffering:

"No matter where you are

Or who you're near,

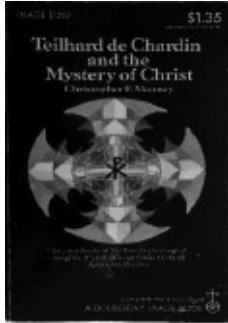
We come up for air together.

No matter my pace of
distance,

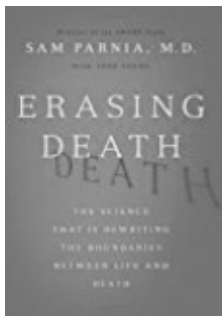
It's you I surface to." (*Poems*,
"Sublimation")

As our seed-life is cracked open by the divine energy calling us to emerge, grow, develop and evolve, we again and again wake from the dream of forgetfulness. We see each other's faces and remember who we are. It's *You*, it's *We*, it's *Thee*, Heavenly Source and Sustainer, to whom we surface; the starry face of love itself. ☉

BOOK LOOK



Christopher F. Mooney's classic book *Teilhard de Chardin and the Mystery of Christ* was first published in 1964. It was one of the first comprehensive studies and systemization of Teilhard's revolutionary ideas. It remains an important resource for students of Teilhard, and anyone interested in exploring the cosmic forward movement of the Spirit toward Christ and the Wholeness of Love. From a theological perspective, Mooney systemized Teilhard's primary writings, which Ilia Delio continues to do in our generation. Though the book is out of print, interested readers can easily find used and inexpensive copies available online.

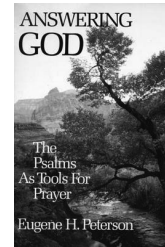


Sam Parnia's compelling book *Erasing Death* takes a helpful and optimistic overview of the science that's rewriting the boundaries between life and death. Not only is *Erasing Death* an important rational pairing to the many near death experiences of popular literature, Parnia also delves into the science of consciousness and explores what the self is and is not. Refreshingly, Parnia doesn't reduce consciousness, the self or soul merely to a phenomena of brain activity. Reading *Erasing Death* will encourage you and may help provide a wider understanding of the distinction between resuscitation and resurrection. One line of this compelling book opens significant possibilities for conversation with the Work idea of the four bodies, and the idea that we are created as self-developing organisms:

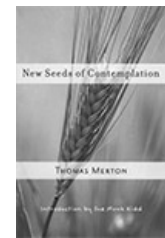
"The level of perception of reality that exists after death is directly proportional to that acquired on earth..." (p. 195)

CCH BOOKSTORE

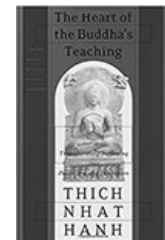
SUGGESTED TITLES FOR APRIL



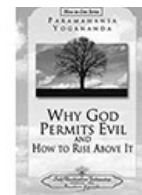
Answering God
The Psalms as Tools for Prayer
by Eugene Peterson



New Seeds of Contemplation
by Thomas Merton



The Heart of Buddha's Teaching
Transforming Suffering into Peace, Joy and Liberation
by Thich Nhat Hanh



Why God Permits Evil
And How to Rise Above It
by Paramahansa Yogananda

Bookstore and Library Hours
Open Monday-Friday 9:00 am-4:00 pm
Sunday 9:30-10:00 am & 11:30 am-noon

OUR CELEBRATION OF GRACE!

BY BARBARA AND TIM COOK

On January 6, 2018, we shared a beautiful Spirit-filled celebration to acknowledge the completion of our 30 years of Grace at The Church of Conscious Harmony. It was a beautiful time to thank God, the Work of Inner Christianity, Centering Prayer and Bernadette Roberts for the spiritual growth that has blessed all of us who have participated. This Celebration of Grace was an exclamation point that marked the end of our time as pastors and facilitators of what began as a five year experiment in a Christian contemplative lay community for transformation of individuals into Christ. Now, a new octave of that same mission is beginning under the inspired leadership of Peter Haas.

Everyone who purchased tickets for the celebration was told that the proceeds were going to be given to us as a parting gift. Recently, Donald Genung presented us with a check from the Church for that and much more. We were surprised and blessed by this generous gift and we thank each of you from the bottom of our hearts. We offer special thanks to all of you who felt a desire to gift us above and beyond the original gift. It's clear that Christ is growing in your lives and that you feel that we have been a part of this growth on our amazing journey in God's Love and our shared Christogenesis, our transformation into Christ.


We are grateful to those who

sent cards and took time to share the ways in which God has been growing you since you began participating in the Church and its practices. Like you, I am always more aware of the amazing graces that have come into my life when I take the time to look back at my life. Since the time God invited me to grow, I've been liberated and enlivened in so many ways that it can sometimes seem ordinary until I reflect. It has been simply miraculous, a cause for great gratitude, never to be taken for granted. We thank you for sharing your experience with us. It is a beautiful way to glorify and magnify God for all of us.

We also feel great gratitude for all who prepared the feast – from securing the venue, selecting the food and music, getting those precious interviews and pictures,

emceeding, taking pictures, turning on the lights at CCH so they would shine down on the festivities at The One World Theatre, and to all who attended. It was a truly fine way to celebrate the close of the opening octave of the Church. We felt warmed and blessed by all the selfless effort and participation that made it possible.

The Church of Conscious Harmony and all of you remain in our daily prayers for the fulfillment of God's plan in you. You are the Light of the world. As you continue to consent, you can completely trust that God is doing His part to complete His plan in you.

Your generosity is blessed and we pray that it will be multiplied in all areas of your lives and most especially in your journey in God, into Christ. 

EASTER SUNDAY

HOLY LIFE (MARK 16.1-7)

APRIL 1

7:00-7:30 AM

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE IN THE SANCTUARY (NO EUCHARIST)

8:00-9:00 AM

CENTERING PRAYER AND LECTIO DIVINA SERVICE IN THE SANCTUARY

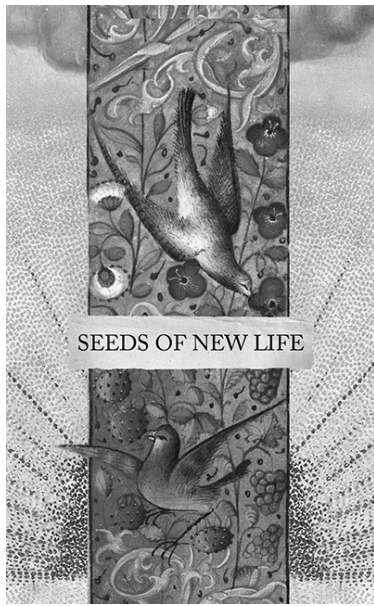
9:00-9:30 AM

EASTER FELLOWSHIP – LIGHT BREAKFAST

10:00 AM

EASTER SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE IN THE SANCTUARY

(WITH EUCHARIST)



In Your light, we see light. Psalm 36:10

ANNUAL AIM: EVOLVING AS CHRIST

SEEDS OF NEW LIFE

REBORN TO THE TRUTH OF LOVE BY TODD BUCHANAN

Every moment and every event of everyone's life on earth plants something in the soul. For just as the wind carries thousands of winged seeds, so each moment brings with it germs of spiritual vitality that come to rest imperceptibly in the mind and will. ... Most of these unnumbered seeds perish and are lost, because men [women] are not prepared to receive them: for such seeds as these cannot spring up anywhere except in the good soil of freedom, spontaneity and love. ... 'The seed is the word of God.' We often think this applies only to the word of the Gospel. ... but every expression of the will of God is in some sense a 'word' of God and therefore a 'seed' of new life. ... The love of God seeks us in every situation, and seeks our good. God's inscrutable love seeks our awakening. ... to make the choices that deliver us from our routine self and open to us the door of a new being, a new reality.

Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*

Probably the hardest part of my job as a family practice doctor over the years has been telling people that their test results show they have a potentially terminal disease. Although we're all going there, it's a reality that shocks most people. So when I sat looking at some routine lab work I had done on myself five years ago that indicated an abnormal result, it

just didn't register with me that I had a potentially terminal disease. I thought it must be related to a recent bout of flu. Let's repeat it in a month and it'll be fine. A month later, my white blood cell level was still more than twice normal.

Hello! Surprise. Shock. Fear. Sadness. As a doctor, I was very used to working with dying people. In fact, I was also the medical

director for a couple of hospices. I'd say that one of my early motivations in becoming a family physician was knowing that it would give me the opportunity to develop an acute awareness of death, and that would enhance my appreciation for life. As a young adult reading Carlos Castaneda's stories about Don Juan, a Central American sorcerer, this left an indelible impression on me.

Don Juan talked about death sitting on your left shoulder all your life and that being intimately aware of that is what gave a person the power to be fully alive. Without that awareness, one was sleepwalking through life. With that background, I was able to pretty quickly get to the realization that in many ways this diagnosis was a blessing, the biggest wakeup call I could ever ask for. It was time to WAKE UP! As Tim Cook used to say, “You need to pray like your house is on fire!”

One of the most interesting things about attending The Church of Conscious Harmony for me has been how often the teachings offered here – through readings, sermons, classes, and discussions – have spoken directly to what I am going through in life. So as I pondered the quotes for the year and this Easter month at CCH, the things that rang true and go straight to the core of what is important and meaningful for me are:

1) the preciousness of life and our consciousness, and

2) the idea, knowledge and understanding that *we are members of one another*. (Ephesians 4:25)

I love Thomas Merton’s quote from *New Seeds of Contemplation* that every moment of our lives bring us “germs of spiritual vitality,” but most of these perish and are lost. Seeds are such a beautiful symbol for transformation, and Easter is our time to be reborn and resurrected in Christ. In Peter Haas’ Scriptorium class about our

lectionary readings every week, it has been very interesting to reference the Greek roots of words in the Gospels. When I looked up resurrection, it comes from the Greek “anastasis: to cause to rise up, to raise from sleep.” Time to wake up!

Merton says the seeds of our life can only spring up in the “good soil of freedom, spontaneity and love.” As I considered this I was immediately reminded of one of my favorite bricks on the Path of Intention leading to our church. Rachel Remen said, “Freedom comes from choosing the changing events of life.” That really hit home and dovetails perfectly with the ability to be spontaneous, which to me means trusting, surrendering, and being non-judgmental. I have spent so much of my life resisting the reality of the present moment, which is ultimately an expression of God’s will. When I give up the unconscious suffering that goes along with that resistance then I really can start to open to Merton’s third condition of good soil – Love. As we sing in church every week, “The gospel in one word is Love.” The simplicity and directness of that line go straight to the heart of my connection to this Church. The image of good soil, of course, recalls the parable of the sower. In talking about this recently, Peter said that being good soil was the bull’s-eye of our target. We won’t hit it every time, but it is what we aim for. To be awake, alert, receptive, patient

and persistent – that is my wish as I travel along the path.

There were many things that resonated deeply with me when I first came to CCH 19 years ago. One of those was that the “legs” of the church are meditative prayer and psychological study. I grew up attending Episcopalian and Presbyterian churches in Houston, but when I came to the University of Texas in Austin for college ... let’s just say my horizons expanded, considerably. I was fortunate to be in a liberal arts program where I could study pretty much whatever I was interested in, which at the time included Eastern religions, cultural anthropology, and history. I belonged to a Buddhist meditation center for several years and would go on retreats with Ram Dass or Steven Levine if they were anywhere in Texas. From my late teens, I have been convinced that spiritual growth must include a cultivation of silence and stillness as a central focus. I had certainly never meditated in church before, and as I learned more about Centering Prayer, I came to appreciate that relationality to God was the primary intention of this practice, whereas the cultivation of mindfulness was the main focus of Buddhist practices. Doing Centering Prayer in a group of people with a shared intention toward God has been a redemptive experience.

The openness to other faith traditions that our former ministers, Tim and Barbara Cook, brought to



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CCH was hugely refreshing. The first time I attended Sunday service, Tim read from the Bhagavad Gita! He had a wall hanging in his office that said, "All Paths Lead to God." We sent a delegation to visit the Dalai Lama in India and later his brother visited us in Austin. This was a far cry from some of the very rigid and narrow minded forms of conventional Christianity that I had been exposed to along the way. But as Tim's teacher in India told him – you are a Christian, follow your path. That spoke directly to me. I had just never been able to see a Christian path for myself before coming here.


Another aspect of the teachings at CCH that immediately struck me was the very deep intellectual curiosity about the true nature of the universe in modern terms of psychology and science. To come to a church that understood and incorporated the discoveries of 20th century quantum physics into its spiritual understanding was life altering. The capstone of my undergraduate education was a senior thesis that compared the conclusions of modern physics to those of the Eastern mystical traditions of Buddhism, Hinduism and Taoism. The conclusions were pretty much identical. Quantum physics shows that the elementary particles that matter is composed of are not independent entities, but rather a complex pattern of relations between various parts

of a unified whole. As crazy as it sounds, science has proven that we are literally connected to everything in the universe – simultaneously and completely. When I came to CCH and heard Tim talk about these teachings, it provided the perfect spiritual context for my understanding of the universe:

As it is above, so it is below.
We are all manifestations of
the whole.

There is only ONE.

We must all confront the "lie
of separation."

Best of all, CCH has given me a chance to see what a community of devotion looks like and to hang out with people who really do practice – daily. Having the example of Tim, Barbara, many other community members, and now Peter, living "God centered lives" as the Church bylaws state, turns out to be the missing piece of my journey. I had drifted away from this church for about 6 years and am so thankful to be back. I can absolutely feel the united intention to focus on God when I walk on the church grounds, sit in the sanctuary, attend classes, and share with other members. To be in the presence of people who commit themselves to the practices at CCH is palpable! I feel so blessed to learn and grow from the combined energy that is available here. At this Eastertime of death and resurrection, my prayer is to be reborn to the Truth of Love – over and over and over again. May it be so. Amen. 

SEEDS

The mind that is the prisoner of conventional ideas,
and the will that is the captive of its own desire
cannot accept the seeds of an unfamiliar truth and a super-natural desire.

For how can I receive the seeds of freedom if I am in love
with slavery and how can I cherish the desire of God
if I am filled with another and an opposite desire? ...

I love my captivity and I imprison myself in the desire
for the things that I hate,

and I have hardened my heart against true love.
I must learn therefore to let go of the familiar and the usual and
consent to what is new and unknown to me.

I must learn to "leave myself" in order to find myself
by yielding to the love of God.

If I were looking for God, every event and every moment would sow,
in my will, grains of His life that would spring up
one day in a tremendous harvest.

Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation*, page 16.

GUIDELINES FOR CHRISTIAN LIFE, GROWTH AND TRANSFORMATION

Fr. Thomas Keating, in his seminal work

Open Mind, Open Heart,

lists 42 principles underlying
the Christian spiritual journey.

Fr. Keating asks that these principles be read according
to the method of Lectio Divina.

One principle will appear in these pages each month.

3RD GUIDELINE

God and our true Self are not separate.
Though we are not God,
God and our true Self are the same thing.

APRIL CALENDAR

Visit consciouharmony.org
for a complete listing of events

SPECIAL EVENTS

Easter Events

April 1 (see schedule on page 5)

One-Day Centering Prayer Retreat

April 21 8:30 am-4:30 pm

Cost is \$15. BYO lunch.

Pre-register in the office.

Annual Meeting

Board of Directors and Community

April 29 noon

MONTHLY

1st Sundays

Bring non-perishables for Caritas

WEEKLY

Sundays

Lectio Divina 8:00-9:00 am

Worship Service 10:00-11:30 am

Youth Program 10:00-11:30 am

Fellowship 11:30 am

Wednesdays

Prayer Circle 10:15-11:00 am

Contemplative Lunch noon-1:00 pm

Contemplative Communion Service 6:00-7:00 pm

Infusion 7:15-8:25 pm

Thursdays 7:30-9:00 pm

Work of Inner Christianity Class

Fridays 7:30-8:45 pm

Devotional Service

Saturdays noon-12:50 pm

Scriptorium

DAILY

Sunday-Saturday 7:00-7:35 am

Centering Prayer Service in Theosis Chapel

Recordings of services are available
through the Bookstore and online at
www.consciouharmony.org

My Father is still working, and I also am working. John 5:17

LIVING THE WORK OF INNER CHRISTIANITY IN DAILY LIFE

THE FOUR BODIES AND THE RESURRECTION

Work Idea: In the season of Easter, it's useful to review the Work idea of the "four bodies" and its connection to the Christian understanding of Jesus' resurrection. Let's first review the categories of the four bodies.

CHRISTIAN TERMS:

Physical Body
Natural Body
Spiritual/Resurrected Body
Heavenly/Divine Body

WORK TERMS:

| | | |
|----------|----------|--------------------|
| 1st Body | Carriage | Body |
| 2nd Body | Horse | Feelings/Desires |
| 3rd Body | Driver | Mind |
| 4th Body | Master | Consciousness/Will |

If you think of a Russian nesting doll, one body within the next, then you will be able to understand in a more visual way the developmental nature of this idea of the four bodies (see figure).

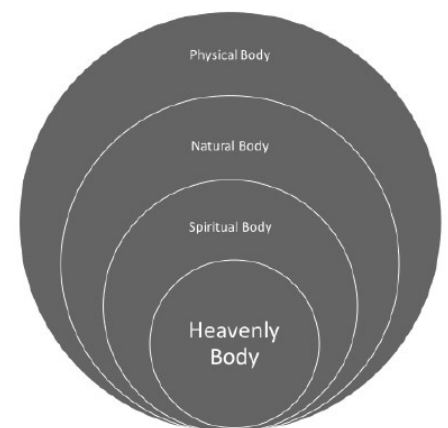
Also, if you can, imagine this nest as an organic, dynamic, interrelated movement, such as in a vortex spiral. From each level, the energy moves upward from the ground of one's being, represented by the foundational physical body,

toward the emerging heavenly body. The lower is transcended by the higher, but also included and never disconnected, that is, until death occurs.

Work Source: Maurice Nicoll clearly summarizes the ideas on pages 226-227 in the *Psychological Commentaries on the Teachings of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky*:

"In order to understand *what* a person is at the present time

– that is, at the present level of development – it is necessary to imagine to a certain extent



what a person can be – that is, what one can attain. Only by understanding the correct sequence of development possible will people cease to ascribe to themselves what, at present, they do not possess, and what, perhaps, they can only acquire after great effort and great labor. According to an ancient teaching, traces of which may be found in many systems, old and new, a person who has attained the full development possible for humankind, a person in the full sense of the word, *consists of four bodies*. These four bodies are composed of substances which are finer and finer, mutually interpenetrate one another and form four independent organisms, standing in a definite relationship to one another but capable of independent action.”


Practical Application: For many, the Easter story of Jesus’ resurrection is challenging, partially because most of us have never seen a dead man rise after two nights of being clinically dead. At best, in recent decades, we’ve begun to realize the validity of near death experiences, which tend to be viewed as a form of resuscitation, not resurrection. The Christian tradition bears witness to the claim that Jesus wasn’t just resuscitated, His body was literally transformed into a different kind of physical-

spiritual body, which we call *the resurrection body*.

The Work idea that we can attain “the full development possible for humankind” sounds like the nature of a seed. At first, we are physical body seeds, but we are not created just to be a physical body-seed. We are created to become what is within the seed. In the case of a human being, this includes both a physical body and the possibility of a spiritual, resurrected body. We are created as self-developing organisms, not just self-satisfying creatures.

The Work idea of the four bodies may help frame the Christian resurrection narrative, and vice versa. Separated from the larger picture of human development, the resurrection devolves into another fantastic miracle story. Yet, when the resurrection is connected with the idea and possibility of our further spiritual development

and evolution, the resurrection of Jesus becomes a manifestation of a stage of our future spiritual life; a stage that can’t be understood from the limited view of physical life alone. That’s why we take Jesus’ resurrection experience as an event of trans-rationality. It transcends the mind and invites a quality of faith that hopes and believes that with God *all things are continuously possible*.

Further Resources: The idea of the four bodies can be explored further in Nicoll’s *Psychological Commentaries*, pp. 218-235 and Ouspensky’s *In Search of the Miraculous*, Chapter Two. It is also useful to ponder these ideas having done Lectio Divina with St. Paul’s description of the resurrection body found in 1 Corinthians 15. 

For more experience with these teachings, you are invited to attend the Work of Inner Christianity class held Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. at The Church of Conscious Harmony.

Community Reading for March-April

Written in Our Hearts
by Theodore Nottingham

Nottingham is a rare combination of wise pastor and Work of Inner Christianity teacher; his practical summary of the broad Work tradition is invaluable. This book is an insightful exploration of the Work through the lens of Christian experience.



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THE GRACE OF TRANSFORMED VISION

*And it happened, while Jesus was with them at table,
He took bread, said the blessing, broke it and gave it to them.
With that their eyes were opened and they recognized Him, but He vanished from their sight.
They said to one another, 'Were not our hearts burning inside us as He talked to us on the way
and opened the scriptures to us?'*

Luke 24:30-32

Like the disciples of Emmaus, we, too, have our own ideas of Jesus Christ,
His message and His church.
We, too, are conditioned by our upbringing, early education, culture and life experience.
The disciples could not recognize Jesus as long as their mindsets about who He was
and what He was to do were in place.

When Jesus demolished their blindness with His explanation of the scriptures,
their vision of Him began to assume a more realistic tone.

The price of recognizing Jesus is always the same:
our idea of Him, of the church, of the spiritual journey, of God Himself has to be shattered.

... When we let go of our private and limited vision,
He who has been hidden from us by our pre-packaged values
and preconceived ideas causes the scales to fall from our eyes.
He was there all the time. Now at least we perceive His Presence.

Thomas Keating, *The Mystery of Christ*