



THE MARK

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God Writes Straight with Crooked Lines

by Tim Cook

A few weeks ago during Sunday service, Barbara and I shared an experience that illustrated how God writes straight with crooked lines. We were recalling the trip we took to California early in our relationship when money was tight, prayer was abundant and we faced enormous difficulties that ultimately turned out to be gifts that we would not fully understand until much later. At the same time that we were recounting our story, a group of our young people were at the Lama Foundation in San Cristobal, New Mexico for their annual pilgrimage after which some of them would be traveling on to spend several days with our friends, the monks, at St. Benedict's monastery in Snowmass, Colorado.

Interestingly, the Lama Foundation was the place where Father Thomas Keating held his very first Centering Prayer retreat. That sacred place has been a center of spiritual awakening for countless individuals from all over the world. And as an inter-religious center, it has been at the forefront of a great movement of the Spirit in breaking down some of the walls of misunderstanding that separate various religions from one another.

Lama was one of the first intentional communities in the country and it has survived all the challenges that are customary to such community life. It is difficult building community when there are diverse ways of seeing and

being. How do you make room for everyone to be fully human, to bear their ordinary humanity and still have guidelines for the community that help it keep the absolutely necessary steady intention and focus? That, of course, is a delicate art, as well as a gift of Grace.

As Christians, we are given the great gift of being individual members in the great Mystical Body of Christ. As members of Christ's body, we feel Christ's presence holding our individualities while we each bear our seemingly separate selves, our false selves, and those of each of the others in the community. The Work of Inner Christianity tells us that we must each bear both the pleasant and unpleasant manifestations of ourselves and each other. We are empowered in this Work by remembering what Christ incarnated to reveal; there is no separate self. Through Christ, we are all made one with the whole of humanity and with the One God, Father of all that is.

When I first discovered spirituality in 1968, I began voraciously reading every book on the subject that I could get my hands on. One day when visiting a book store in Toronto, where I was living at the time, I was powerfully drawn to the book, *Remember Be Here Now* by Ram Dass. This book was written at the Lama Foundation and it blew my heart wide-open. It's clear now that it started me on the path that led

straight to our present community. But "straight" can have a lot of twists and turns when God is doing the leading. It has been said that God writes straight with crooked lines. No kidding! What a wonder it is to look back from my present life here and now in Austin as a pastor at The Church of Conscious Harmony, to see how the spiritual hunger that opened my heart 45 years ago started me on my spiritual journey. It took me through an astonishingly circuitous route, through all kinds of life changes and led me to found this church that I am still serving 25 years later. At the time I read that book, I hadn't been in a church for many years and I certainly never dreamed I would be a minister. But, of course, God knew.

In 1978, after reading many spiritual books for ten years and self-righteously thinking that made me "spiritual," I decided to go on my first retreat at the Lama Foundation with Ram Dass. As a beginner, I did not yet know just what and how much I did not know; but I was about to find out. God has many ways of revealing the things we need to learn on our spiritual journey by means of what Fr. Keating calls a series of humiliations. And oh the humiliation that I experienced at that karma yoga retreat. At the time, I did not know nor understand the idea behind "karma yoga" and I had no concept of the Work idea called "internal considering," but

I was about to find out. I found myself inwardly objecting to doing the manual labor for the retreat, which was carrying around rocks, lots and lots of big rocks. So instead of observing a loving mind in the silence of the retreat atmosphere and no distractions within my head, I got to see that I was a pretty unloving guy as I carried rocks and resented the fact that I had paid money to carry rocks.


On the last day of the retreat, Ram Dass came walking up the hill as I was walking down. As we got closer and closer, thoughts were running through my head about what I would say. I was in awe of Ram Dass who had written the life-changing book that opened the door to my heart. I felt the interior pressure building; I just had to say something. So as we got nearer I said, “Hey old man that’s some Kundalini you’ve got there.” Arrgh!! I didn’t even know what it meant, and I felt a blush go from my face down to my feet and back again. It was a culmination of every humiliation in my life, because it happened in silence. And there I was feeling pretty dumb. Well, this type of thing has recurred on countless occasions since then.

From the false self’s perspective, humiliation is an awfully harsh lesson. But from the point of view of our True Self – our Being – this is how we get to the truth, because the false self shows us how ridiculous it is. It shows us how we attempt to impress others and create appearances to influence how we want the world to think of us. These humiliations help us see what we are not. They help us let go of our false selves and see the truth that we are

very dependent little creatures. We are certainly not the independent, self-actualizing beings that we think ourselves to be. We are dependent on God for every heartbeat and every breath. We are dependent on God for the grace of friendship and for leading us every moment of every day. Grace is the means by which we return to our original union with God. Our end is the same as our beginning – union with God. And it is God who satisfies the hunger in our hearts and teaches us the truth that ultimately makes us free.

For over 25 years, God has held us in relationship as our church community has grown deeper and deeper. God helps us build community, which is the necessary womb that holds us together in His Love while we grow. Individually and collectively, we are learning to

surrender our lives and return them to their Source. God has been the sole focus of our lives here at The Church of Conscious Harmony and what a gift we have been given. Just as this young man was guided in 1968 to begin buying books that led him in a roundabout way to this church, each of us can trust our lives to God and let the invisible part of us be the Truth that keeps us free, even while the ordinary and extraordinary happenings of our lives go on.

As Barbara and I embark on our pilgrimage to Israel, Rome, Assisi and Snowmass, I am so grateful God wrote straight with these crooked lines of my life. And in the spirit of CCH’s annual aim of “Gratitude,” I am so grateful that the hunger that began for me in Toronto has ultimated in the gift of this community in Austin. 

Service to Others

For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve. (Mark 10:45)

Jesus Christ came not to be served, but to serve. And this is what everyone who has any authority over other people ought to be saying. This is what pure ministry is. Those whom we appear to command, we should in reality be serving. We must suffer their imperfections, lift them up gently and patiently when they fall, and wait for them to follow along God’s path. We must become all things to everyone and think of ourselves as having been made for them.

We need to humble ourselves in order to gently speak the most needed corrections. We must never give up in discouragement. Instead, we need to ask God to change their heart—something we cannot do ourselves.

So examine yourself with respect to the people who have been given to you to care for, and for whom you bear responsibility in the sight of God.

The Complete Fénelon, page 201. François Fénelon was a seventeenth-century French archbishop, controversial theologian and spiritual thinker. His writings have been translated into English and edited by Robert J. Edmonson & Hal M. Helms.

Looking Back from November

by Barbara Cook

I recently had a meeting with one of the members of our community who shared that she was feeling some fear that her newly found spiritual relationship with God would be jeopardized as her ministers were about to leave on sabbatical. I shared my feelings of how I felt risk, but was trusting God to take care of our beloved community and to continue to grow the spiritual life of its members. In addition to the anticipation I was feeling, I also felt some trepidation at the idea of letting go of our beloved community for three entire months and opening into a deeper relationship with God. It was a great feeling to be able to recognize and share our vulnerable feelings with each other. I'm so grateful for my Centering Prayer practice and for the Work of Inner Christianity, because they have taught me that these feelings are dealt with best by simply feeling the feelings and then releasing them.

My friend also asked how she could support us during our time away. My answer was quick and sure; do your daily practice twice a day every day. Practice the Work of Inner Christianity and

continue to participate, show up, and do your part to support this incredible community of Christian transformation; especially when the familiar leadership is not present.

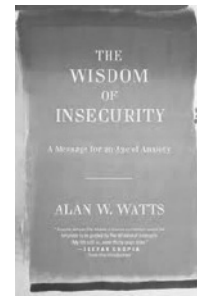
Father Thomas Keating reminds us that each of us is in the Body of Christ. Our community is a cell in the Mystical Body of Christ and each of us is a cell within that cell. Cells cannot exist without one another or the Body. That is my offering to all of the blessed members of the community at The Church of Conscious Harmony. It is to welcome this time apart as an opportunity to grow individually and as a community in Christ.

Tim and I are also stepping into the Divine Mystery to further deepen our relationship with God and to further embody our True Selves, the Christ within us. We wish this for each member of our community; and we know that as we keep our relationship with God strongly grounded in Centering Prayer, that is exactly what will happen. I'm looking ahead to November, anticipating how we will all see how much God has healed us and grown us. May it be so. ☸

CCH Bookstore

Current Community Reading

The Wisdom of Insecurity
by Alan Watts



We spend too much time trying to anticipate the future and lamenting the past, missing the pleasures of the moment. Drawing from Eastern philosophy, Watts argues that it is only by acknowledging what we do not and cannot know that we can find something truly worth knowing.

A Note from the Bookstore Manager

It is with gratitude for the open hearts and arms of CCH that I am announcing the end of my time as your bookstore manager in mid-August. I am beginning a new octave as a full-time seminarian this Fall. It has been my pleasure to serve you, and I know I will miss the regular physical connection to this place and its people.

Peace, Thom Temperli

Bookstore and Library Hours
Monday-Friday 8:30 am-3:30 pm
Sunday 9-9:50 am & 11:30 am-12:30 pm

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

31st Guideline



Solitude is not primarily a place but an attitude of total commitment to God.

When one belongs completely to God,
the sharing of one's life and gifts continually increases.

Flowers of Paradise

These thoughts are ours, and they are dear to us.

And they are ours, because they are dear to us.

The more we love them, the more they become part of ourselves.

These are the flowers of Paradise in our souls,
but flowers that blossomed first in the Garden of the Agony.

Cherish them, and give them the setting of our sufferings

resting in our love for Him:

a bouquet, indeed, worthy of the place of honour.

But better still, put them in the hidden chamber

where the Father seeth in secret.

A Carthusian, *They Speak by Silences*, page 36.



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I give thanks to my God at every remembrance of you ... Philippians 1:3

Annual Aim: Gratitude Celebrating 25 Years of Grace

Youth Education Services by Don Hale and Deborah Hale

Reflect a moment on the way
a newborn child
begins to experience reality.
As it looks around
at things,
it does not distinguish
one from another.
.... It has not yet started
to analyze the difference.
It enjoys the *act* of seeing
and does not worry about
what it is seeing.
This great art of enjoying
the very *act* of seeing
without distinguishing
what is seen is a quality
of the enjoyment of reality
that God means us to retain
all our life long.
... *Just to be, just to do*
– these are the two great gifts
of God,
the foundations of every other gift.

Thomas Keating,
The Heart of the World

*Whoever receives one child
such as this
in my name
receives me.*

Matthew 18:5

In the early years when The Church of Conscious Harmony was located in a bank building, all of the children (regardless of age) gathered in one room. Almost a quarter of a century later, Youth Education Services (YES) still exists to serve the spiritual education of the youth who attend CCH. Our common aim within the various age-level programs is to help our children learn and retain the affirmative feeling of self-worth we call the *Yes Feeling* and to teach clear and certain awareness of God-knowing. We intend to provide balanced learning experiences and pray that we enable our children to develop their highest possibilities in relational and devotional living; that they might become spiritually awake, God-centered human beings living out of extraordinary love. Thus, YES is about saying yes in life – to the spiritual journey, God and our basic core of goodness.

“These children are the seeds of the future of this planet and the entire human race. Every one of these kids is going to touch thousands of people in their lives. The YES programs constitute a mission and a call to excellence to be held in consciousness. I want the best possible thing for these kids. We are going to serve our children, that’s what they came to us for.” ~Tim Cook, Minister

Harmony Youth Program (HYP)

by Don Hale

Everybody involved in the youth program shows gratitude for this community by saying “yes” to learning about and participating in adolescent spirituality. This is not an easy thing

to say yes to, and a challenging thing to participate in. Where does one learn about adolescent spirituality? There is no discussion or mention of adolescence in the Bible. Our church has no dogma that we are trying to promote. Of the existing adolescent curriculums that we have explored, none really meet the needs of our

church. We are left to say “yes” to our adolescents here and now; where they are in their own personal relationship with Christ, by trusting Spirit, the Holy Word of Jesus and the core principles of the Church of Conscious Harmony.

Like everyone who has said yes to participating in the YES program, I had no idea what I was getting myself into when I volunteered to work with the youth the second Sunday I attended CCH in 1995. The first couple of years, I taught in all the classrooms and ended up with the teens. Because of the lack of teachers, I was spending every Sunday with them. I kept saying yes as CCH kept changing church locations and YES directors. The young people began to express a desire to perform, meet at different times of the week, and travel together, so my involvement kept increasing and eventually I said yes to being hired as youth director in 2002. My professional life over this period of time evolved from part-time teacher to full-time, so I was constantly saying yes even though I was always tempted to say no because I really didn’t think I had the time. Time constraints are one of the big obstacles to saying yes that we in the youth department find challenging. But my experience with saying yes in these and other moments has led me to understand better how to be grateful for the seeming insurmountable difficulties in my life. It simply is not me saying yes or doing anything. We are all learning to give our lives over more and more to

God’s higher purpose for us.

With great intentions, the YES program began in a single room for all ages. Since 1995, we have explored various curricula including some from Unity Church and some from the Episcopalians. The curriculum we have now has evolved through these approaches. Unlike the children’s program, which found the Godly Play program to perfectly fit its needs for ages 3-11, the youth program had to create its own to fit the needs of our contemplative youth. As our church has changed to include the lectionary readings, we have changed our youth curricula so that the weekly lectionary readings are central to our program. The adult volunteers, Tim and Barbara, the young people, and the board of directors have contributed to what the curriculum is today.

The HYP Curriculum is set up so that the adult can get out of the way and let the lesson plan for the week be the vehicle that allows the Holy Spirit to manifest. In our youth program, we don’t see ourselves as teachers but as guides. This allows us to put our personality on hold and, having internalized that week’s lesson plan, allow the young people to speak. The presence of the Holy Spirit allows for free, personal sharing to take place. Preteen, young teen, and older teen lessons are all based on the Gospel reading for that Sunday, although all three classes have different approaches to working with the Gospel.

The young people coming into the program have been saying yes to

a relationship with God as they come up through the Godly Play program. The depth of their experiences with God have allowed them to participate in gaining a personal connection to the manifesting reality of God in their lives. Those who have not been through Godly Play and come to us later in their young lives can instantly feel the openness of the atmosphere in the classes.

We adults have the opportunity to say yes to the manifesting of this Spirit, not only on the Sundays that we teach, but every week as we show up at church and come into contact with these young people. What has happened to them since the last time we saw them (which may have been months)? We are called to say yes to praying with the lesson plan for each week, so we may remain available to the Spirit in the present moment while the lesson plan merges with where the young people are. In other words, the guides say yes to where the Spirit leads so as not to be overly attached to any preconceived outcome in the class.

Other places adults say yes to participating in the youth program is the Youth Council, which works in an advisory role to the youth director, as well as participating in and/or facilitating, the ceremonies that happen as part of our program (i.e. the Bridging Ceremonies, the Ceremony of Thirteen, and the Rite of Passage for graduating seniors), and a myriad of events that may arise on a monthly basis. Adults and young people say yes to participation in the annual pilgrimage to the

Lama Foundation and St. Benedict's Monastery, the all-night "conscious gatherings," the fundraisers, most notably the spaghetti luncheon and silent auction and the calendar sales, the Glorious Impossible Christmas program, and involvement in HYPED youth group meetings.

So why do people say yes to becoming involved in the youth program? I said yes to show my gratitude for the community that sustains my spiritual life. In the 18 years since I said that initial yes, the meaning has evolved to where today, I just say yes to God. I know it might look like a wild ride to those standing on the outside looking in, and it is, but there is a calm quiet center when I realize that I am safe and ultimately not the one doing anything except saying yes.

Godly Play by Deborah Hale

One of the things that makes Godly Play the perfect plan for our Sunday School is that Godly Play is a way to make *lectio divina* accessible to children. Through wondering and art response, our children engage with the Word of God and have the opportunity to come into relationship with God and experience the holiness of creation.

We didn't always have Godly Play at the Church of Conscious Harmony. Early on when I was first the Children's Director at the Steck location, we worked with curriculum from Unity. I stepped down after a few years, and when I came back on

board to serve again, it seemed like the program was waiting to become something new. We had moved from Steck to Sri Atmananda and into our present location on Newhall Lane when Godly Play came into being.

Jeff Genung, a CCH board member, had been researching curricula for the YES program and found Godly Play to be the best fit for our young children. In the summer of 2002, Edward Pierce, another board member, drove Heidi Bangle (Barbara's daughter) and me to Tennessee to be trained in Godly Play. We had an intention to look at each piece of this training and see how we could make Godly Play ours. We decided to open three Godly Play classrooms. Our plan was to make all of the story materials from patterns in a book called *Young Children and Worship* by Jerome Berryman (the founder of Godly Play) and Sonja Stewart. Heidi and I made prototypes for our people of God figures and taught other church members how to make them. We had a wonderful friend named Bill Kretschmer who was making our wooden pieces. Often the pieces were delivered the morning we needed them for telling the story. He had to make three of everything, from temples to models of Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

Godly Play stories come from the Bible, including parables, sacred stories, and liturgical action stories that represent the sacraments and special holy times of the year. Bill made us beautiful gilded wooden parable boxes. Other volunteers

cut out the felt underlays that accompany the story pieces. We opened our classrooms in September 2002. We had organized the teachers to work in teams, having two teams per classroom, so the children would only work with four familiar adults over the course of a year. This has provided an experience of caring, safety and belonging. Many of our original Godly Play teachers are still working in the program. When the Praxis Center was built, we were able to add two more Godly Play classrooms. This time, we were able to purchase some of the beautiful materials made by Godly Play Resources.

What's Special

Some of the things that are special to our Godly Play program are the Centering Prayer areas in each classroom and the handmade cloth dolls that represent the people of God and the holy family.

Our toddler room is somewhat different from the other Godly Play rooms. Here the children have bigger play to go with a smaller selection of stories that they hear more frequently. To accompany the stories, there are more interactive play pieces and fewer art response materials. A wall mural with bird puppets and soft nests that rest on shelves helps children work with the parable of the mustard seed. The Good Shepherd parable features large wolf and sheep puppets. The holy family has a dress up component of crowns and capes for the three wise men. Another

difference is the threshold, which is an archway. Adults must bend to enter – a tangible reminder that in Godly Play, adults do not tower over the children, but come to their level.

We have some special celebrations during the year that bring the whole community of young people together. Our Move Up Sunday is a ritual rite of passage that brings together toddlers to teens, as are the Advent Garden, Posada and Glorious Impossible. All of the children are part of the Ceremony of Thirteen and also join in the blessing of the Lama pilgrims.

The Calendar of the Church Year hangs in the Godly Play classrooms, marking the progress of the liturgical year for the children. Our special ceremonies are a part of the fabric of our church year as are the Communion Baptism classes that are held each spring for children ages nine and over who are ready to say yes. We crafted this preparation series using a Godly Play storytelling format. We begin with a class about the world religions where the participants get some context for Christianity in the timeline of the history of the major religions. We use the children's finger play of "Here is the church, here is the steeple, open the door and see all the people," to give them an orientation to our church, its core teachings, and the work that people do to support the church. We explore how sacraments are a way of choosing a new life in Christ, and how we continue to choose it again and again, as well as prepare them for

the two sacraments that they will experience together.

Sunday Mornings

Before going to the Godly Play classrooms for the week's story and program, the toddlers through 5th graders and their teachers come together in the Fellowship Hall to participate in Children's Chapel. After chapel, the doorkeeper greets the children and helps them become ready to cross the threshold into the sacred space inside their classroom. Our teachers, like Godly Play teachers everywhere, learn the stories by heart and tell them so well that they draw everyone in the room into the story. But at CCH, before the children arrive on Sunday morning, the teachers have already met and prayed together so that everyone who enters the room will have an authentic experience with the living God. This is in our hearts as we prepare for the children and we are reminded by the hands that we see on the classroom doors every time we cross the threshold.

To complete the Sunday morning octave, the children cross the threshold once again and pour into the courtyard heading for the bridge into the sanctuary. Together we wait until the first notes of "Amazing Grace." Brothers and sisters who have been in different classrooms hug and anticipate seeing their parents' faces in the congregation when they get up onto the stage. Often I am moved to tears by the amount of love in our community in those moments. It is so beautiful it is

almost too much to handle.

Beyond Sundays

Recently, I was interviewed on a telecast about the school I helped to start two years ago. The final question was, "What advice can you give parents listening to the broadcast who may not be able to send their child to a school like yours?" Another version of this question came to mind as I sat to write this article. It was for parents and grandparents who want to nurture a conscious family and may or may not be able to regularly send their child to a church like ours.

Eat dinner together. In Godly Play, our feast of goldfish crackers and water is symbolic of sharing the sacrament of bread and wine. Dinner can be this for the family. Begin the feast with a blessing, letting the children of the family choose the blessing when they are old enough.

Limit screen time and get the family outdoors together. A family garden can be a way to do this or a walk around the neighborhood together after dinner. Bernadette Roberts has said that the first revelation of God is through nature. That can happen for a child with a pet indoors, but most of nature has to be experienced outside. I think a big part of why our HYPED Lama trip is so powerful each year is because of the sacred setting in nature (and they leave their iphones at home).

Be open about your prayer practice and devotion to God. I was deeply affected as a child by the love

my grandmother had for God and the beautiful joy that lit up her face when she was in prayer. Recently I read a wonderful suggestion in *Slow Family Living* by Bernadette Noll that might be helpful for parents trying to get in the second centering prayer period. She relates a common experience most parents of young children have. At bedtime, children want just one more hug, one more drink of water, or they need to ask one more really important question. The children are trying to delay the moment when they will be alone by keeping their parent engaged. The suggestion is for the parent to stay in the child's room and do their evening meditation practice. The parent will stay for 20-30 minutes as long as the child is quiet. Thus the child enjoys the presence of a comforting adult in the room and the parent is able to make their second appointment with God. At the end of the prayer period, the child has


fallen peacefully asleep.

My final little flower comes from Jerome Berryman in *Children and the Theologians: Clearing the Way for Grace*. He has recently introduced a proposal to the churches that we formally adopt the spiritual practice of receiving children as sacraments, as a means of grace. I wonder how many in our congregation have been touched by the loving presence of some of our blessed children and young people who love being part of our community: Corva, Claudia, Athey, Treya, Kate, Katie, Andrew, Levi, Annika or Miranda. The full list obviously would put me over my word allocation for this article. Jerome says that these children are a means by which we can receive God's light without being overwhelmed by Christ's presence, because the children absorb Christ's presence and make it manifest rather than only superficially and passively reflecting it. I stand as a witness to

the profound truth of this.

Saying Yes

Each Sunday, I prepare to receive the children as I receive the Word of God at the lectio divina service and share the Eucharist with our YES teachers. Then, I am ready to know the children as Christ.

Sometime in your life, try volunteering in the YES program with the knowledge that children are sacraments and see what God can do. Something always opens up when you make a choice to participate, and there are many ways in which to serve in the YES program from serving the feast to the children, holding babies, playing guitar or piano in Children's Chapel, assisting with younger children's classes, signing children in at the greeter's table and of course being a Godly Play doorkeeper and storyteller. You will be richly fed by your opportunity to be with the children and play with God. 

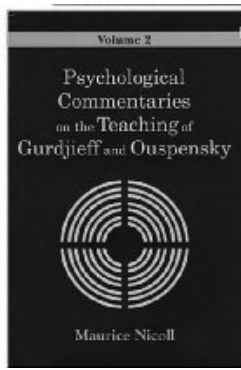
Youth Mission Statements

Harmony Youth Practicing Evolving Devotion (HYPED) is a connection between God and each other through Centering Prayer and conscious togetherness.

The Harmony Youth Program (HYP) creates an atmosphere for young people to personally experience the presence of God in their lives and stay connected with their basic core of goodness through participation of the "Good News." The curriculum is based on the lectionary liturgical year Gospel readings with discussion emphasis on "How can what we're learning here affect my relationship with God, myself, my family, friends and others?" Adults serve as guides and facilitators, responding and interacting with the youth through thoughtful questions and patience, supporting an opening to the Holy Spirit and bringing forth insightful, personal sharing from the young people.

The Youth Council was formed to initiate, empower, and honor our youth by ritually celebrating and blessing them as they move into the next stage of life. We wish to serve our youth by acknowledging them as sacred, spiritual beings and prepare them for the journey that lies ahead.

To learn more about the Youth Educational Services programs, visit the Youth tab under the Programs & Activities section of our website.



The Work

of Inner Christianity

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

I's of All Different Ages

An 'I' may have formed itself early in our life when we were in unusually unhappy circumstances, due perhaps to a parent, brother, sister or [teacher], and when we felt and thought it was all very unfair. When our circumstances changed as we grew older, we had no reason to feel things were unfair. But this 'I' formed at an earlier time still *persists in us*. Because we do not separate from it, and therefore take it as I, it pops to the surface when any difficulty arises and eagerly controls us and makes us unhappy. In this way are we imprisoned by 'I's that are anachronisms—that is, that do not belong to the present time but to the past. Distinct, calm observation of them as being early 'I's belonging to situations long ended and not valid any more and saying to them: "This is not I" or "I am not this 'I'", and seeing that even though they spoke some truth once upon a time they do not now do so—in short, separating from them by no longer identifying and so believing them can, after a determined struggle, cause them

gradually to wane to shadows. You will feel a miraculous freedom. But if you go asleep to them and once more foolishly let the feeling of I into them again, it is like transfusing them with your blood and they soon revive and with the greatest delight reproduce in posture, expression, intonation, feeling and thought, all the old unhappiness. We all suffer from these early, out-of-date 'I's and always will as long as we believe we have only one I and therefore say I to all the crowd of 'I's of different ages in us. Now please realize that as long as you say: "I wish I were not so worried," you are saying I to your worrying and thus identifying with it. You are not separating from it and starving it. On the contrary you are giving it a transfusion of your blood. For every time you say: "I wish I were not so worried," you are putting the feeling of I into an 'I'. ⚠

Maurice Nicoll, *Psychological Commentaries on the Teaching of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky*, page 1723. For more information and experience with these teachings, you are invited to attend the Work of Inner Christianity class held every Thursday at 7:30 p.m. at The Church of Conscious Harmony.

August Calendar

Visit consciousharmony.org
for a complete listing of events

Special Events

Simple Explanation of Work Ideas
Thursday 7:30 pm through Aug 15

Intro to Centering Prayer
Monday 7:30 pm through Aug 19

Commuter Retreat
Aug 10, 8:30 am - 5:30 pm
Aug 11, 8 am - 5:30 pm
Cost \$100
Pre register in the office

Monthly

Community Workday
Aug 17 9 am-noon

Tuesday Enrichment 7:30 pm
Aug 20 Gurdjieff Music

Weekly

Centering Prayer Support Group
Aug 19 7 pm
Praxis Center

Prayer Circle
Wednesdays 9:15 am

Contemplative Lunch
Wednesdays noon

Mid-Week Communion Service
Wednesdays 6-7 pm

Yoga
Thursdays 6-7:15 pm
Cost \$14 each session

Work of Inner Christianity class
Thursdays 7:30 pm

Daily

Weekday Centering Prayer Service
M-F 7-7:35 am in Theosis Chapel

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



The Church of Conscious Harmony
A Contemplative Christian Community
7406 Newhall Lane Austin, Texas 78746

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*The seventy-two returned in high spirits.
'Master,' they said,
'even the demons are subject to us
because we use your name.'
'Yes,' He said to them,
'I was watching Satan
fall like lightning flashes from heaven.
.... Just the same, do not rejoice
in the fact that
the spirits are subject to you,
but rejoice in the fact
that your names are written in heaven.'*
Luke 10:17-18, 20

What Really Counts

The seventy-two disciples, flushed with success,
came to the Lord expecting to get a pat on the back,
and all He said was, "Don't get excited about working miracles.

Anybody with a little psychic power can do that.

What really counts is that you are part of God's plan.

The thing to rejoice in is that you are chosen to become
divine and to join me in raising the consciousness
of the world."

Thomas Keating, *The Mystery of Christ*

