

Prayer before Centering Prayer - Peter Traben Haas

O God My Healer:
Turn my demands into preferences,
and my preferences into detachment,
and detachment into pure love,
and love into union,
consummating into only oneness
so that there is no other -
to be judged, demanded, or preferred.

Amen.

Christian Non-Duality and Unity Consciousness

*Whoever is in Christ is a new creation:
the old things have passed away;
behold, new things have come.
And all this is from God.*

2 Corinthians 5: 17-18

***The Christian experience of awakening and of unity
consciousness is a true Oneness that involves the full
participation of our humanity, body, soul, and spirit.***

In our discussion of non-duality, it is important for those committed to the Christian contemplative tradition to think of what non-duality really means for us. It seems to be a term for enlightenment, transformation, or awakening. It has a very strong conceptual background. I spoke about sacrifice. The relationships in the Trinity are constantly giving themselves to each other totally so that there is this infinite exchange of love and complete self-sacrifice through the love of the Holy Spirit.

When Christ, the Son of God, by becoming a human entered into humanity, this is the peak of the evolutionary process. The universe becomes conscious of the Creator through human beings who can respond to God with gratitude. Humans become capable of abstract ideas, self-reflection, self-consciousness, forgiving and compassionate, all of which are not found in the animal kingdom. In the classical definition of a human being, we are described as "thinking animals." Notice: thinking is only an adjective! So, we are basically mammals, part of this creation, part of this earth, part of this universe, and part of the continuing development of human consciousness.

The idea of non-duality appears in many of the Christian mystics, in the sacraments, and in the liturgy of the Church. It needs to be more clearly emphasized in our times insofar as this term is the one that is being used in inter-spiritual circles today. In non-duality the separate-self sense is greatly reduced and even disappears.

Everything that happens is the direct experience of reality. It is being able to lead ordinary life without thinking of oneself. When you look at a tree, it is a tree and not *you* looking at a tree. The latter is the response of our rational intellect.

How do we grow in this new consciousness? Christ became a human being in order to show us how to do this. Saint Paul compares him to Adam and names him as the Second Adam. The emphasis in Paul's teaching is that all humanity is in Christ in a special way because through his human and divine nature. He penetrates with his presence all of humanity, past, present, and to come. Thus, his experience extends to the details of being human, such as eating, having a cup of tea, walking around, taking a bath, sleeping, and whatever ordinary humans have to do to survive and to enjoy life. Jesus seems to have led an ordinary human life for thirty years. This was his way of manifesting the love of God – becoming one with us in order that human beings might become one with God. One of the classic statements of the Church Fathers was that “God become human in order that the human family might become God.”

Jesus reveals this Oneness explicitly in his teaching and especially in his last discourse at the Last Supper where he speaks of oneness with God and with each other. He prays for his followers to be one with the same oneness that he has with the Father and the Father with him. Jesus' Priestly Prayer [John 17] is very strong on our call to oneness with God. Paul develops this insight in his reflections on the Mystical Body of Christ. Through Baptism and grace each human being is invited to become a new creature in Christ as a cell in his Mystical Body. Everything we do in ordinary life cannot be separated from this Oneness. It dwells in us as our deepest self. Little by little, we are meant to develop consciousness of the divine Self by which we were created.

Being aware of ourselves and of God is a kind of duality. Even in the transforming union we are still two. We have to understand what love is. In the Christian tradition love is the bottom line: “Love God with your whole heart, mind, soul and strength and your neighbor as yourself.” The same God is in others as in us. All humans basically are equal and, if they consent, are inserted into the Mystical Body of Christ to serve each other and to build-up the Body of Christ in every possible way.

Once you are baptized and in grace, you are a living cell in the Body of Christ that has the Holy Spirit as its life blood: The Spirit fills the whole, every cell and, indeed, every particle of every cell. Teilhard de Chardin said that every particle in the cosmos contains Christ. Since we are made up of trillions of them, we are truly immersed in Christ at all times. In other words, we are saturated with God.

It is not science or intellectual reflection that awakens this reality, of course, but the experience of relating to God in more and more intimate ways so that the ego is no longer dominating. The emotional programs for happiness are laid to rest or moderated so that they are not the main focus of conversation with God or with others.

Blessed are those who stayed indoors for they protected others.
Blessed are the unemployed for they recognised their dependance on God

Blessed are the postal workers and delivery persons who brought us our essential needs
Blessed are the frontline workers who stood between us and the grave
May they see the face of God
Blessed are the garbage collectors who faced with mountains of garbage still could discern the handiwork of God
Blessed are the single parents who kept on being responsible 24/7
God does not forget them
Blessed are those who are alone, may they never forget they are God's children.

Written by a Jesuit Priest from Jamaica

Final Prayer

"May God heal all divisions -- those within my own mind, heart, soul and body, and those between all people and groups -- that we may be one Body in Christ, unified in every way and on every level, and thus manifest the Living Christ by our very lives. Amen."

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