

Centering Prayer: A Path to Spiritual Connectedness.

Quotes and references

Practice the Pause: Jesus' Contemplative Practice, New Brain Science, and What it Means to be Fully Human." Caroline Oakes, 2023, Broadleaf Books.

Quotes:

"If you bring forth that which is within you, it will save you. If you do not bring it forth, it will destroy you." - Logion 70 from the Gospel of Thomas.

"If you could get rid of yourself just once,
The secret of secrets would open to you.
the Face of the Unknown,
Hidden beyond the universe would appear
On the mirror of your perceptions."

- Rumi

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world." Jesus also said, "You are the light of the world." ... when Jesus discovered that the foundation of his being, God, was the light of the world, he also discovered that the foundation of every being, which is God, was also the light of the world.... unfortunately, Christianity has concentrated on "I am the light of the world" and not "you are the light of the world," the statement that Jesus addressed to the whole of humanity.... We have to put the other wheel on the cart and embrace a vision of our full human potential."

-John Martin Sahajananda, OSB. "You are the Light: Rediscovering the Eastern Jesus."

"Jesus revealed and accepted a paradox in his entire being: Human and divine are not separate, but one, his life shouted!

Are we afraid to bear the burden of divinity? Maybe we realize subconsciously that if we really recognized our True Self – which is the divine indwelling, the Holy Spirit within us – if we really believed that we are temples of God (1 Cor 3:16, 6:19, 2 Cor 6:16) then we would have to live up to this incredible dignity, freedom, and love."

Richard Rohr, "You are the Imago Dei" July 31, 2016, CAC daily meditations.

"This birthing of your deepening heart awareness, may just be the most important thing you ever do. It lays the foundation not just for this world, but for all the worlds, open and immediate to you in the resonance of your heart."

- Cynthia Bourgeault, The Wisdom Jesus, pg 149.

"Between Stimulus and response is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom."

- Viktor Frankl

“Prayer is nothing but the inhaling and exhaling of the One Breath of the universe.”

“The soul is a breath of living spirit that permeates the entire body to give it life, just as the breath of the air makes the earth fruitful. The air is the sound of the earth, moistening it, greening it.”

“Breath is living sound, the movement of all creation.”

- St Hildegard von Bingen

Chant: From Darlene Franz, “You the One, One in All, Say I Am, I Am You.” Available on Bandcamp: <https://wisdomchant.bandcamp.com/track/you-the-one-one-in-all>

Inspired by a poem of Rumi:

To the bits of dust I say, Stay.
To the sun, Keep moving.

I am morning mist, and the breathing of evening.
I am wind in the top of a grove, and surf on the cliff.

Mast, rudder, helmsman, and keel,
I am also the coral reef they founder on.

I am a tree with a parrot in its branches.
Silence, thought, and voice.

The musical air coming through a flute,
a spark of a stone, a flickering
in metal. Both candle, and the moth crazy around it.

Rose, and the nightingale lost in the fragrance.

I am all orders of being, the circling galaxy,
the evolutionary intelligence, the lift,
and the falling away. What is,
and what isn't. You who know,

You the one
in all, say who
I am. Say I

am You.

(translated by Coleman Barks)

Scripture quotes:

Ps 46:10 “Be still and know that I am God.”

Mt 6:6 “. . . when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you.”

MK 1:35,
MT 14:23,
Mk 1:12-13
Luke 6:12,
Luke 22:39

God is breath. All that breathes resides in the Sacred One Being. From my breath to the air we share to the wind that blows around the planet; Sacred Unity inspires us all.

- Jn 4:24 From “The Hidden Gospel: Decoding the Spiritual Message of the Aramaic Jesus,” by Neil Douglas Klotz, pg 41.

Howard Thurman quote from *The Growing Edge* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956), 17–18. Note: minor edits made for inclusive language.

“Jesus, however, approaches life from the point of view of God. The serious problem for him had to be: Is the Roman a child of God? Is my enemy God’s child? If he is, I must work upon myself until I am willing to bring him back into the family.... If God loves them, that binds me. Can it be that God does not know how terrible my enemy is? No, God knows them as well as he knows himself and much better than I know them. It must be true, then, that there is something in every human that remains intact, inviolate, regardless of what he [or she] does. I wonder! Is this true? Is there an integrity of the person, so intrinsic in its value and significance that no deed, however evil, can ultimately undermine this given thing? If a person is of infinite worth in the sight of God, whether they are saint or sinner, whether they are a good person or a bad person, evil or not, if that is true, then I am never relieved of my responsibility for trying to make contact with this worthy thing in them.”

“Now if I hear the sound of the genuine in me, and if you hear the sound of the genuine in you, it is possible for me to go down in me and come up in you. So that when I look at myself through your eyes having made that pilgrimage, I see in me what you see in me and the wall that separates and divides will disappear.”

This is his assurance that our calling into self need not be solitary. Nor is it only for the healing and protection of me. Just as outer voices can lead you away from the well of your own selfhood, they also have the capacity to usher you into new depths of it. And if practiced right, your calling into selfhood may enhance the sound of self in someone else.”

Quote from James Finley:

“The Mystical Foundations of Nonviolence,” *Oneing* 10, no. 2, Nonviolence (Fall 2022): 127, 128–129, 132.

“In the Gospels, they asked Jesus, “What is the greatest commandment?” (Mark 12:28). That is to say, “Of all these beautiful things you say about God, about life, what is it that, if we would ground ourselves in that, everything that you say would fall into place?” Jesus didn’t respond with a doctrine.... Jesus said, “The greatest commandment is to love God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength. That’s the greatest commandment” (see Mark 12:30)....

But there’s a catch to this: our wayward ways. We’re exiled from the generosity of God pouring God’s self out as life itself. We know it’s true, but we’re estranged from it. This is the meaning of “original sin,” but not as a blight against the soul. Rather, it means we’re exiled from the divinity of every breath and heartbeat, because to taste the divinity of every breath and heartbeat means fear has no foundations....

So, we ask: “How can I learn, Lord? How can I learn to be free from the tyranny of fear in the midst of my fears? How can I learn to be free from the tyranny of my brokenness in the midst of my brokenness?”... God is the presence that spares us from nothing, even as God unexplainably sustains us in all things. God depends on us to protect ourselves and each other, to be nurturing, loving, protective people. When suffering is there, God depends on us to reach out and touch the suffering with love that it might dissolve in love. But here’s the thing: To be present to suffering and to touch the suffering with love, that it might dissolve in love, means to be grounded in the peace that is not dependent on the outcome of the effort because, regardless of how it turns out, God is unexplainably taking us to God, breath by breath, moment by moment. That’s mystical nonviolence.”