



Living in Relational Wholeness



COALESCE

Coalesce Podcast

Episode 012 – Christianity’s core and central message

Note, terms, scripture, practice

Consider reframing the terms "social distancing" as "compassionate retreat" and "isolation" as "solitude."

Solitude: “place of conversion, the place where the old self dies and the new self is born, the place where the emergence of the new man and the new woman occurs.” —Henri Nouwen

[Philippians 2:5-6](#)

[2 Corinthians 2:14](#)

[John 14:3](#)

[Hebrews 12:2](#)

[Ephesians 2:10](#)

Jesus’ inevitable trajectory: divine conception (hidden and unrecognized), ordinary and mundane existence (thirty years before his active ministry), eventual enlightenment and recognition (baptism), engagement in the world (healing and teaching), trials, misunderstanding, passion, even crucifixion and death (the inevitable result of faithfulness to love and truth), resurrection (God’s promised response), and final ascension back to God (fully completing the circle).

“The glory of God is a human being fully alive.” —St. Irenaeus of Lyon

We are not human beings trying to become spiritual; we are already spiritual beings, and we are just trying and needing to become human for one another. —Teilhard de Chardin (paraphrased)

[Ephesians 1:4](#)

Jesus did not come to change the mind of God about humanity (it did not need changing)! Jesus came to change the mind of humanity about God. —John Duns Scotus (paraphrased)

[Hebrews 7:27; 9:12; 10:10](#)

Practice: Eucharist

T. S. Elliot said in the Four Quartets, “[Human]kind cannot bear very much reality.” What humans often prefer are highly contrived ways of avoiding the real, the concrete, the physical. We fabricate artificial realities instead, one of which, I’m sad to say, is religion itself. So Jesus brought all of our fancy thinking down to earth, to one concrete place of incarnation—this bread and this cup of wine! “Eat it here, and then see it everywhere,” he seems to be saying. If it’s too idealized and pretty, if it’s somewhere floating around up in the air, it’s probably not the Gospel. We come back, again and again, to this marvelous touchstone of orthodoxy, the Eucharist. The first physical incarnation in the body of Jesus is now continued in space and time in ordinary food.

Eucharist is presence encountering presence—mutuality, vulnerability. There is nothing to prove, to protect, or to sell. It feels so empty, naked, and harmless, that all you can do is be present. The Eucharist is telling us that God is the food and all we have to do is provide the hunger. Somehow we have to make sure that each day we are hungry, that there’s room inside of us for another presence. If you are filled with your own opinions, ideas, righteousness, superiority, or sufficiency, you are a world unto yourself and there is no room for “another.” Despite all our attempts to define who is worthy and who is not worthy to receive communion, our only ticket or prerequisite for coming to Eucharist is hunger. And most often sinners are hungrier than “saints.”

As you sit at home and take your next bite of bread and sip of wine, say this: “You become what you eat. Come and eat who you are!”