



*Living in Relational Wholeness*

**Coalesce Podcast**

**Episode 018 – The Way**

**Note, terms, scripture, practice**



AD33—Jesus was executed

AD 80—there were Christians as far away as India and France

AD88—Christianity moved outside the synagogues. We can see how all biblical scripture are written with a Jewish lens

AD 90—The *Didache* was written

AD 120—*The Shepherd of Hermas* was written

AD 175—St. Clement of Alexandria wrote a letter entitled “Can a Rich Man Be Saved?”

AD 200—Tertullian (a recognized “Father of the Church”) writes: “scorn worldly things”

AD 303—the great formal persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire ended

AD 313—Christianity was legalized by Constantine I (previously the Church was the bottom of society)  
In response: Anthony of the Desert, John Cassian, Evagrius Ponticus, et al went off to the deserts of Egypt, Palestine, and Syria to keep their freedom and preserve Christian origins.

AD 338—Pope (St Julius I) moves Christmas celebration from March to December

AD 1054—the schism between what are now the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches

AD 1098—Anselm of Canterbury posits “substitutionary atonement”

AD 1517-1680—Protestant reformation (created oppositional thinking, antagonistic mind, literalism)

AD 1685-1815—Enlightenment/Scientific era (discovery of rational mind, logic, reasoning)

AD 1910—theological conservatives rallying around the five fundamentals came to be known as fundamentalism

AD 1945—Nag Hammadi scrolls found; Perennial philosophy.

AD 1965—Second Vatican Council; Immigration and Nationality Act; Globalism

AD 1968—Postmodernism

The Way: a movement that emphasized Jesus' teachings, death, and resurrection as the path to transformation.

Early Church: the five hundred or so years following Jesus' death and resurrection

The Reign of God: how to live a better life here and now

Usury: the taking of interest on loans (remained a "mortal sin" until well into 12<sup>th</sup> century)

*The way of the cross* (Catholics)

*The sign of Jonah* (Jesus)

*The paschal mystery* (Augustine)

*The descent into hell* (Apostles' Creed)

*apophatic* tradition: knowing by silence, symbols, and not even needing to know with words.

*docta ignorantia*: learned ignorance

Fathers of the Eastern Church: Origen, Athanasius, Basil, the two Gregorys (of Nazianzen and Nyssa), Evagrius Ponticus, John Chrysostom, Pseudo-Dionysius, the two Cyrils (of Alexandria and Jerusalem), and others.

*hesychasm*: 'resting' in God (i.e. contemplation)

*apokatastasis*: universal restoration

*orthodoxy*: 'rightness' (a word not used by Jesus)

### **Practice: Concrete Participation**

As we turn toward participation we now can see that most of religious and church history has been largely preoccupied with religious ideas, about which you could be wrong or right. When faith is all about ideas, you do not have to *be* part of it; you just need to talk correctly *about* it. You never have to dive in and illustrate that spiritual proof is only in the pudding.

The spiritual question is this: Does one's life give any evidence of an encounter with God? Does this encounter bring about in you any of the things that Paul describes as the "fruits" of the spirit: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness, and self-control" ([Galatians 5:22](#))? Are you different from your surroundings, or do you reflect the predictable cultural values and biases of your group?

The "participatory turn" is learning from concrete practices, personal disciplines, and interactive dialogues that change the seer and allow and encourage the encounter itself. Many Christians today are rediscovering prayer beads, prayer of quiet, icons, contemplative sits, Taizé chants, charismatic prayer, walking meditation, Zen chores, extended silence, solitude, and disciplined spiritual direction. Up to now, you could have a doctorate in theology as a Catholic or Protestant and not really know how to pray or even enjoy prayer (experienced union), although you could recommend it officially to others and maybe even define it. Now we know that we must personally *live* our faith.

I hope you will dive into your faith and experiment with ways of opening yourself to transformation, to encounter, to conscious participation in God.