

Christmas: Only One Message

by *Richard Rohr*

And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth. —John 1:14

The Christmas message is ultimately about “union,” the healing of our separate selves and world through Christ:

I know because it's Christmas Eve, you're surely hoping for some very special meditation. I don't think I have one, because there's really only one message. If we're praying, it goes deeper and deeper and deeper. If we're quiet once in a while, even on a busy day like today, it goes deeper and deeper and deeper still.

There's really only one message, and we just have to keep saying it until finally we're undefended enough to hear it and to believe it: there is no separation between God and creation. That's the message. But we can't believe it.

And so this Word, this Eternal Word of God that we read about in the prologue to John's Gospel, “leapt down” and took his abiding place on Earth, in order to heal every bit of separation and splitness that we experience. That splitness and separation is the sadness of the human race. When we feel separate, when we feel disconnected, when we feel split from ourselves, from our family, from reality, from the Earth, from God, we will be angry and depressed people. Because we know we weren't created for that separateness; we were created for union.

So God sent into the world one who would personify that union—who would put human and divine together; who would put spirit and matter together. That's what we spend our whole life trying to believe: that this ordinary earthly sojourn means something.

Sometimes we wake up in the morning wondering, what does it all mean? What's it all for? What was I put here for? Where is it all heading?

I believe it's all a school. And it's all a school of love. And everything is a lesson—everything. Every

day, every moment, every visit to the grocery store, every moment of our so-ordinary life is meant to reveal, “My God, I'm a daughter of God! I'm a son of the Lord! I'm a sibling of Christ! It's all okay. I'm already home free! There's no place I have to go. I'm already here!” But if we don't enjoy that, if we don't allow that, basically we fall into meaninglessness.



Friends, we need to surrender to some kind of ultimate meaning. We need to desire it, seek it, want it and need it. I know no one likes to hear this, but we even need to suffer for it. And what is suffering? Suffering is the emptying out of the soul so there's room for love, so there's room for the Christ, so there's room for God. □

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