

*Will you pray with me and for me, affirming that all Spirit  
wants to express through me will come from my heart and my words.*

**Meditation** (repeat the phrases in the silence of your heart-mind)

*When I pray, I feel my heart go deeper*

*My soul go deeper*

*My love go deeper into my God*

*Right here*

*Right now*

*Right where I am, I pray*

What is mine to do?

How am I to serve?

Right here, right now I listen,

I go deeper

I align with divine mind, divine heart

Right here

Right now

I trust the deep heart of God to lead me

to *my* perfect place,

means and heart for sacred service.

**Message: The Practice of Going Deeper**

Last week I wove together the strands of remember, grieve, and love, challenging us to see those sorrows that break us open as a pathway to love more deeply. This week as the sorrows of the world weighed on my heart, they sometimes threatened to pull me under into hopelessness and despair. So this week, I offer what has helped me stay afloat as an expression of God's love— the practices that help me to go deeper. As I share my spiritual journey from this week, I invite you to consider what helps you go deeper? How are you practicing the art of living the

truth that God is all, is everywhere present, and calls us to co-create a world transformed by elemental love?

This week I came across a poem by James Crews that, for me, cut to the heart of my grief, anger bordering on rage, and confusion at the “sorrows of the world.”

**Kintsugi Again**     -James Crews

In the Japanese art of mending ceramics  
with powdered gold, no one ever  
talks about how they'd leave  
the pots, cups, and cracked bowls broken  
for a while, sometimes whole generations.  
And so I say to you: let your heart stay  
shattered in your chest, let it ache.  
Some might claim you've now been  
broken open, and can let in the light.  
This might be true, but before you rush  
to gloss over the wounds, filling  
the holes with gold so they glimmer,  
try to find beauty in the broken places too,  
proof of where the fire left its marks on you.

The Fires of THIS age have left their marks. We are hard pressed to talk about horrors happening around the globe— lives lost in wars and oppression, in gun violence, in climate catastrophes— without “sides” lining up to shout at each other about how right “our side” is and how wrong “their side” is. Staying *near to* those flames and not being consumed is a delicate balance, and I think, can only be achieved by going deeper, by shoring up our spiritual practices of prayer, meditation, and communing with the deep heart of the un-nameable/omni-nameable Presence.

In **The Rebirthing of God**, John Philiip Newell writes in *chapter 5: Reconnecting with Practice*, about Thomas Merton's call to a "contemplative orientation" of life.

Newell on Merton:

"In Merrton's teachings on spiritual practice we can discern a threefold pattern. The first is his belief that spiritual practice is about remembering our diamond essence. It is about remembering that what is deepest in us is of God. The second is his conviction that spiritual practice is about remembering that that diamond essence is at the heart of **each one of us and of all things**. The third is his belief that we will find true strength for the holy work of transformation in the world only by digging deep into the foundations of our being. Enduring strength will be found not in our ego but in our essence. In spiritual practice we return to this deepest center. In meditation, he says, we penetrate the innermost ground of our life. This allows us to find our true meaning not from outside...but from within."

*We will find true strength for the holy work of transformation in the world only by digging deep into the foundations of our being. Enduring strength will be found not in our ego but in our essence. In spiritual practice we return to this deepest center.*

Returning to that center, that essence– that trust that God is that heart of us AND ALL THINGS– is the work of living into our Unity Principles, it is the gift of living our sacred purpose.

HOW do we shift our consciousness– how do we live consciously in the awareness that God is everywhere present; that we are made *of* God; that we are co-creating with God in every moment; HOW do we align our thoughts and words with the heart of God? We practice, again and again returning to the stillness, the quiet that allows us to listen to the voice of God longing to express its fullness in us, AS us.

*When I pray, I feel my heart go deeper, my soul go deeper, my love go deeper—into my God. Right here, right now, right where I am, I pray.*

Last week I reminded ME, and us, of this passage from *The Five Principles*”

“(p.111-112) When we are living the truth, any action we take will be from a consciousness of spirit and oneness, **with ego in service to the soul**...(p118) Putting principle into action starts as an inside job. To bring peace to the world, be peaceful. If you want to practice principle beyond your own home, try seeing the divinity in other people. Try treating each person you meet as a messiah in disguise.

Newell says the same truth in speaking of Merton’s wisdom:

“Spiritual practice is not only about moving to the diamond center of our own being. It is about plunging deep into the heart of the world...The deepest ground of our being cries out for communion. The unity for which we long is not a new unity. It is our original unity. We do not have to create a relationship with all things. We simply need to let it be born again from the very foundations of our being. Spiritual practice is at the heart of this great work...In order to be strong for the work of transformation in the world... our seed force of strength for change in the world will multiply by accessing the innermost ground of our being. That is where true strength is to be found.... “

We remember that LIVING the truth that there is no separation between us—and those we might call enemy, or other calls us to an ELEMENTAL Love. Living from that place of love, finding what is ours to do, and allowing our hearts to rest in the fiery wounds of sorrow, calls us to align our hearts, minds, souls, actions, prayers with the immanent/transcendent presence of God. So here is one more poem, one with an unknown author, but with the wisdom of a “to list” for living fully into the practice of transforming the world with love, compassion, peace and justice.

**On This Day...** ~Author unknown

Mend a quarrel

Search out a forgotten friend

Dismiss suspicion and replace it with trust

Write a love letter

Share some treasures

Give a soft answer

Encourage youth

Manifest your loyalty in a word or deed

Keep a promise

Find the time

Forego a grudge

Forgive an enemy

Listen

Apologize if you were wrong

Try to understand

Flout envy

Examine your demands on others

Think first of someone else

Appreciate, be kind, be gentle

Laugh a little more.

Deserve confidence

Take up arms against malice

Decry complacency

Express your gratitude

Worship your God

Gladden the heart of a child

Take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of the earth

Speak your love

Speak it again

Speak it still again

Speak it still once again....

And so it is. Amen!