

What the World Needs Now: From I to We to One

(adapted from a prayer session of the LCWR)

John 17:21—23: *“that all may be one, as you Abba, are in me and I in you; I pray that they may be one in us, so that the world may believe that you sent me.”*

“I have given them the glory you gave me that they may be one, as we are one—I in them, you in me—that they may be made perfect in unity.”

Reflection: We come from oneness and we are called back into oneness. All separation is an illusion, as the mystics tell us. Yet we are living in a society that is increasingly mired in the illusion of separateness, a society that is becoming increasingly divided, divisive, violent and hyper-individualistic. At the same time, Christians are gradually awakening to a movement of evolutionary consciousness, from I to We to One. Perhaps this is the deepest call to us today. There may be nothing that the world needs more than a return to the vision and experience of original oneness.

A Strange Predicament (Pavithra Mehta)

When I stop to consider the facts they astonish me,
there you are, couched in your own skin, and
here I am in mine. No matter how close
we must each do our own living.

Your heart cannot be persuaded to pump my blood
my lungs will not consent to breathe for yours.
It is an odd arrangement.

Inside me, a mansion of memory and anticipation.
A place other people may visit, like a museum.
Inside you, a similar mansion, that I can visit
with your permission, gaze at pictures on the wall.

But only until closing time.

And is this not a strange predicament?

This seeming and inescapable individuality?

The hard shell of the ‘I’ that we live inside,
like soft-bodied sea creatures.

When did we choose this? On whose ill-advice?

How different the world would be
if we could waft through different identities
as easily as the wind inhabits the trees.

Then the woman selling flowers at the street corner would be me.
And the crumpled leaf of the half-blown rose in her bucket would be me.
And the man reaching into his back pocket to pay for the bouquet—me.

Me. Me. Me. Then I would not be ‘I’ anymore.

And neither would you. No not at all and never again.

Once out of the bottle no genie of sound mind
ever chooses to return
to such cramped, uncomfortable quarters.

To Ponder:

The depths of our tradition call us to live out of this awareness of oneness. We pray to the "Source of all Being," to the One from whom all comes and to whom all returns. Merton tells us that, ". . . we are already one. But we imagine that we are not. What we have to recover is our original unity. What we have to be is what we are."



It is the experience of this original oneness that impels us to show reverence and care to all creation, human and non-human, and to recognise the equal dignity of every human person regardless of race, social status, gender orientation etc.

- Can I identify moments and experiences where I have known (not with my head but with my whole being) my oneness with another, with others, with creation? What difference does this knowing make in my life?
- Can I identify places where my world has become cramped because I have lost the awareness of this oneness of which I am a part? What are some ways in which I can heighten and expand my awareness of and presence to that oneness?

Enhancing the awareness of oneness: The Prayer of Loving Kindness

May I be filled with loving kindness.
May I be peaceful and at ease.
May I be well.
May I be happy.

May we be filled with loving kindness.
May we be peaceful and at ease.
May we be well.
May we be happy.

May all be filled with loving kindness.
May all be peaceful and at ease.
May all we well.
May all be happy.



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