

Pastor Roy's Sermon from July 21, 2019

Paul lifts up the mystery of Christ in us. What is the nature of Christ in us? (Seat belt—stream of consciousness sermon, website)

Paul lifts up that in Christ all things were created. In Christ all things hold together. In Christ all the fullness of God was and is pleased to dwell, and through Christ God was pleased to reconcile all things, making peace through the cross. Paul is not holding back in his celebration of Christ!

The Christ Spirit is the creative power at work in the universe. There is nothing that the Spirit of Christ cannot envelop or transform. The transformation is a matter of us waiting to see God at work even in the darkest of places. The Spirit of Christ is all, in all. What we think of as evil is situations which we cannot yet see God's presence, but the Christ Spirit is there. And so Christ is making all things new, and the process is not one in which God is overcoming evil, but that newness is about us accepting the presence of love, peace, resurrection, communion in whatever we perceive as evil. I'm not saying evil doesn't exist, Paul is saying that the intentions of evil, whatever they may be, never get off the ground. Evil doesn't stand a chance in the grand scheme of the Christ Spirit at work in the universe today. Not a chance. The challenge is that we don't feel that. We run up against the grief of the losses of what we so desperately want and feel we need. The Spirit of Christ invites us to take the time we need in prayer to listen, to wait, to hope anew.

We think of the Christ Spirit as mainly about humanity and moral things, but the Spirit of Christ is at work in all things. Even the plates of the earth's crust moving slowly, or asteroids shooting through space. All of creation is Christ expressing the mystery and wonder of beauty, love, relationship, life, and energy moving about from element to element, from creature to creature. Nothing is outside of the merciful energy of God bringing peace and joy to all, in all, through all, for all. Yes, in it all, we will feel intense pain and loss and we will at times despair of it all, but resurrection of Christ is at work overcoming, inviting newness and peace.

We are part of this life in Christ, of Christ, through Christ. We needn't fear because nothing is left out, no one is excluded, there is no beginning nor end of the power of the Spirit of Christ.

We still ourselves in the presence of the Christ Spirit. We listen. We hope—not to get lucky, or to accomplish some great thing—but our hope is *relationship with the Spirit of Christ linking us to all, in all. Without fail.*

The Christ Spirit is Mary listening to Jesus, without a concern in the world. The Christ Spirit is Martha practicing hospitality, but not Martha worrying about failing. The Spirit of Christ needs not worry because all of the connections are already made. Resurrection is occurring all around us. So we needn't worry. The Spirit of Christ is not a spirit of harsh judgment or worry. The Spirit of Christ is perfect communion and union and *that* kind of perfection is **rest and peace**—not anxiousness.

And don't worry if you worry (which we all do) because either way we are still in communion with the Spirit of Christ's love and the power of that energy moving, making, creating, giving and receiving. The communion is there regardless of the emotions—what we feel. **Jesus is simply encouraging Martha to release her worry and trust that whatever she has to give, it will be *helpful and good enough.***

So often we don't see that whatever we offer is fine. That the Spirit of Christ is the gift and the relationship and we don't need to worry. But we worry. And it steals our joy because to worry is to forget the gift, to be out of touch with the freedom of giftedness which is everything because everything is a gift.

Like Mary we must release our desire to control the gift and stop it from getting away from us. As soon as we receive it or conceive of it, we must begin, like Sarah and Abraham to let go of it. A son will be born. And perhaps he will be taken away. Perhaps not. But the gift is a gift and can only be a gift if held in an open palm, gently, with hope, with gratitude, with generosity.

Mary and Sarah and Abraham and Paul and his disciple who wrote Colossians they received the gift of Christ, the mystery of Christ in us, with gratitude, not demanding the gift be this or that, but simply to acknowledge it, embrace it, and offer the gift back to God, share the Spirit of Christ with all the freedom by which we receive love, mercy, and peace—the energy of God. I'm not saying it's easy but this is the only way we can find freedom and joy.

God give us courage to pray with open hands and see the Christ Spirit at work today. Amen.