



Of Seeds and Flowers



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THE TWO HALVES OF LIFE

"One cannot live the afternoon of life according to the program of life's morning; for what was great in the morning will be of little importance in the evening, and what in the morning was true will at evening have become a lie. Carl Jung, The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche.

The task of the first half of life is to create a proper container for one's life and answer the first essential questions: "What makes me significant?" "How can I support myself?" and who will go with me? The task of the second half of life is, quite simply, to find the actual contents that this container was meant to hold and deliver. The container is not an end in itself, but exists for the sake of your deeper and fullest life, which, by and large, you do not know about yourself. Far too many people just keep doing repair work on the container itself and never "throw their nets into the deep" (John 21 :6) to bring in the huge catch that awaits them.

The task of the first half of life invests so much of our blood, sweat, eggs and sperm, tears and years that we often cannot imagine there is a second task, or that anything else could be expected of us. MOST people die here. "The old wineskins are good enough" (Luke 5:39) we say, even though they often cannot hold

the new wine. The container from the first half of life has to stretch and die in its present form, or even replace itself with something better.

Various traditions use different metaphors to make the difference clear: beginners and proficients, novices and the initiated, juniors and seniors, apprentice and master. **Only when you have begun to live in the second half of life can you see the difference between the two.** Yet, the two halves are cumulative and sequential, and both are very necessary. You cannot do a nonstop flight into the second half of life and no one can do it for you. No book, no guru, no psychological technique, no religious formula can do it for you. Barnes and Noble self help section is sterile.

"Juniors" on the first half of the journey invariably think that true elders are naive, simplistic, "out of it", or just superfluous. *They cannot understand what they have not experienced. They cannot see beyond their first tasks.* However, a person in the second half of life will always have a patient understanding of the juniors and be helpful to them. Higher stages always empathetically include the lower, or they are not higher stages!

Almost all of culture and religious history has been

concerned with first-half-of-life issues: the three big concerns of identity, security, sexuality and gender. They don't just preoccupy us: they totally take over and leave us forever immature. Sounds like present day America, doesn't it??

In our formative years, we are so self-preoccupied that we are both overly defensive and overly offensive at the same time, with little time left for simply living, pure friendship or useless beauty. We need to feel "special"; we need our "narcissistic fix." By that I mean, we all need some successes, affirmation and positive feedback early in life, or we will spend the rest of our lives demanding it. Or bemoaning its lack, from others. **Most of our culture is here.**

An authentic spiritual life demand that we deal with the false self of the First Half of our lives. An authentic God experience always "BURNS" you, yet does not destroy you just as the burning bush did to Moses. But most of us are not prepared for such a burning, NOR EVEN TOLD TO EXPECT IT. By definition, authentic God experience is always "too much"! Interested? Intrigued? Want to grow? Serious about your spiritual life? The above is from the first chapter of "Falling Upward" by Richard Rohr.

During World War II there was an advisor to Winston Churchill who organized a group of people who dropped whatever they were doing every day at the prescribed hour for ONE MINUTE to collectively pray for the safety of England, its people and peace. There is now a group of people who have organized the same thing here in America. If you would like to participate: Every evening at 9 PM EASTERN, stop what you are doing and spend ONE MINUTE praying for the safety of the United States, our troops, our citizens, our ailing government and for a return to a Godly nation. Smart Phone: set the alarm for 9 PM.

WHAT A GREAT IDEA! Prayer, constant, faithful prayer in times like these is a quiet, subversive, revolutionary act. YOU can change the course of events from your favorite chair. One minute, 9PM, Eastern Time, each night for 365 days, equals about 6 hours of prayer for positive change in our country.-by just YOUR prayer alone!! If one million people pray for one year it translates into 6 million hours of prayer for America. Prayer changes things. Prayer makes things happen. Join in, please, and share the message liberally.



"Christians, in this world are to be like a light in the darkness. Our strength is on our knees, in our hands folded together in prayer, in our carrying of the cross. Our strength comes from our Lord God. There is no other strength, no other wisdom, no other victory, but the victory over the absurdity of this world- through humbleness, love and sacrifice."

Mirjana, one of the visionaries at Medjugorje, writes in her beautiful and life transforming book "My Heart Will Triumph": One day during an apparition , we asked a childish question of Our Lady, "How is it that you are so beautiful? " Our Lady smiled, "I am beautiful because I love" she said. "If you want to be beautiful, then love." Mirjana's book is a gem. We just shared 15 copies with friends. This book will give you God's understanding of our present world situation and what He plans to do about it. Read it with your heart WIDE OPEN. You won't put it down or regret it. Good to be "in the know".

In the End, It All Comes Down to This:

- If you want others to be more loving, choose to love first.
- If you want a reconciled outer world, reconcile your own inner world.
- If you are working for peace out there, create it inside as well.
- If you notice other people's irritability, let go of your own.
- If you wish to find some outer stillness, find it within yourself.
- If you are working for justice, treat yourself justly, too.
- If you find yourself resenting the faults of others, stop resenting your own.
- If the world seems desperate, let go of your own despair.
- If you want a just world, start being just in small ways yourself.
- If your situation feels hopeless, honor the life of God inside you.



We mend and renew the world by strengthening inside ourselves, what we seek outside ourselves, and not by demanding it of others or trying to force it on others. **"Reflect, pray and "DO whatever He tells you."**

"Grown-ups never understand anything by themselves, and it is tiresome for children to always be explaining things to them. "The Little Prince", Antoine de Saint Exupery "Unless you change and become like little children, you cannot enter the Kingdom of God." Jesus **"Reflect, pray and "DO whatever He tells you."**

Vision and Reality

"The wise Rabbi Bunam once said in his old age when he had already grown blind: 'I should not like to change places with our father Abraham! What good would it do God, if Abraham became like a blind Bunam, and blind Bunam became like Abraham? Rather than have this happen, I think I shall try to become a little more myself.'

Rabbi Zusya, a short while before his death said, 'In the world to come I shall not be asked: 'Why were you not Moses?' I shall be asked: 'Why were you not Zusya?'"

"Everyone uses his own experience as the measurement of all reality." *Heraclitus*. Little experience, no experience, bad experience EQUALS a life with little reality, no reality or bad reality. Isn't that true? - and if it is, IT IS TRUE FOR EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE! Think of this truth in terms of religion. Little experience, no experience, etc.etc.. If you were hauled into court for being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?

"The sayings of Jesus are designed to move people to question their **unquestioned values** so that they can be open to the radical program for change that He offers. We do not normally enjoy change; even a change for the better is threatening. It is easier to stick with the value system that we have absorbed from our parents, education, ethnic group, nation and religious education." "Awakenings" by Thomas Keating, OCSO.

TO BE EXPLAINED: 35% of Americans have divorced. 34% of born again, married Christians have divorced after they became Christians. (The Barna Group) Conclusion: Without real TRANSFORMATION many Christians live very much like non-Christians. WHAT YOU SEE IS WHAT YOU GET. **WHAT YOU SEEK IS ALSO WHAT YOU GET**. If you always DO what you've always DONE, you'll always GET what you've always GOT. "Our only occupation should be the cure of ourselves." Epicurus

John Adams to his wife Abigail while away on business, "Teach the children **religion, morality and liberty.**"

DIVORCE CONSEQUENCES: Our great American divorce experiment has robbed all our children of their confidence in being able to sustain a marriage or even a long term relationship. Judith Wallerstein, "The Unexpected Legacy of Divorce". If statistics remain the same, in 25 years, 50 % of young adults will be celebrating the 10th anniversary of their divorce and have 2 children from the broken marriage.

"The most dangerous place for an African American is in the womb. "60% of African American pregnancies are aborted." These words, printed on billboards in New York City, were chosen by an African American minister and his church. The Pastor who put up the signs compared abortion on blacks to genocide. Makes you think! **The truth isn't always easy or pretty; that's one way you can identify it.**

Mary's Field is a **"POLITICALLY CORRECT FREE ZONE"**. We have gotten special permission from God who told us that, "Only the TRUTH frees".

"In necessary things, unity; in doubtful things, freedom; in *all things, charity.*" St. Augustine

"When science discovers the center of the universe, a lot of people will be disappointed to find that they are not in it." Bernard Bailey Remember: Your EGO is not your AMIGO!

"It is discouraging to think how many people are shocked by honesty, truth and love and how few by deceit'. Noel Coward **THINK ELECTION!!**

Reflect, Pray, and "Do whatever He tells you." St. John

Speaking Softly

Stop worrying. Whatever it is that you must do to follow the path that God has shown you do to the best of your ability. And when you have done it move on to the next thing.

Don't keep rerunning it in your mind trying to decide whether your efforts were too little or too much, whether it was a great deed or a small one, whether you might have done better.

If it wasn't sinful and you were trying to do the will of God, it is enough.

Don't worry. Move on. Simply. Calmly. Peacefully.

Follow the path the Lord shows you free of anxiety. Otherwise your anxiety will undermine your efforts to grow.

If you do fail don't let anxiety overcome you, but admit your failure quietly, humbly, and in God's presence.

Then get on with following the path that God will continue to show you. *St. Francis de Sales.*

"All grown-ups were little children once, although few remember it." The Little Prince

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