



# RADICAL GRACE

a publication of the center for action and contemplation



emerging christianity



*Integrating a contemplative lifestyle  
and compassionate action*

**CAC MISSION STATEMENT:** We are a center for experiential education, encouraging the transformation of human consciousness through contemplation, equipping people to be instruments of peaceful change in the world.

The CAC supports a new reformation—  
*from the inside:*

- In the spirit of the Gospels
- Confirming peoples' deeper spiritual intuitions
- Encouraging actions of justice rooted in prayer
- With a new appreciation for, and cooperation with, other denominations, religions, and cultures

Radical Grace, the quarterly publication of the Center for Action and Contemplation, is an ongoing means of relationship and communication with the CAC community. Friends making a suggested donation of \$35.00, receive a year's worth (4 hard copy issues, or the more sustainable online, downloadable, full color PDF version for \$25.00) of Radical Grace. Australia and UK friends (only) please visit [www.cacradicalgrace.org](http://www.cacradicalgrace.org) to subscribe to Radical Grace.

Editor  
Vanessa Guerin

Editorial Team  
Joni Thompson, Judy Traeger

Proofreader  
Janet Lear, Shirin McArthur

Design / Layout  
Monique Estrada

Artwork

Page 12, *An Attack on a Galleon*, by Howard Pyle, c. 1905.  
Page 15, *Icon of the Holy Trinity*, by St. Andrei Rublev, c. 1410.

Photography  
Page 8, *Anointing*, by Shirin McArthur.  
Page 11, *The Fire Site*, image from the Simple Way,  
[www.thesimpleway.org](http://www.thesimpleway.org).

US Postal Service Statement of Ownership, Management & Circulation

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Publication Title: Radical Grace  | 9. Names and Addresses of Publisher, Editor, Publisher: Center for Action and Contemplation, 1705 Five Points Rd SW, Albuquerque, NM 87105                     |
| 2. Publication Number: 1054-4569   | Editor: Vanessa Guerin   |
| 3. Filing Date: Oct. 1, 2009   | 10. Owner: Center for Action and Contemplation, 1705 Five Points, SW, Albuquerque, NM 87105  |
| 4. Issue Frequency: Quarterly  | 11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages or Other Securities: None |
| 5. Published Annually: 4x  | 12. Tax Status: Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months   |
| 6. Annual Sub Price: \$25.00+ donation   | 13. Publication Title: Radical Grace   |
| 7. Address of Known Office of Publication: Center for Action and Contemplation, 1705 Five Points Rd SW, Albuquerque, NM 87105-3017   | 14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: Oct. 2009   |
| 8. General Business Office of the Publisher: Center for Action and Contemplation 1705 Five Points Rd. SW, Albuquerque, NM 87105-3017 |  |

15. Extent and Nature of Circulation	Average No. Copies of Each Issue During Preceding 12 Mo.	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (Net Press Run)	4000	3500
b1. Paid/Requested Outside County	2233	2277
b2. Paid In-County	0	0
b3. Sales (non-USPS distribution)	0	0
b4. Other classes (USPS distribution)	0	0
c. Total Paid/Requested Circulation (b1-b4)	2233	2277
d1. Free Distribution by Mail Outside County	0	0
d2. Free Distribution by Mail In-County	0	0
d3. Free Distribution by Mail Other classes	0	0
e. Free Distribution Outside the Mail	0	0
f. Total Free Distribution	0	0
g. Total Distribution	2233	2277
h. Copies not Distributed	1767	1223
i. Total	4000	3500
j. Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation	100%	100%

16. Publication of Statement of Ownership: January 2010  
I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. Vanessa Guerin, Editor, Oct. 14, 2009

Center for Action and Contemplation  
PO Box 12464 • Albuquerque, NM 87195  
Telephone: (505) 242-9588 Fax: (505) 242-9518  
editor@cacradicalgrace.org • www.cacradicalgrace.org

Radical Grace (USPS 023-275)  
Published quarterly by Center for Action and Contemplation  
Periodicals Postage Paid at Albuquerque NM  
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: RADICAL GRACE:  
1705 Five Points Rd. SW, Albuquerque, NM 87105  
[Not a mailing address]

## INSIDE RG

- 3 EMERGING CHRISTIANITY:  
A NON-DUAL VISION  
By Richard Rohr, OFM
- 4 EMERGING CHRISTIANITY:  
HOW WE GET THERE DETERMINES WHERE WE ARRIVE  
By Brian McLaren
- 6 EMERGENCE CHRISTIANITY:  
THE DANDELION EFFECT  
A CONVERSATION WITH PHYLLIS TICKLE  
By Anita Amstutz
- 8 DUST ON THE STREET  
By Sara Miles
- 10 TO ALL MY NON-BELIEVING,  
SORT-OF-BELIEVING,  
AND USED-TO-BE-BELIEVING FRIENDS  
By Shane Claiborne
- 12 A PLEA FOR CHRISTIAN PIRACY  
By Kester Brewin
- 14 THE "ONE TRUE CHURCH"  
THE VIRTUES OF HUMILITY, SERENITY, AND SOBRIETY  
By Don Richard Riso and Russ Hudson
- 16 GOD DOES NOT NEED MY  
SNOTTY OPINIONS ABOUT EVANGELICALS  
By Nadia Bolz -Weber
- 17 DOING THE RIGHT THING  
BECAUSE IT IS THE RIGHT THING  
By Ronald Rolheiser, OMI
- 18 A KIND OF JAZZ:  
TRADITION AND IMPROVISATION  
By Ian Adams
- 20 EMERGING FROM THE UNDERSIDE  
By Stephanie Spellers

## KORU FERN

We have chosen as our image and metaphor for Emerging Christianity the symbol of the New Zealand "koru fern." I found this primitive fern everywhere in my visits to that country. The New Zealanders take the koru as their native symbol of unfolding, growth, and the endless generative nature of their people and their islands.

For us, it also unites one major unfolding, the Christ Mystery, with the many smaller unfoldings that are the various traditions and denominations of Christianity. They all grow together and all broaden and enrich one another, just as Paul said of the parts of the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12).

We trust and pray that our Spring Conference on Emerging Christianity can be a truly catholic contribution to such an emergence and such an unfolding in our time.

~ Richard Rohr

For more information on the Emerging Christianity conference, and to register, please visit [www.cacradicalgrace.org](http://www.cacradicalgrace.org).

# EMERGING CHRISTIANITY: A NON-DUAL VISION

---

By Richard Rohr, OFM



In our second “Emerging” conference this April, we have chosen to speak of Emerging Christianity instead of just the Emerging Church. What is happening is far bigger than any mere structural or organizational re-arrangement. *It is a revolutionary change in Christian consciousness itself.* It is a change of mind and a

change of heart that has been a long time in coming, and now seems to be a new work of the Holy Spirit. Only such a sea-change of consciousness—from such a Deep Sea—will produce anything that lasts long or bears fruit that will last.

Just remember, Emerging Christianity is not trying to make something happen as much as it is *naming and validating something that is already happening around the world.* If you finish this article, I bet you are there already, at least in some ways.

Brian McLaren, who has himself emerged as the most poignant spokesperson for the Emerging Movement, told our team that he believed this second conference of ours needs to highlight the theme of my last book (*The Naked Now: Learning to See as the Mystics See*)—non-dualistic thinking, or the contemplative mind. We do know that if we settle for our old patterns of dualistic thought, this Emerging phenomenon will be just one more of the 30,000 reformations in Christianity that have characterized the last 500 years. It will quickly and surely subdivide into liberal or conservative, Catholic or Protestant, intellectual or emotional, gay or straight, liturgical or Pentecostal, feminist or patriarchal, activist or contemplative—like all the other dualisms—instead of the wonderful wholism of Jesus, *a fully contemplative way of being active and involved in our suffering world.*

Emerging Christianity is both longing for and moving toward a following of Jesus that has much more to do with *an actual daily lifestyle than with believing things.* We do not want to solidify into a word and document institution, but we want to stay, if at all possible, at the crucial movement and lifestyle stage where all the vital energy is contained. Lifestyle and relationships are always non-dual and organic. It is words that are dualistic and make us think that Reality itself is separated or artificial.

We are grateful and content to let our historic churches and denominations take care of the substructures and

the superstructures of Christianity. They have trained us well, grounded us, and sent us on this foreign mission. We will keep one happy foot in our Mother churches, but we have something else that we must do and other places that we must place our other happy foot. We have no time to walk *away* from anything. We want to walk *toward* and *alongside*.

**LIFESTYLE CHRISTIANITY** has been avoided, denied, minimized, ignored, delayed, and sidelined for too many centuries, by too many Christians who were never told Christianity was anything more than a belonging system or a belief system. Now we know that there is no Methodist or Catholic way of loving. There is no Orthodox or Presbyterian way of living a simple and non-violent life. There is no Lutheran or Evangelical way of showing mercy. There is no Baptist or Episcopalian way of visiting the imprisoned. If there is, you are invariably emphasizing the accidentals, which always keep you from the very “marrow of the Gospel,” as St. Francis called it. We have made this mistake for too long, and cannot keep avoiding what Jesus actually emphasized and mandated. In this most urgent time, “it is the very love of Christ that now urges us” (2 Cor. 5:14).

I recently reviewed an excellent book by the Quaker minister, Philip Gulley, called *If the Church Were Christian.* His chapters so summarize our needed direction, that I will take the liberty of capturing them here in my own words, as a rather excellent description of ▶ page 22

**Emerging Christianity is not trying to make something happen as much as it is *naming and validating something that is already happening around the world.***

# EMERGING CHRISTIANITY: HOW WE GET THERE DETERMINES WHERE WE ARRIVE

---

By Brian McLaren

“For thirty years I’ve won nearly every argument in my marriage,” a friend once told me, “But in the process, I’ve almost lost my marriage. I’ve always felt like a success because I was ending conflicts through superior logic. I now realize that I was defeating and humiliating my wife. That wasn’t winning or succeeding at all; that was a cruel and bitter kind of failure.”

Along the way, most of us who are married learn what my friend learned: what matters most is not *who* wins arguments, but rather *how* they’re resolved. And my friend’s realization offers a powerful lesson for all of us who are involved in ministry: *How we get there determines where we arrive.*

**If you can’t get your church to focus on cross-racial relationships, you can take a step this Sunday and visit a church where you’re the minority, and from there, begin to build relationships.**

Jesus knew this. All around him, people wanted good things ... peace, justice, security, prosperity, happiness. But how they pursued those things often sabotaged their attempts to secure them. If you seek peace through violence, he knew, you will never find real peace. If you seek prosperity through selfish greed and hoarding, he knew, you will never truly prosper. If you seek justice through retaliation for previous offenses, he knew, you’ll only multiply injustice. So he taught them to seek peace, prosperity, and justice through forgiveness and reconciliation, through mutual care and service, through fidelity and generosity, through courage and love.

Many of us are seeking new ways of being Christians. We are on a quest for a new kind of Christianity—a faith liberated from the institutional and dogmatic straightjackets we inherited, a way of life that integrates the personal and the social dimensions of spirituality, a practice that integrates centered contemplation and dynamic action. In our quest, we must remember how easy it is to self-sabotage; we must remember that how we get there will determine where we will be.

In my work, first as a pastor and now as a writer,

speaker, and networker, I see four areas where many of us need to pay special attention to the how, so we can be examples and midwives of emerging Christianity instead of its accidental saboteurs.

First, we need to process our pain, anger, and frustration with the institutional or inherited forms of church. Many of us have been disillusioned and wounded by inflexible structures and uncaring people in the church. When we’ve asked honest questions or dared to raise a differing viewpoint, we’ve been shot down in ways that felt quite brutal. At that point, if we turn our pain into blame, we will become bitter and sabotage our quest for a new kind of Christian faith—because religious bitterness is not new at all. But if instead we learn to process our pain, if

we join Jesus in the way of redemptive suffering and gracious forgiveness, we will become sweeter and better, not meaner and bitter, and we will become the kinds of people who embody

an emerging Christian faith indeed.

Second, we need to manage our idealism. The fact is, even if we break out of old patterns of institutionalism and dogmatism, we’re still a mess. Although we may help move the football of faith a few more yards downfield towards the goal-line, we won’t cross the goal-line of perfection. In this life, our goal is “a more perfect union,” which is a very different thing from “a perfect union.” The quest for perfection makes us (unsurprisingly) perfectionists, and soon we perfectionists find ourselves hating people (including ourselves) when they keep fouling up our idealized wish-dreams and spiritual fantasies. On our best days, we’re going to need huge doses of patience, kindness, humility, forgiveness, and endurance in our Christian communities ... to bear others’ many imperfections, not to mention our own. The emerging church will never be a perfect church; it will always be a community of sinner-saints and stumbling bumbler touched by radical grace. Liberated by grace from a perfectionistic idealism, we can celebrate the beauty of what is emerging instead of letting its imperfections frustrate us.

Third, we need to focus our circle of responsibility. If you expect your denomination to suddenly see the light and change deeply ingrained habits overnight, you're probably smoking something illegal. Instead of taking the splinter out of your denomination's eye, it makes so much more sense to focus on the telephone poles in your own. That means letting go of the things you can't control—which includes the decisions that popes, bishops, pastors, councils, and church boards may make today, tomorrow, or next year. It's far wiser to focus on things you can control—like whether you invite anyone over for dinner this Saturday night, and who you invite, and what you do and talk about when you're together. So if you can't get your congregation to care about homeless people, you can get involved yourself. If you can't get your denomination to treat gay folks with respect, you can do so around your kitchen table. If you can't get your church to focus on cross-racial relationships, you can take a step this Sunday and visit a church where you're the minority, and from there, begin to build relationships. You don't need anyone's vote or permission to do these things: you only need to exercise your own responsibility and freedom. In so doing, you will be embodying and demonstrating the emerging church—and providing an example that others can see and maybe even emulate some day.

Finally, we need to start small and celebrate small gains. One of the curses of late modernity was the belief that unless something was big and well-publicized, it didn't count. How different that mentality is from the mindset of Jesus. He spoke of tiny mustard seeds, of a little yeast in a lot of dough, of a little flock, of the greatness of smallness, of a secret good deed and a simple cup of cold water given to one in need. We brag about big things through statistics; we celebrate small things through stories. So we need places where beautiful small signs of the kingdom can be celebrated.

Just this morning, I had breakfast with a gifted young pastor who has helped form a new emerging church in a poor neighborhood in Baltimore. They haven't rid Baltimore of crime, but they have conducted prayer services at the sites where children have been murdered ... a beautiful thing. They haven't transformed the educational system, but this summer they painted an inner-city school for free ... a beautiful thing. They haven't overcome racism, but in recent weeks, an affluent white family and a poor African-American family have become friends, and last week, two years of unemployment ended for the African-American father ... a beautiful thing. They haven't created a conference for thousands in which they present "the model" for churches of the future, but they have created a safe space where forty people can express both their faith and their doubts Sunday by Sunday ... a beautiful thing.

As we process our pain, manage our idealism, do what's doable, and celebrate the small and beautiful, we discover that all around us, new forms and expressions of Christian faith are emerging. Through a better how, a better where is possible.

*Brian McLaren's next book, A New Kind of Christianity: Ten Questions That Are Transforming the Faith will be released in February. He is an author, speaker, pastor, and networker among innovative Christian leaders, thinkers, and activists, and will be presenting together with Richard Rohr and others at the CAC-sponsored Emerging Christianity conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, April 9 – 11, 2010. To learn more about Brian McLaren and his work, visit [www.brianmclaren.net](http://www.brianmclaren.net).*



## MEN'S RITES OF PASSAGE 2010

**ARIZONA • Apr 28-May 2**  
Aravaipa Canyon Ranch  
120 miles SE of Phoenix, AZ

**ILLINOIS • Aug 11-15**  
Pilgrim Park Retreat Center  
Princeton, Illinois  
110 miles West of Chicago, IL

**CALIFORNIA • Nov 10-14**  
CYO Camp and Retreat Center  
Occidental, California  
65 miles North of San Francisco

### INTERNATIONAL

**AUSTRIA • July 27-Aug 1**

**SCOTLAND • Week**  
beginning Monday, July 26  
Near Perth, Scotland

**AUSTRALIA • Aug 17-21**  
Camp Somerset  
Queensland, Australia

**CZECH REPUBLIC**  
Sept 11-15  
Nesmer, Czech Republic

[www.malespirituality.org](http://www.malespirituality.org)

Application Process Required  
(505)242-9588  
[menswork@cacraddicalgrace.org](mailto:menswork@cacraddicalgrace.org)

# EMERGENCE CHRISTIANITY: THE DANDELION EFFECT

## A CONVERSATION WITH PHYLLIS TICKLE

---

By Anita Amstutz

Recently I had the opportunity to chat with Phyllis Tickle by telephone. It was a fascinating conversation as she deepened my understanding of this thing called Emergence Christianity. As we talked, the image of a dandelion emerged, in describing the effect this movement is having upon systems and institutions that have stood for centuries. As I thought about the beleaguered dandelion, which is widely regarded as a weed, I began to admire its qualities. A cheery yellow flower, with nutritional value, it is able to grow in poor soil, repopulate itself with multitudes of fuzzy seeds and is a very tenacious plant!

### Like the dandelion, Emergence Christianity has a robust ability to grow demographically in strength and number even as old institutions and systems of the modern era are dying.

So, what does the dandelion have to do with Emergence Christianity, you might ask? According to Phyllis Tickle, this movement largely resembles emergent organisms in the biological world. As a matter of fact the word “emergence” came straight out of the biological sciences! Like the dandelion, Emergence Christianity has a robust ability to grow demographically in strength and number even as old institutions and systems of the modern era are dying. EC can repopulate itself readily without being demographically stable.

Another natural example is the starfish, an emergent species. This organism can re-propagate itself when damaged. Starfish can grow another body from a leg, if it is dismembered, unlike a spider which will die if its head is cut off. In a book called *Starfish and Spider: The Unstoppable Power of Leaderless Organizations* by Ori Brafman and Rod Beckstrom (Penguin Group: USA, 2008) the authors define new ways of working, organizing, and socializing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century which are more akin to the starfish than the spider. Like the starfish, a prime characteristic of Emergence Christianity is its ability to drop back, reconfigure, and self-organize, as well as its non-hierarchical way of being and proliferating.

As we talked, what struck me was that Phyllis used terms from the natural world to describe the movement and function of Emergence Christianity! I asked Phyllis if she thought this was a sustainable movement, meaning it was in concert with the biotic world and could be a dynamic, life-giving organism into the future. Phyllis said, “Absolutely! It is a green movement. The Kingdom of God is here and now, lived out in this world... We can’t have social justice without “green,” nor “green” without social justice!” She sees Emergence Christianity growing out of a greater ecological awareness both in the culture as well as in the institutional Christian church.

One of the things Phyllis wanted to clarify for this article was the term, **Emergence Christianity**. She called it the “umbrella” under which many component parts reside, including neo-monasticism, missional church, neo-Calvinism, deep church, and emerging church.

The second thing Phyllis clarified is that the Great Emergence is a phenomenon, a movement which encompasses *all* of culture: socio-political, economic and intellectual realms. The cultural presentation has been seen in the writings of Thomas Friedman in *The World is Flat* and David Korten in *The Great Turning*. Emergence Christianity then, is an expression within the *Christian tradition* of a trend that is happening across all of human society.

Finally, she wanted to qualify that this Emergence Christianity is NOT just a North American experience. It has been unfolding around the globe for many decades in numerous countries, affecting all of the standing Christian traditions. In her words, we most commonly hear this talked about and seen in terms of Protestantism, simply because that is the part of organized Christianity that is being the most dramatically changed from the populist point of view. Both the Great Emergence and Emergence Christianity are happening in the part of the world that received its Christianity via the Latin tongue, or was colonized and/or *colonialized* by those who so received it. That is an important distinction. Emergence Christianity did not arrive at any significant place in the general conversation or the public awareness until the 1990’s, whereas it had done so much earlier in other parts of the Latinized world. That does not mean that there



were not evidences of its existence and functioning well before that here... from the mid 1940's, in fact, with things like the founding of The Church of the Saviour in Washington D.C.

Phyllis' reflection on what is up for sale at the Church's 21<sup>st</sup> century rummage sale ("The Great Emergence" by Phyllis Tickle, *Radical Grace*, October-December 2008) was summed up in one word: "Modernism."

Some of the things she noted that make up the era of modernism which we are now "throwing out into the yard" are historicity, propositional thinking (facts), "Christus Victor" and the political Christ as seen in the moral majority.

In place of this modern system of seeing and understanding the world, Emergence Christianity embraces *narrative* over fact as closer to the truth (e.g. poetry, story). Holy Spirit is the poster child in this time of great flux and uncertainty.

People are hungry for transcendence as well as *relationality* in worship. They desire sacred space and social justice. It is moving back in time toward a spirituality found in the first century Acts of the Apostles. Phyllis noted an excellent book by Ray Anderson, written in 2006, called *Emerging Theology for Emerging Churches*, which addressed this first century expression of Christianity. Anderson explored how we are re-living what was happening in first century Antioch where, in the midst of sharp divisions and differences in the church, Antioch was the place where non-rabbis could serve communion, where all food could be eaten, and where circumcision was not required. Jerusalem was orthodoxy. Antioch was emergence.

The question is, what will show up in the next 350 – 500 years in this cycle of Christianity emergence—what will be the 'Antioch' issues for us? Phyllis noted that we haven't gotten there yet, because of the chrysalis effect (another natural image!). We are still in the cocoon, incubating, growing. But at some point, the butterfly will need to stretch its wings and push against the chrysalis until it breaks open. As we cocoon, one of the main things that will need to be decided, noted Phyllis, is ecclesiology. What does it look like? What should it feel like? What is leadership? Do we want leadership?

In the meantime, interesting things are sprouting up such as the "people's seminaries," which credential lay people. Ministers are being seen as facilitators. Many leaders will need to again hearken back to the Apostle Paul, who made a humble living as a tent maker even while he was on the road evangelizing.

In summary, Phyllis believes we can take hope in this time of changing paradigms. She said, "It is a joy to see established churches reaching out to this emergence! The best we can do is pray and keep the doors open."

And that is exactly what Phyllis is doing, as she travels around the country listening, observing, and teaching in this exciting and unsettling time!

*Phyllis Tickle, the founding editor of the Religion Department of Publishers Weekly, is the author of over two dozen books including The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why.*

*Anita Amstutz, M.A. M.Div., a Mennonite pastor, works with Mission Integration and Spiritual Formation for the Center for Action and Contemplation.*

# DUST ON THE STREET

By Sara Miles

*What happens when “emerging church” doesn’t take place in church? An account of bringing ancient traditions outside the walls, to people often ignored by the self-consciously “alternative” emerging churches.*

“Hey, did you know today is Ash Wednesday?” a white hipster shouted into his phone, as our procession of fifteen men and women dressed in black cassocks walked, chanting, into the plaza a block from my home in San Francisco’s busy Mission District. “Yeah, no shit.”



Bertie Pearson, a young Episcopal priest whose previous job was as a club DJ, had set up a makeshift altar on a black-draped card table in front of the entrance to the subway. Three Brazilian drummers were pounding away in front of two handwritten signs Bertie had duct-taped to a fence. *Life is Very, Very, Very Short* said one; the other simply read *More Forgiveness*.

I sprinkled more incense on the coals in my thurible. It was *copal*, the yellowish resin used by the Aztecs to bless the four directions of the world, and its smoke still fills Mexican churches with the smell of prayers more ancient than Jesus. “Ready?” I asked, and our impromptu

group of Christians processed around the corners of the crowded plaza, censing east and west, north and south with clouds of smoke. This was church *way* outside of church.

We returned to the altar and fell on our knees, and the drumming stopped abruptly. “O God,” began Bertie, chanting in a serious, thin voice only partly drowned out by the buses going by, “you made us from the dust of the earth. Grant that these ashes may be a sign of our mortality and hope.” He held up baby-food jars filled with the ashes of burned-up palms from last year’s Palm Sunday. Bystanders were edging nearer to see what we were doing, and a seminarian with long black hair addressed everyone. “Let us kneel before the God who made us,” she said.

I knelt and pressed my forehead to the dirty sidewalk, the whole rush of my neighborhood, its crazy beauty and its apparent hopelessness filling my heart. I’d walked through this plaza the day two teenage kids were shot a block away; I’d seen someone overdose in the subway entrance. I’d come here busy and distracted on the way to the library with my five-year old daughter; I’d eaten tacos, chatted with beggars, and laughed with friends in this place. “Lord,” I said, “have mercy.”

We rose and started singing, a repetitive chant. “*Recuerda que eres polvo, y al polvo volverá.*” Then I marked Bertie, dipping my thumb into the soot. “Remember you’re dust,” I repeated in English, making the sign of the cross on his forehead. “And to dust you shall return.”

“Amen,” said Bertie, and I bent my head to receive ashes from him. A curious crowd was forming. The priests stayed, seemingly by habit, standing in front of the altar, waiting for people to come to them up the escalator.

But the rest of us divided into pairs—one with ashes, one with incense—and started spreading out, touching complete strangers by the dozen, the score, the hundreds. We put our hands on people’s foreheads, saying in English and Spanish, “Remember you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” Then I grabbed a friend, Deb Tullman, who took a thurible. The two of us set off into the dollar stores, the taquerias, the parking lots and restaurants, offering ashes to everyone we saw.

We touched the foreheads of commuters, and the gang kids on the corner, and little children, and a bunch of

# CHRIST AT THE ATM

obnoxious drunks. I was pausing on the sidewalk to impose ashes on an older lady when some big Chicano guy pulled up in a truck, put on his blinkers, and threw open the door. "Oh! Can I have those? Wait, my mom is in the back seat, can you go give her some?" I looked at Deb. "People want so much more church than we give them," I said.

In the library, a clerk said to us, softly, "I saw your sign that said *forgive more*. That's what I need in my life right now. I need to forgive more." She bent her head. I could feel the blessing coming off her, into my ashy fingers.

At the taqueria, a sweaty cook said, "Oh, you knew we couldn't get to church, so you came to us?" Deb was transfixed. "It's so intense," she said. "When you touch each forehead, it's like time stops, over and over."

Deb stood watching, tearful, in the Italian bakery, as a big woman in an apron, holding a three-layer birthday cake in her arms, leaned over the counter toward me. The woman closed her eyes and said, "Please."

McDonalds was crowded with teenagers and families buying cheap fast food. A Guatemalan woman unwrapped her tiny baby, a week and a half old, and held him up to us. I crossed his forehead with ashes, and took a deep breath, and told the baby he was going to die. And then his mother, like every single person who received that day, said the same words: *thank you*.

Why would you say thank you when a stranger tells you you're going to die? Because it's the truth. People say thank you when they hear the truth, because finally, despite all the lies of our culture, it means nothing is hidden, or pretend, or made up anymore. As we find the courage to walk outside of church, may God's truth continue to shine on us.

*Sara Miles is the Director of Ministry at St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church in San Francisco. Her latest book is Jesus Freak: Feeding Healing Raising the Dead (Jossey-Bass). To learn more visit: [www.saramiles.net](http://www.saramiles.net).*

Christ came to me at the ATM,  
In San Francisco  
Near the Tenderloin district.

I struggled to put my card in and he approached me.  
"I need help Man."

"Sorry?"  
I moved away.

He followed.  
His brow knitted,  
His face gaunt,  
Straggly beard.  
Crucified in his inner being,  
He cried out, "I'm frickin dying of AIDS man.  
You gotta give me twenty dollars for a heroin fix."

"I can't help you Man!  
I've got nothing left.  
The ATM won't work.  
It's the machine!"

Distressed, discomfited, I turned away.  
Went round the corner to a more public place  
With three ATMs  
Bank of America.  
Stood in line.

Christ walked past again,  
Weighed down with the burden of his greatcoat,  
Head bowed.  
Denied even the solace of vinegar and myrrh  
He turned and glanced at me.  
Mumbled something.

No cock crew.  
But I knew.

~ Geoffrey Butler

*Geoffrey Butler, from Queensland, Australia,  
attended the CAC 9-Day Internship in June of 2007.*

# TO ALL MY NON-BELIEVING, SORT-OF-BELIEVING, AND USED-TO-BE-BELIEVING FRIENDS

---

By Shane Claiborne

I feel like I should begin with a confession. I am sorry that so often the biggest obstacle to God has been Christians—Christians who have had so much to say with our mouths and so little to show with our lives. I am sorry that so often we have forgotten the Christ of our Christianity.

Forgive us. Forgive us for the embarrassing things we have done in the name of God.

The other night I headed into downtown Philly for a stroll with some friends from out of town. We walked down to Penn's Landing along the river, where there are street performers, artists, musicians. We passed a great magician who did some pretty sweet tricks like pour change out of his iPhone, and then there was a preacher. He wasn't quite as captivating as the magician. He stood on a box, yelling into a microphone, and beside him was a coffin with a fake dead body inside. He talked about how we are all going to die and go to hell if we don't know Jesus.

Some folks snickered. Some told him to shut the hell up. A couple of teenagers tried to steal the dead body in the coffin. All I could do was think to myself, I want to jump up on a box beside him and yell at the top of my lungs, "God is not a monster." Maybe next time I will.

The more I have read the Bible and studied the life of Jesus, the more I have become convinced that Christianity spreads best not through force but through fascination. But over the past few decades our Christianity, at least here in the United States, has become less and less fascinating. We have given the atheists less and less to disbelieve. And the sort of Christianity many of us have seen on television and heard on the radio looks less and less like Jesus.

At one point Gandhi was asked if he was a Christian, and he said, essentially, "I sure love Jesus, but the Christians seem so unlike their Christ." A recent study showed that the top three perceptions of Christians in the U. S. among young non-Christians are that Christians are 1) antigay, 2) judgmental, and 3) hypocritical. So what we have here is a bit of an image crisis, and much of that reputation is well deserved. That's the ugly stuff. And that's why I begin by saying that I'm sorry.

Now for the good news:

I want to invite you to consider that maybe the

televangelists and street preachers are wrong—and that God really is love. Maybe the fruits of the Spirit really are beautiful things like peace, patience, kindness, joy, love, goodness, and not the ugly things that have come to characterize religion, or politics, for that matter. (If there is anything I have learned from liberals and conservatives, it's that you can have great answers and still be mean... and that just as important as being right is being nice.)

The Bible that I read says that God did not send Jesus to condemn the world but to save it... it was because "God so loved the world." That is the God I know, and I long for others to know. I did not choose to devote my life to Jesus because I was scared to death of hell or because I wanted crowns in heaven... but because he is good. For those of you who are on a sincere spiritual journey, I hope that you do not reject Christ because of Christians. We have always been a messed-up bunch, and somehow God has survived the embarrassing things we do in His name. At the core of our "Gospel" is the message that Jesus came "not [for] the healthy... but the sick." And if you choose Jesus, may it not be simply because of a fear of hell or hope for mansions in heaven.

Don't get me wrong, I still believe in the afterlife, but too often all the church has done is promise the world that there is life after death and use it as a ticket to ignore the hells around us. I am convinced that the Christian Gospel has as much to do with this life as the next, and that the message of that Gospel is not just about going up when we die but about bringing God's Kingdom down. It was Jesus who taught us to pray that God's will be done "on earth as it is in heaven." On earth!

One of Jesus' most scandalous stories is the story of the Good Samaritan. As sentimental as we may have made it, the original story was about a man who gets beat up and left on the side of the road. A priest passes by. A Levite, the quintessential religious guy, also passes by on the other side (perhaps late for a meeting at church). And then comes the Samaritan... you can almost imagine a snicker in the Jewish crowd. Jews did not talk to Samaritans, or even walk through Samaria. But the Samaritan stops and takes care of the guy in the ditch and is lifted up as the hero of the story. I'm

sure some of the listeners were ticked. According to the religious elite, Samaritans did not keep the right rules, and they did not have sound doctrine... but Jesus shows that true faith has to work itself out in a way that is Good News to the most bruised and broken person lying in the ditch.

It is so simple, but the pious forget this lesson constantly. God may indeed be evident in a priest, but God is just as likely to be at work through a Samaritan or a prostitute. In fact the Scripture is brimful of God using folks like a lying prostitute named Rahab; an adulterous king named David... at one point God even speaks to a

the neighborhood, a neighborhood where folks said, “Nothing good could come.” It is this Jesus who was accused of being a glutton and drunkard and rabble-rouser for hanging out with all of society’s rejects, and who died on the imperial cross of Rome reserved for bandits and failed messiahs. This is why the triumph over the cross was a triumph over everything ugly we do to ourselves and to others. It is the final promise that love wins.

It is this Jesus who was born in a stank manger in the middle of a genocide. That is the God that we are just as likely to find in the streets as in the sanctuary,



guy named Balaam through his donkey. Some say God spoke to Balaam through his ass and has been speaking through asses ever since. So if God should choose to use us, then we should be grateful but not think too highly of ourselves. And if upon meeting someone we think God could never use, we should think again.

After all, Jesus says to the religious elite who looked down on everybody else: “The tax collectors and prostitutes are entering the Kingdom ahead of you.” And we wonder what got him killed?

I have a friend in the UK who talks about “dirty theology”—that we have a God who is always using dirt to bring life and healing and redemption, a God who shows up in the most unlikely and scandalous ways. After all, the whole story begins with God reaching down from heaven, picking up some dirt, and breathing life into it. At one point, Jesus takes some mud, spits in it, and wipes it on a blind man’s eyes to heal him. (The priests and producers of anointing oil were not happy that day.)

In fact, the entire story of Jesus is about a God who did not just want to stay “out there” but who moves into

who can redeem revolutionaries and tax collectors, the oppressed and the oppressors... a God who is saving some of us from the ghettos of poverty, and some of us from the ghettos of wealth.

In closing, to those who have closed the door on religion—I was recently asked by a non-Christian friend if I thought he was going to hell. I said, “I hope not. It will be hard to enjoy heaven without you.” If those of us who believe in God do not believe God’s grace is big enough to save the whole world... well, we should at least pray that it is.

Your brother,  
Shane

*Reprinted with permission of Shane Claiborne, from Esquire, [www.esquire.com/features/best-and-brightest-2009/shane-claiborne-1209](http://www.esquire.com/features/best-and-brightest-2009/shane-claiborne-1209).*

*Shane Claiborne is a founding partner of The Simple Way, a faith community in inner-city Philadelphia that has been a model for radical faith communities around the world. His books include The Irresistible Revolution: Living as an Ordinary Radical and Follow Me to Freedom: Leading and Following as an Ordinary Radical. Shane will be presenting together with Richard Rohr and others at the CAC-sponsored Emerging Christianity conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, April 9 – 11, 2010.*

# A PLEA FOR CHRISTIAN PIRACY

By Kester Brewin

Having been involved in some UK networks that became labelled by others as “emerging,” one of the problems was that we were never quite sure in what sense the word was being used. At the time I was rather taken by the connection it made to the science of emergence and complexity—and my first book, *Signs of Emergence*, was an attempt to see the gospel as God’s “bottom up” critique of our “top down” religion.

Now that the movement has been around for a while, I am more interested trying to come to grips with exactly what is emerging, and what these fledging communities are emerging into. In fact, as Christians, we should see these two questions as interdependent. One of the core messages of the incarnation—and thus of an incarnational Christianity that takes being the Body of Christ seriously—is that the forms we take are intimately connected to the culture we are within.

So what are new forms of church emerging into? I think it is simply this: the hegemony of capitalism. It is not that it is simply all around us; it is within and among us.

While waiting at a bus stop recently, my attention was caught by an advertisement for a shopping mall running down the side of one bus:

## **Sunday is a Day for Rest Shopping.**

Working hard all week to pay the bills, the Sabbath has become a time to “spend” together. “Having,” the psychologist Oliver James notes in his book *Affluenza*, “has replaced Being.”<sup>1</sup>

If Jesus emerged into Jewish culture and became an itinerant preacher in order to disturb, critique, and renew it, what form should we be taking as we emerge into consumer culture if we are going to disturb, critique, and bring it to renewal, too? I want to argue that history suggests that the archetypal critic of capitalism is the pirate, and that if the Emerging Church is to offer a proper critique of the message that “I am what I consume,” then it needs to heed the call for a new Christian piracy.

Pirates remain figures of fascination to children. Why is it that I am happy for my son to dress up and go to a party as a pirate? I can’t imagine him being invited to an “aggravated robbery” themed party. It seems that their thievery is functioning on a different level.

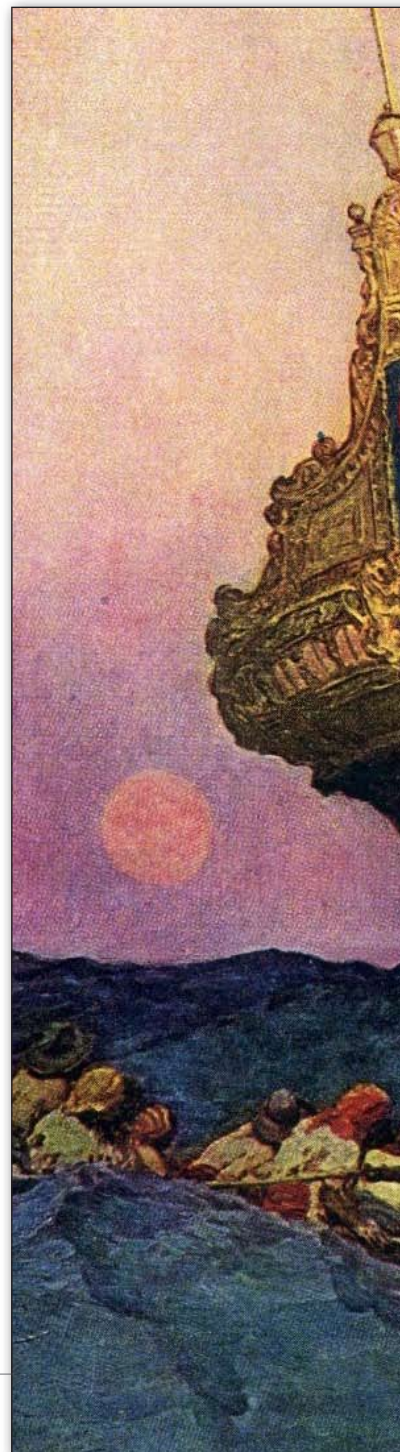
The “golden age of piracy” coincided with the extending fingers of the Spanish and British empires. Ships were sent out to gather wealth from the new world, and pirates emerged to plunder them. If caught,

they were dragged back to London, tried and hung from gillies along the banks of the Thames. With such a risky life and heavy punishment, the important question is thus why people decided to become pirates. The American anarchist-historian Peter Lamborn Wilson offers a reason:

Labour conditions in the merchant marines of Europe presented an abysmal picture of emerging capitalism at its worst. The sailor had every reason to consider himself the lowest and most rejected figure of all European economy and government—powerless, underpaid, brutalized, tortured... the virtual slave of wealthy merchants and ship-owners, and of penny-pinching kings and greedy princes.<sup>2</sup>

Piracy was thus not simply theft, but an act of social resistance. The seamen, living in squalor while enslaved to rich merchants, saw their turn to piracy as a shaking off of the capitalist establishment that shackled them. They had been trained to steal, and so steal back they did.

However, though clearly violent and colourful characters, pirates did more than just rob. It is well documented, but not well known, that pirates regularly attacked slave ships and set the slaves free. One Captain Mission, having captured a Dutch slave ship off the coast of Africa, made a long speech to its crew, arguing that “the Trading for those of our Species could never be agreeable to the Eyes of divine Justice and that no Man has the Power of the



Liberty of another; and while those who profess a more enlightened Knowledge of the Deity, sold men like Beasts; they prov'd that their Religion was no more than a Grimace!"<sup>3</sup>

In their stealing from greedy princes—who were ravaging the resources of the New World—and setting free slaves from slave ships, these pirates were undertaking a radical critique of the governing ethic of the day. They were branded as heretics for doing so, but their heretical beliefs were eventually to become orthodoxy: human rights are universal, and merchants and monarchs do have a responsibility to trade fairly and to distribute wealth more carefully.

This then is the role of the pirate, and this is what elevates him or her above the level of common thief: they live as heretics in “blocked” societies, committed

to seeing their heresy become orthodoxy as flows of property and ideas are “unblocked.”

We still see pirates functioning in this way in the music business. The pirate radio stations of the 1960s broadcasted heretical “pop” music from off the shores of the UK. Initially banned by the government, these pirate DJs were later hired by the very orthodox BBC as they set up “Radio 1.” More recently we have seen the heresy of Napster—a free music downloading service that was jumped on by the music industry as sounding the death knell of their businesses—replaced by the orthodoxy of Spotify—a free music streaming service that the music industry hails as a potential saviour.

These acts of piracy are fascinating because they are symbols of resistance and of heresy. When there are changes ahead that we feel unable to navigate, pirates are there to unblock our route, and as we face a society “blocked” by the hegemony of consumerism we need good Christian pirates to emerge in the mode of Jesus—himself a piratical figure.

The incarnation was no less than a rupture that we experienced as heresy, a challenge to our economics and ethics that we resisted and fought. Was not Jesus arrested and tortured and strung up for all to see like those 17th century lovers of liberty, chained to gillies by the Thames? Did he not also demand that “no Man has the Power of the Liberty of another; and while those who profess a more enlightened Knowledge of the Deity [...] prov'd that their Religion was no more than a Grimace”? Has not the heresy that he preached been embraced by us as a radical orthodoxy?

If so, in a changing and constantly re-emerging world, we need constantly to be thinking of how we can function in the same incarnational mode as Jesus. When our culture becomes “blocked”—as I feel it is now—we need to be prepared to be painted by the powerful as heretics, and be strung up for our beliefs. But we do this not out of hatred for orthodoxy, but love of it. For true pirates know that their religion is more than a grimace, and that true riches will be shared if we are prepared to commit righteous mutiny against the systems that oppress the poor.

1. Oliver James, *Affluenza, Vermillion*, 2007.

2. Lamborn Wilson, *Pirate Utopias: Moorish Corsairs and European Renegades*, New York, *Autonomedia*, 2003, p. 21.

3. *Ibid.* p. 195

*Kester Brewin is a writer and pioneering church planter. In emerging church circles he is best known for working with a collective of artists and city lovers to create the experimental, alternative worship group Vaux. Brewin has worked in an advisory role at Fuller Theological Seminary, helping them to think about new ways of training Emerging leaders. The author of Signs of Emergence: A Vision of Church that is Always Evolving, he is based in London, England.*



# THE “ONE TRUE CHURCH” THE VIRTUES OF HUMILITY, SERENITY, AND SOBRIETY

By Don Richard Riso and Russ Hudson

There are two kinds of churches: the first kind is made of brick and stone, hierarchy and ordinary people, maintaining the beliefs and traditions that are required for continued membership in the group. This kind of church is most likely the kind that many of us have been brought up in—and the sort of church that has held sway for thousands of years. It is also the kind of church which has often been criticized for losing touch both with its founding principles and with the people it exists to serve. In this article, we have little new to add to the basic insight that this kind of church often serves “religion” and its social, economic, and political purposes much more than it facilitates the liberation of individuals.

## God is really and truly in charge.

Yet, it is still possible to find groups moved by real spirituality which focuses on liberation and inner freedom. However, only those who are themselves liberated from the needs of institutional religion can be effective guides for the liberation of others. While institutional religions do some social good, as well as remind believers of the original inspirations of their religion, unless *personal spiritual experience* is at the core of any church, it will eventually go off course.

One of the main ways that most churches and religions go off course is that they sooner or later claim that they are “the one true church.” Human egos naturally feel that they are right and are justified in their beliefs and actions. When we see the actions of others, we tend to feel that since we are right in our beliefs, they must be wrong in theirs. We are convinced that both points of view cannot be true.

This kind of dualistic thinking can have only two ultimate outcomes. First, one can become unconcerned about other religions and completely indifferent to their spiritual insights. Second, dualistic thinking can lead us to become intrusive, controlling, and intolerant. We can succumb to the neurotic need to press our own beliefs on others, to evangelize them to our point of view. Unfortunately, this is the root of fundamentalism, and is the aggressive face of dogmatic belief.

But, there is a second kind of church based on spirituality and personal experience. Real spirituality

is not about convincing anyone of anything. It frees individuals to find the truth for themselves. (Of course, it is normal for most to start their spiritual awakening in a traditional religious context. But, eventually, the more we make the core truths of our religious tradition our own, they inevitably lead us to discover real spirituality, voiced in our own words and expressed in our own experience.)

The Virtues of **Serenity** (associated with type One), **Humility** (type Two), and **Sobriety** (type Seven) can be strong bulwarks against the superiority, indifference, and intolerance that are the results of much institutional religion. These Virtues help us do our part to create the “one true church.” Unless a church is infused with these Virtues, the church will quickly deteriorate into a place where empty beliefs, restrictive rules, baseless fears, lack of heartfulness, and deluded egos are the unfortunate norm.

While the Virtues are often thought of as qualities of an individual’s awakened heart, they are also markers of a group’s (or of a church’s) spiritual maturity. In fact, these three Virtues might be thought of as “social virtues” because of their good effect on society and people at large. As guardians of the social realm, these three Virtues open the door to everyone, balancing competing viewpoints, and keeping the group focused on its greatest good—the establishment of God’s dominion over hearts and minds on earth.

*Humility* is probably the most paradoxical of the Virtues since as soon as one is aware of having it, it disappears, or worse, it turns into “false humility,” which is merely a subtle mask of pride. Despite its apparent evanescence, humility is not fragile. On the contrary, humility is so robust that it needs no tending: it arises spontaneously when the heart has found its rightful place and knows the measure of its own worth. The humble person knows that she is infinitely worthwhile because she is a vessel of infinite Love—and she also knows that value lies in the Love, not the vessel.

For the “one true church,” humility is essential as a guardian against pomposity, sanctimoniousness, and the inflated self-satisfaction that comes when someone assumes the posture of speaking for God. As a social virtue, humility ensures that everyone is treated with respect and equal reverence. Humility also enables each congregation never to think of itself as “the one true

church,” but to respect the beliefs and practices of others, seeing the good that is in them.

*Serenity* allows the awakened heart to stay uplifted and joyous in the face of apparent setbacks and disappointments. The human ego has the unfortunate habit of generating specific expectations about reality, itself, and other people. We not only think we know the truth and are right about everything, we create expectations about reality that amount to the unconscious demand that reality be a certain way. Of course, things rarely line up with our expectations, and we end up being frustrated, reactive, and blaming. Not only does serenity neutralize

church” is not immune to social calamities but neither is it devastated by them. Indeed, it teaches others that happiness is never dependent on externals.

*Sobriety* needs to be understood in a special way: not as the clarity of mind that comes from the lack of alcohol or other intoxicants, but as the lack of false excitement and of a “group giddiness” that can arise when people feel that they are specially blessed. It would perhaps be better to think of sobriety as “Inner Stillness”—and possibly to go even further to see it as an aspect of “Purity of Heart.” The awakened heart is sober in both of these senses: it is still and it is pure. Nothing sullies it, nor can anything sully our essential Being. With sobriety, the Beatitude “Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God” comes true. The pure heart sees God everywhere, in everyone and in every circumstance. It is the mystic’s view of reality for which inner stillness and purity of heart are absolutely necessary. For the “one true church,” sobriety (inner stillness and purity) is a fitting quality of the betrothed waiting for the Bridegroom. The church waits, fully awake in each moment, full of sober expectation. As a social Virtue, sobriety becomes a beacon of steadfastness in an ever-changing and fickle world of shallow values and shifting moral yardsticks.

As Gurdjieff and others have taught, there is no transformation without the transformation of the heart, and the Virtues are the sign that transformation is taking place. If there is to be an emerging, transformed Church, it must be virtuous. It must also recognize that there is no “one true church” apart from those who embody the Virtues. (“Whoever does the will of God is my brother and my sister, my father and my mother”—Matthew 12:50). *Anyone who lives a life of virtue is already in the “one true church,”* be they Buddhist, Jew, Christian, Hindu, or of any other religion.

In short, the “one true church” is made up of all virtuous people. But those who embody the Virtues will be too humbly engaged in the task of remaking the world to notice their own virtue. They will be dazzled by the beauty of the co-creative Work in which they are engaged. And when all of the Virtues are embodied in human beings, religious distinctions will drop away into the limitless Light of the Divine where no shadows or walls exist. The Virtues will have led us home again.

*Don Richard Riso and Russ Hudson are leading teachers and authors in the Enneagram field today. They are co-founders of the Enneagram Institute, and can be reached through their website at [www.EnneagramInstitute.com](http://www.EnneagramInstitute.com). They are regular contributors to Radical Grace.*

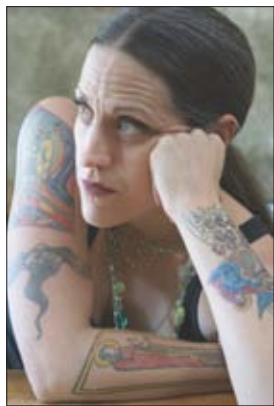


these negative reactions, it undoes their source. The soul is serene with what is, *just the way it is*. Serenity allows us to accept reality undistorted by the ego, and hence, to live more fully in the Truth.

The Virtue of serenity provides the “one true church” with an attitude of joyous expectation that taps into the truth: God is really and truly in charge. We can therefore be serene in the face of all things. As a social virtue, serenity remains calm if there are reversals due to political or economic changes of fortune. The “one true

# GOD DOES NOT NEED MY SNOTTY OPINIONS ABOUT EVANGELICALS

By Nadia Bolz-Weber



**H**ow hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God, [says Jesus](#). How hard it is for us who are self-reliant and smug, to accept how utterly dependent we are on God. How hard it is for those of us, who don't actually need God, to see God. How hard it is for us, for whom comfort (material, financial and physical) insulates us from the daily bread reality of our creator. How hard it

—especially. . . ones who have radio shows in which they tear apart my sermons and basically call me a heretic for being a woman pastor.

is for those of us who dedicate ourselves to being good social justice activists to surrender to a God who is likely unimpressed with our busyness. How hard it is for the powerful to see life abundant in giving away power. How hard it is to die and be re-born.

So who can enter the kingdom on their own? Who among us has done the hard things necessary to inherit eternal life? Who among us has sold all we have and given it to the poor? Who among us has, as Mark 9:43-47 suggests, hacked off our own feet and hands to ensure our salvation?

If we try to read the discipleship texts from Mark as a personal salvation manual, then we imagine that it is we who must cut off our hands and feet, gouge out our own eyes, give away all our possessions and shrink our camel-sized selves down to needle-eye size. But in fact it tends to be God who does this for us—who prunes us, feeds us, cuts us and our bank accounts down to size, and shapes us. It tends to be God and not us who does the impossible.

Crazy things go on when we are part of this kingdom of God. For instance, I never had any desire to befriend evangelical pastors. If I'd tried to figure out on my own how to get saved and Jesus had said, *Nadia, for your personal salvation management program you must become friends with evangelical pastors...* If Jesus had said, *You must preach at their churches, collaborate on a prayer book, and develop fondness and*

*respect for people whose theology and worship looks like it's from another planet entirely...* If Jesus HAD said this to me I would go away shocked and grieving. For I have many snotty opinions about these people, and I'm honestly as comfortable with my opinions as that rich guy was with his wealth. I am perfectly happy not liking evangelicals.

I'm also quite happy to not like Missouri Synod Lutherans—especially, for instance, ones who have radio shows in which they tear apart my sermons and basically call me a heretic for being a woman pastor. Who exactly is the guy I met yesterday at the conference where I was speaking? Presumably, he was there to get more fuel for his little radio show. I knew he was there, and I did not want to engage with him. Why? He spent

an entire half hour of a radio show picking apart my [sermon on the ELCA Church-wide Assembly](#). I had never met him, but I don't like him. Yet God paid this very little attention recently when, despite us both, my LCMS detractor/conservative Christian radio host and I had a thirty minute conversation filled with grace and honesty, and in which twice he shed tears. We spoke of how desperate we both are for the gospel, desperate enough to hear it even from each other. It's weird that beautiful conversation happened at all since it's basically impossible.

And yet God went ahead and did this for me—put me and my enemy face to face. And in the past six months God has sent me a bunch of evangelicals to be my brothers and sisters, to have meals with, to love. This is what happens when God does the impossible and, like the disciples, we get swept up into it. Our Small Catechism says that I believe that I cannot by my own understanding or effort come to my Lord Jesus or believe in him, but the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel and enlightened me with the Spirit's gifts.

The impossible is what happens when the Holy Spirit calls us through the gospel and enlightens us with the Spirit's gifts. I believe that by my own understanding or effort I cannot sell all I have and give it to the poor. I believe by my own understanding or effort I cannot have beautiful collaborative collegial relationships ▶ page 19

# DOING THE RIGHT THING BECAUSE IT IS THE RIGHT THING

---

By Ronald Rolheiser, OMI

“Have you ever done something simply on principle, because it was the right thing to do, knowing that you couldn’t explain it to anyone, without there even being a good feeling attached to your act?”

Karl Rahner wrote that and then added: “If you have done this, you have experienced God, perhaps without knowing it.”

Jesus would agree, so much so that he makes this both the central tenet of religion and the overriding criterion for salvation.

We see this explicitly in the famous text in the gospels where Jesus tells us that whatsoever you do to the poor here on earth you do to him. For Jesus, to give something to a poor person is to give something to God, and to neglect a poor person is to neglect God.

There’s an important background to this teaching. They had been asking Jesus: “What will be the test? What will be the ultimate criterion for judgment as to whether or not someone enters into the kingdom of heaven or not? His answer surprised them. They had expected that the final judgment would revolve around issues of religious belonging, religious practice, correct observance, and moral codes. Instead they got this answer: “When the Son of Man comes in his glory and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.”

And what, according to Jesus, will be the basis for the separation? Only this: Did you feed the hungry? Give drink to the thirsty? Invite in the stranger? Clothe the naked? Visit the sick and imprisoned? Because when you do these things to the hungry, to the thirsty, to strangers, to the sick, and to the imprisoned, you do them to God, and vice versa.

And immediately there was confusion among those who heard these words. Both those who did what was asked and those who didn’t were equally befuddled and lodged the same protest: When? When did we see you hungry? When did we see you thirsty? When did we see you naked, or a stranger, or sick, or in prison and serve you or not serve you? When did we see you, God, and do this to you?”

Both are caught off guard and both ask seemingly the same question, but their protests are in fact very different. The first group, those who had measured up, are pleasantly surprised. What they say to Jesus is essentially this: “We didn’t know it was you! We were just doing what was right!” And Jesus answers, “It doesn’t matter! In serving them, you were meeting me!”

The second group, those who hadn’t measured up, is rudely shocked. Their protest, in effect, is this: “If we had only known! If we had known that it was you inside the poor we would have responded. We just didn’t know!” And Jesus answers, “It doesn’t matter! In not serving them, you were avoiding me!”

What’s the lesson? The more obvious one of course is the challenge that is already contained in the famous mantra of the prophets who had stated unequivocally that the quality of our faith will be judged by the quality of justice in the land, and that the quality of justice will be judged by how the most vulnerable groups in society (widows, orphans, and strangers) fare while we are alive. The Jewish prophets had already taught us that serving the poor is a non-negotiable, integral part of religion that nobody gets to heaven without a letter of reference from the poor. But Jesus adds something: God doesn’t just have a preferential option for the poor, God is inside the poor.

But there’s another lesson too, subtle but important: In this gospel story, neither those who served God in the poor nor those who didn’t serve God in the poor knew what they were doing.

The first group, who did respond, did so simply because it was the right thing to do. They didn’t know that God was hidden inside the poor. The second group, who didn’t respond, didn’t reach out because they didn’t realize that God was inside the poor. Neither knew that God was there, and that is the lesson.

A mature disciple doesn’t calculate or make distinctions as to whether God is inside of a certain situation or not, whether a person seems worth it or not, whether a person is a Christian or not, or whether a person appears to be a good person or not, before reaching out in service. A mature disciple serves whoever is in need, independent of those considerations.

The last temptation that is the greatest treason is to do the right thing for the wrong reason. T.S. ▶ page 19

# A KIND OF JAZZ: TRADITION AND IMPROVISATION

By Ian Adams

**I**t began with a conversation about music with a friend who is a jazz musician. In time the talk came round to “Kind of Blue” by Miles Davis. ‘You’ve got to listen to this’ he said, and for the last year I’ve been doing just that.

Kind of Blue is one of those pieces of music that changes things. Somehow it takes known ingredients, then does something with them that we perceive as miraculous. Through my experience of living with this amazing piece of music I want to suggest that the practice of improvisational jazz may prove to be a fertile theme for an emerging Christianity in the next decade.

I don’t mean the actual playing of jazz – although that might be part of the deal. But, I am suggesting that the spirit and soul of improvisational jazz may offer us patterns and possibilities as we try to be people of the Christ in and for our fast-changing cultures.

One of the vital ingredients for creating great jazz music is a consciousness of, and a love for, the tradition. “Kind of Blue” was hugely innovative when it was created in 1959, but it was still jazz. It carried the stories, the forms and the spirit of the tradition from which it emerged and to which it gave itself.

There may be great leaning here for an emerging Christianity. The ability to know ourselves as part of a bigger story is a way into truly human-being. Most of us want to live from our roots. The various streams of an emerging Christianity are rediscovering the depth and wonder of the traditions from which they come. In the part of the stream from which I come, the Eucharist has quietly come to the center, with liturgy, iconography, pilgrimage, and rule of life finding new expression.

If the jazz of “Kind of Blue” reminds us of our traditions, it also calls us into improvisation. Each track begins with a theme, but then it moves in unexpected directions. Sound-paths open up that are still true to the

theme, still faithful to the spirit of the piece, but releasing the music to fly higher and further, to go to places that it may not have been before. The fluidity of “Kind of Blue” seems to ask of us ‘what line will you play?’

Improvisational jazz has a dynamic quality. It cannot be contained, limited, or boxed in. There’s a freedom to “Kind of Blue” that had much to do with Davis moving from a classic [and more structured] form of jazz based on chords to a ‘modal’ form based on fluid use of scales.



Instead of a series of chords repeated through a song, with improvisation restricted to notes that ‘fitted’ each chord, Davis experimented with scales, using one central ‘tonic’ note, and freeing the improvisation to flow through the notes. Interestingly, this had the effect of slowing the tempo down.

Perhaps this is what a prayerful-active emerging Christianity will be like. Not controlled by us, not limited by the smallness of our thinking, nor boxed in by the chords we know. But freeing, calling us to step into the dynamic life of the Holy Trinity, to be intuitive in action and ready to enter stillness. Our prayers and our actions like trumpet, sax, piano, bass, and drums calling to each other, complementing each other, producing something in their togetherness beyond our imagination.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus asks Nicodemus to “be born from above” and pictures this encounter with God as like the blowing wind, full of movement, sensed but not controlled. Imagine individuals and communities of the Christ consciously and happily rooted in a particular tradition – but also daring to be “born from

above,” improvising new lines and taking new steps in their neighbourhood or network.

There is a sense that the most profound music is almost waiting to be discovered. It doesn't need to be forced or pushed. So on “Kind of Blue,” the playing is always understated. Davis and friends seem to be catching waves, surfing moves, dancing on the lip of something much bigger and even more beautiful than they or we could imagine.

There's a spaciousness to the music that requires the players to go with it, rather than make it happen. And so perhaps an emerging Christianity will learn how to trust the flow, to let go of the walls to which we cling, and to step into the open spaces.

“Kind of Blue” also suggests that, as Mother Julian in the Christian hermit tradition discovered for us, “all will be well.” There's a relaxed approach to the musical story as it unfolds. And so with us in the improvisation of our lives as would-

be followers of the Christ - somehow, through it all, the unknown next stanza will be well, the space opening up in front of us will be well, even the end of the song will be well. Through improvisation, an emerging Christianity will re-enter the great tradition that God is good and can be trusted.

What will this look like? It's delightfully hard to tell. Each tradition will lead into its own unexpected but life-giving improvisations. The jazz of an emerging Christianity will be given color, texture, and shape by local setting, by the personality of the players, and by the ever-surprising Spirit of God.

*Ian Adams is a writer, mentor and teacher on spirituality, culture and community. An Anglican priest, he was founder and abbot of the experimental faith community mayBe in Oxford, England. He is a partner in StillPoint, a center for the practice of Christian spirituality, and author of the Morning Bell, a daily call to prayer that goes around the world by email, text and twitter.*

## GOD DOES NOT . . .

Continued from page 16

So like the rich man, what must we do to inherit eternal life? Still be alive after the other guy dies. In other words, in this life of discipleship, we will die and be reborn again and again in the death and resurrection of Christ, as God sweeps us up again and again into the crazy impossible. So watch those bank accounts, brothers and sisters, and those snotty opinions, and your so-called enemies, and those plans and management programs. Because seriously — who knows what crazy thing's gonna happen.

*Nadia Bolz-Weber is a Lutheran pastor living in Denver, Colorado, where she serves the emerging church, House for all Sinners and Saints. She blogs at [www.sarcasticlutheran.com](http://www.sarcasticlutheran.com) and is the author of Salvation on the Small Screen? 24 Hours of Christian Television. This article is an edited adaptation of a recent [sermon](#).*

## DOING THE RIGHT . . .

Continued from page 17

Jesus would add that doing the right thing is reason enough.

*This article was reprinted with permission of the author, Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser. Ronald Rolheiser is a Roman Catholic priest and member of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. He is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas, and is a community-builder, lecturer and writer. His numerous books include Secularity and the Gospel: Being Missionary to our Children, Forgotten among the Lilies, and The Restless Heart. He can be contacted through his website, [www.ronrolheiser.com](http://www.ronrolheiser.com).*

Through the practice of contemplative prayer and active engagement with challenging issues and marginalized people, you can strive to **BECOME CONTEMPLATIVE IN YOUR ACTIONS.**



- Classes and field experiences in social justice issues and contemplative practice.
- Border awareness trip at the US/Mexico border.
- Facilitated group processing, offering the opportunity to communally reflect and process the experience.
- Time for personal reflection, contemplative prayer, group prayer, liturgies, and camaraderie.

### 2010 Dates

April 23-May 2

June 4-13

October 8-17

Application process is required. Download an application form on [www.cacradicalgrace.org](http://www.cacradicalgrace.org).

# EMERGING FROM THE UNDERSIDE

by Stephanie Spellers

A transformational church, directed toward the reign of God, in solidarity with the poor, translating traditions to meet its local context, rigorously committed to collaboration and relationship. Liberation theology or emerging church? Or both?

It is hardly surprising that few people seem to recognize the relationship between these two movements. The world of conservative, evangelical Protestantism that birthed the emergent movement in the United States rarely overlaps with the worlds of racial or sexual minorities and other marginalized communities living liberation theology. It is up to the growing number of us who straddle these worlds to make the links. If we do, both movements will flourish.

## SO CLOSE, YET SO FAR

As an African-American, working-class teen in the conservative, evangelical, Protestant South, I wanted little to do with church. I thought it was a hypocritical club obsessed with certain social issues (sex, homosexuality, abortion) and conspicuously silent on far more pressing matters (poverty, racism, eco-justice).

Two books changed my mind and my life: *Liberation Theology: An Introductory Reader*<sup>1</sup> and *Lift Every Voice: Constructing Christian Theologies from the Underside*.<sup>2</sup> In those pages, I discovered faithful people serious about following Jesus, changing social systems, reclaiming the sacramentality of our bodies and daily lives, and forming egalitarian communities patterned after the early church. I wanted to be a Christian like them.

As I entered my 20's and became more active in mainline

communities that translated the good news and ancient traditions for their cultural contexts. They were wrestling with scripture and claims of authority, deconstructing and reconstructing theology.

These postmodern followers of Jesus were emerging from the cloak of hierarchical, exclusivist models of Christian community. And they were walking side-by-side with liberation theologians. But hardly anyone recognized it.

## MAKING THE CONNECTIONS

The resonance between emergent and liberation theology is uncanny. The more I look, the more I wonder if emergent is the answer to the query: "What if liberation theology penetrated middle-class church life?" Granted, there may be reasons why emergent leaders have not acknowledged the link—not the least being a basic discomfort with appearing too "revolutionary" and breaking ties with the conservative evangelical traditions that nurtured many emergent leaders. It is time to move beyond the labels to develop the relationships.

Liberation and emergent communities are transformative. Sri Lankan priest Tissa Balasuriya has argued passionately for "a fundamental break from a theology which was, in fact, the ideological support for the Western hegemony of the world, for capitalist domination over the poor, and for male clerical domination within the church which was in the service of the prevailing world order...."<sup>3</sup>

Balasuriya's revolutionary cry echoes today in the voice of Tim Keel, pastor of Jacob's Well, an emergent community in Kansas City, Missouri. "We need mystics," Keel writes. "We need poets... prophets...apostles... artists. We need a church out of the

margins, drawn from the places and filled with people and shaped by competencies formerly thought to be of little account. In fact, perhaps it is from such 'marginal' communities as these that influence will begin to spread outward into communities that have been domesticated in the modern world and rendered docile."<sup>4</sup>

Emergent Christian communities are filled with post-evangelicals who are fed up with doctrinal purity and the orthodoxy police. They yearn for orthopraxy: practice and reflection that are in line with the life and witness of Jesus Christ. They might pay attention to Native American theologian Andrea Smith, who writes,

## Emergent Christians everywhere are reclaiming and following the radical Jesus. . .

church life, I saw less of that liberative commitment. Until I discovered emergent Christian communities; until I attended Emergent Village gatherings and theological conversations; until I served as priest and midwife for The Crossing community, a multicultural, radically welcoming Christian community rooted at St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral in Boston.

Most church insiders minimized emergent as contemporary worship, but I could see a movement taking shape. The expressions were vastly different, but everywhere it seemed sisters and brothers were birthing cell groups and house churches, and creating Christian

# CAC WORK INTERNSHIP



- **ENGAGE** in a spiritual formation program rooted in the integration of action and contemplation.
- **WORK** to support the mission of the CAC.
- **LIVE** in a communal environment with other work interns.

Unit Dates	Deadline
05/31/10 - 08/13/10	Jan 4, 2010
08/30/10 - 05/13/11	Mar 1, 2010
08/30/10 - 08/12/11	Mar 1, 2010

Applications available to download at  
[www.cacradicalgrace.org](http://www.cacradicalgrace.org)  
 or  
 Call: (505) 242-9588 x 128  
 Email: [formation@cacradicalgrace.org](mailto:formation@cacradicalgrace.org)

“Indians tend to give less weight to an orthodoxy of religious belief than to spiritual centeredness and ethical behavior—what Native people call ‘walking in balance.’”<sup>5</sup>

This praxis-oriented faith is laser-focused on participating in the reign of God. If the church does not practice reconciliation and peace, and announce jubilee for those who suffer, then it ceases to be church.

In his essay, “God Is Black,” James Cone declared: “By electing Israelite slaves as the people of God and by becoming the Oppressed One in Jesus Christ, the human race is made to understand that God is known where human beings experience humiliation and suffering....”<sup>6</sup> The heart of liberation theology is its alliance with the underside.

How might emergent Christians more deeply engage theology from the underside? Having listened to many emergent conversations, I have been struck by my colleagues’ countercultural values. They want to know what Jesus would say about church parking lots full of SUVs. They want to know what Jesus would do about extreme poverty in Kenya. And even as it puts them at odds with the churches of their youth, they are placing a commitment to justice and transformation at the heart of their faith.

Sherry and Geoff Maddock, leaders of Commuality—an intentional community in Lexington, Kentucky—describe this shift in consciousness. “As we confront the broader issues of systemic injustice, we expand our thinking about ‘getting saved.’ If we ... walk with Jesus into communities of despair, we are challenged to ask bigger questions about what it means to be saved from the things that ensnare and press down humanity—especially the poor. This, coupled with a careful reading of Scripture, leads us to see that the individual soul alone is too small a target for God’s love and justice.”<sup>7</sup> This is a revolution.

Brian McLaren surprised many readers on the emergent scene with his 2007 book, *Everything Must Change: Jesus, Global Crises and a Revolution of Hope*. In it, he promised, “If we believe, [then] the decadent and self-indulgent West can be converted from overconsumers to creative stewards, from empire builders to community builders .... We can be caught up in the unfolding, emergent, spiraling process of God giving birth to a beautiful whole, the kingdom of God.”

Emergent Christians everywhere are reclaiming and following the radical Jesus who proclaimed good news to the poor and persecuted, promised liberation for all people, and died and rose again to make God’s dream real. They are building small, committed circles of faithful people who love Christian traditions enough to make them their own. In closer collaboration with liberation traditions and voices from the underside, these emergent communities could become the seedbed of a new liberating church.

1. Curt Cadorette, Marie Giblin, Marilyn Legge and Mary Snyder, *Liberation Theology: An Introductory Reader* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992).

2. Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite and Mary Potter Engel, editors, *Lift Every Voice: Constructing Christian Theologies from the Underside* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000). Note: Original version printed in 1990.

3. Tissa Balasuriya, “Toward the Liberation of Theology in Asia” in *Liberation Theology*, p. 40.

4. Tim Keel, “Leading from the Margins,” in *An Emergent Manifesto of Hope* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007), p. 233.

5. Andrea Smith, “Walking in Balance,” in *Lift Every Voice*, p. 57.

6. James Cone, “God Is Black” in *Lift Every Voice*, p. 105.

7. Sherry Maddock and Geoff Maddock, “An Ever-Renewed Adventure of Faith” in *An Emergent Manifesto of Hope*, pp. 81-82.

*Stephanie Spellers is the author of Radical Welcome: Embracing God, The Other and the Spirit of Transformation. She serves as priest and lead organizer for The Crossing—an emergent Christian community rooted at St. Paul’s Episcopal Cathedral in Boston, Massachusetts ([www.thecrossingboston.org](http://www.thecrossingboston.org))—and as co-chair of The Episcopal Church’s Standing Commission on Mission and Evangelism.*

# RICHARD ON THE ROAD and CAC SPONSORED EVENTS

Visit [www.cacradicalgrace.org](http://www.cacradicalgrace.org) for detailed / contact information

## JAN 3-8 (SUN - FRI )

Camarillo, California  
Seminarian's Retreat (closed)  
Hosted by Archdiocese of Los Angeles

## JAN 9 (SAT)

Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Experience the Naked Now Webcast

## JAN 22 - JAN 24 (FRI - SUN)

Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Following the Mystics Through the Narrow Gates  
With James Finley and Cynthia Bourgeault

## JAN 29-30 (FRI - SAT)

Miami, Florida  
Catholic Biblical Scholars Series  
St. Thomas University

## JAN 31 (SUN)

Miami, Florida  
Naked Now Book Tour Stop  
Church by the Sea

## FEB 5-7 (FRI - SUN)

Santa Fe, New Mexico  
Things Hidden: Scripture as Spirituality  
Hosted by Second Baptist Church, Texas  
For information: (806) 783-0202

## FEB 13 (SAT)

Phoenix, Arizona  
Naked Now Book Tour Stop  
Church of the Beatitudes

## FEB 14 - MAR 18

HERMITAGE in Arizona

## MAR 19-21 (FRI - SUN)

Anaheim, California  
Religious Education Congress  
Hosted by LA Archdiocese

### Friday:

The Naked Now: Learning to See as the  
Mystics See

### Saturday:

We Are the Second Coming of Christ

## MAR 23-26 (TUE - FRI)

Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Franciscan Formators (closed)

## MAR 27 (SAT)

Albuquerque, New Mexico  
Emerging Christianity webcast  
Registration coming soon

## EMERGING CHRISTIANITY . . .


Continued from page 3

Emerging Christianity:

1. Jesus is a model for living more than an object of worship.
2. Affirming peoples' potential is more important than reminding them of their brokenness.
3. The work of reconciliation should be valued over the primacy of judgments.
4. Gracious behavior is more important than right belief.
5. Inviting questions is to be valued more than supplying answers.
6. Encouraging the personal search is more important than group uniformity.
7. Meeting actual needs is more important than maintaining institutions.
8. Peacemaking is more important than power.
9. We should care more about love and less about sex.
10. Life in this world is more important than the afterlife (which would then take care of itself, and we would recognize eternity is God's work anyway and something we know nothing about).

If this makes sense to you, you are already inside of Emerging Christianity.

*Fr. Richard Rohr, the Founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation in Albuquerque, New Mexico, is the author of numerous books including The Naked Now: Learning to See as the Mystics See (Crossroad 2009). He is a regular contributor to Radical Grace.*



Please  
remember  
the CAC  
in your  
will.

For information, please contact  
Paul Swanson at 505-242-9588 x 134  
or [pswanson@cacradicalgrace.org](mailto:pswanson@cacradicalgrace.org)  
[www.cacradicalgrace.org](http://www.cacradicalgrace.org)

ITEM	PRICE	QTY	TOTAL
Levels of Spiritual Growth (1 CD)	\$8.00		
Where You Are is Where I'll Meet You (2 CDs)	\$15.00		
Donation for <i>Radical Grace</i> (1 year/4 issues)	\$25.00		

**Payment Info:**

Check or money order (payable to CAC)  Visa  MC

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Exp. (mo/yr) \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ Amt. charged \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name and address must match billing address of credit card.  **My billing address is different** (please write on back)

**Subtotal:**

**Shipping:** +

**Donation:** +

**Total:**

**Shipping Chart**

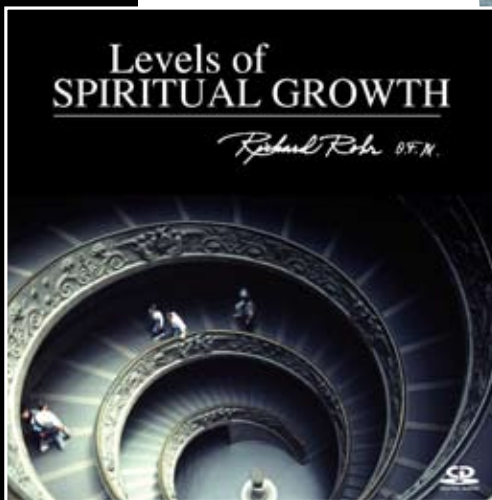
Order Amt.	US/Canada	Int'l
<\$10.00	\$3.00	\$12.00
\$10.01 - \$25.00	\$6.00	\$14.00
\$25.01 - \$50.00	\$8.00	\$18.00
\$50.01 - \$75.00	\$10.00	\$23.00
\$75.01 - \$100.00	\$12.00	\$38.00
\$100.01-\$200.00	\$14.00	\$42.00
\$200.01 - \$400.00	\$20.00	\$74.00
\$400.01 - \$600.00	\$25.00	\$108.00

>\$600.00—email your order for shipping cost.

# NEW from the *Mustard Seed!*

## Fr. Richard shares insight into **LEVELS OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

All levels are good; the important lesson for everyone is to be able to recognize where they are and to be the best they can be. Each of these titles is presented to different audiences.



### LEVELS OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH

This deep teaching is for everyone who wants to learn about the levels of spiritual growth and how they apply to your life. This teaching will help you see from a new perspective, and it offers enough detail on each level to give you genuine help on your inner journey.

1CD \$8.00



### WHERE YOU ARE IS WHERE I'LL MEET YOU *A Guide for Spiritual Directors*

Fr. Richard addresses a conference of Spiritual Directors. An astute Director needs to be able to recognize at which level their directees are currently living, in order to communicate at that same level. This teaching specifically serves as a guide for Spiritual Directors.

2 CD set \$15.00





Center for Action and Contemplation  
PO Box 12464, Albuquerque, NM 87195 • (505) 242-9588  
[www.cacradicalgrace.org](http://www.cacradicalgrace.org)

PERIODICAL NEWS

 Please recycle! Share *Radical Grace* with a friend.

**HOW we get there determines WHERE we Arrive**



# EMERGING CHRISTIANITY

Continuing on with the exploration begun at last year's Emerging Church conference, the CAC is thrilled to invite you to another large gathering of Christians seeking to explore this emergence and convergence together.

**April 9 -11, 2010**  
Albuquerque, NM

*Emerging Christianity: HOW we get there determines WHERE we Arrive* hopes to inspire and challenge you with the lens of non-dual thinking, a new politics and a new theology with the "third way" as the basis.



BUTLER BASS



MCLAREN



CLAIBORNE



ROHR

Join us for 3 days of **SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT, CHALLENGE, and SHARED EXPLORATION** as we **ENVISION WHAT THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CAN BE** and do in this generation and in generations to come.

To register or for more info visit: [www.cacradicalgrace.org](http://www.cacradicalgrace.org)