

John 17:1-11

After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. **2** For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. **3** Now *this* is eternal life: that they *know* you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. **4** I have brought you *glory* on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. **5** And now, Father, *glorify* me in your presence with the *glory* I had with you before the world began. **6** "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. **7** Now they know that **everything you have given me comes from you**. **8** For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. **9** I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. **10 All I have is yours, and all you have is mine**. And glory has come to me through them. **11** I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, **so that they may be one as we are one**."

Schools out - what am I going to do with the kids? Pool days, BBQ's, road trips and reunions.

Road trips can be a wonderful way to reconnect with our family. There is always that wonderful moment in the car when we wonder **why we decided to drive** rather than **fly** or just **stay**

home. Perhaps there is something as TOO MUCH RECONNECTING - that's why iPads and headphones were invented.

A couple was on a road trip to a college reunion in Chicago and took a wrong turn down a country road that seemed endless — not saying a word. Something they were talking about earlier led to an argument and neither of them wanted to concede and admit defeat. As they drove through a farm, they passed by a fenced area of mules, goats, and pigs. **The husband asked sarcastically, "Relatives of yours?" "Yep" the wife replied, "In-laws."**

Family reunions can be fun vacations - until the point when you **can't handle any more small talk and chit-chat** - just pack up the car and head home. A elderly couple was attending a large family reunion. Family members they hadn't seen in 20 years rented a **banquet hall** for the occasion. Everyone wanted to know **how they managed to stay married so long in this day and age**. The husband responded "When we were first married we came to an agreement. I would make all the major decisions and Ellen would make all the minor decisions. And in 60 years of marriage we have **never needed to make a major decision**."

[Prayer]

It's funny how we come to these **agreements**, in order to **manage the complexities and difficulties** of relationships.

Richard Rohr in his book *The Divine Dance* helps us average Christians understand the ways in which we have become **disconnected, and rediscover the Trinity - “I’m convinced that beneath the ugly manifestation of our present evils — political corruption, ecological devastation, warring against one another, hating each other based on race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation — the greatest dis-ease facing humanity right now is our **profound and painful sense of disconnection.**”**

Disconnection is a profound dis-ease in our culture.

Disconnection from God, but also from ourselves, our bodies, each other, and a living world. **Fourfold isolation** plunging our culture into destructive behavior.

Unearthing Trinity is the way back toward a fourfold re-union of Spirit, self, society, and soul, which is our ultimate place in the world. Our journey toward re-union.

The antidote to disconnection is Re-union.

In John 17 Jesus’ prayer expresses the revelatory power of this family re-union. Calling himself the Son of the Father and yet one with the Father.

“Now this is eternal life - that they know you... I have brought you glory on earth... now, Father, glorify me... I have revealed you... now they know... they knew with certainty... they believed... all I have is yours, all you have is mine... Holy Father protect them... so that they may be one as we are one.”
Revelation that the heart of the universe of all creation of which we are a part - the heart of God - is RELATIONSHIP.

Eternal life is this Relational Knowledge, Participatory knowledge, experiential, immediate, overflowing. Not a rational knowledge, but an intimate knowledge. You could say its like knowing Reality from the inside-out. **RIGHT RELATIONSHIP - RECONCILIATION**

Who you are is who you are in the Father - that is your meaning.

Re-union discloses your true identity — meaning & purpose.

In an **adolescent society**, we experience what **Erik Erikson** first coined an **identity crisis** on a massive scale. We haven’t been taught how to undergo a healthy initiation into a mature spiritual identity in our culture so we seek other ways to initiate ourselves into a viable “adult” identity through marriage and family or career choice, fame, power and wealth. Radicalization captures young men in their teens and early 20s who feel mistreated, socially and culturally isolated, and indoctrinated in an ideology that promises them identity, meaning, & community.

Until we come to an **experiential knowledge** of God rooted in a trust, intimacy that grounds us in this Trinitarian pattern of mutual self-giving - much of our **motivation and life orientation** will be rooted in **fear.**

We fear that kind of relationship - everything starts to change. We can no longer be rugged individualists! We can no longer pretend to be in control.

It is truly startling when we realize how much of our lives have been motivated by fear. Fear is the dis-ease...

In relationship with a relational God we come face to face with our fear. **Love casts out fear by loving the one who fears.** I love the idea of vacation or road trip as a metaphor for relationship. You really get to know each other a week on the road.

God invites us not to vacation away from, but vacation with our fear - to travel where we might not want to go.

God wants us to SEE PARIS FIRST.

"Fearing Paris" by Marsha Truman Cooper

Suppose that what you fear
could be trapped
and held in Paris.

Then you would have
the courage to go
everywhere in the world.

All the directions of the compass
open to you,
except the degrees east or west
of true north
that lead to Paris.

Still, you wouldn't dare
put your toes
smack dab on the city limit line.
You're not really willing

to stand on a mountainside,
miles away,
and watch the Paris lights
come up at night.

Just to be on the safe side
you decide to stay completely
out of France.

But then the danger
seems too close
even to those boundaries,
and you feel
the timid part of you
covering the whole globe again.

You need the kind of friend
who learns your secret and says,

"See Paris First."

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At our Seminary of the Wild retreat at Golden Gate Campground I met a delightful Mennonite pastor from Ontario. Becky's father had passed away a couple years ago. The year prior she decided to make some big changes in her life and faith.

Exploring with some friends about what church community might look like reconnected with the natural world, worship and liturgy in conversation with Creation. She took a Sabbatical and explored the Forest Church movement and started her own Forest Church that met monthly alongside her traditional pastoral role.

Becky identified herself as a Peacemaker, and shared about a **fear of leadership** she was experiencing that kept her from stepping more fully into her new role in an exciting and scary venture. She was **certain that she was not really the kind of leader** she needed to be to take the **assertive and confident** role she believed was needed to fulfill her dream. Causing conflict was a source of anxiety for her—after all she was a Peacemaker.

During the week she cultivated a deeper relationship with God through her imagination, significant childhood memories and images, boundary crossing events and confrontational experiences in her dreams.

There were inner voices, protector parts, telling her to not to take risks... and that she was not special and could never be a leader. Voices that were only parts of her, but she believed WAS who she really is.

Story of childhood camp numinous experience - power going out in camp - 10 year old Becky running along paths in the dark freely without needing to see where she was going!

Becky's relationship with God shifted to an **untamed lover of her soul** - mirrored to her through the wild world of ponderosa and aspen grove and her own deep imagination - Becky discovered a **startling RE-UNION** occur. **Reunion with God her Beloved and her own wild Belovedness**. Like Aslan, God, the good but "not safe" lion of her heart revealed himself to her

in this form for the first time. A relationship not based on making agreements nor following rules but falling in love.

Grace, this summer I want to challenge us to fall in love again with the One who calls us his own. To live out of the glory that God has given each of us. To face our fears with the One who goes with us padding along softly through the woods of our hearts.

What we need is an untamed Friend who learns our secret... we hide the glory God has given us in the places we fear most. But we need to travel there to unearth a gift for our spouses, our families, and our faith community so that we might become the church God has called us to become.

Can we be the kind of friend who says, "See Paris First?"