“God is Not Absent in Anything”

3. CYNTHIA BOURGEAULT, HOW I FOUND GOD IN EVERYONE AND EVERYWHERE, ST. LUKE’S, PART 2, OCTOBER 9, 2019
Bourgeault: From Orientation to Disorientation (or Dissonance)

ORIENTATION:

Christian Science childhood: A human being is a space where God is NOT. “There is no life, truth, intelligence, nor substance in matter.”


Some think that believing the “light within” is “putting God in a box.”
DISORIENTATION:
A mystical experience & the Quakers: “the light within!” (they told me it was in everyone). Jn 1

“I remember myself standing in a pumpkin patch just at sunset in late October, everything brilliantly ablaze in orange. I knew then and there that the holy, intimate radiance suffusing the picture was in me and in everything, if for no other reason than because it was from the inside that all of this seemed to be emerging.”
We need a brand new paradigm.
So, personally and confessionally (rather than a theological argument), Bourgeault’s 3 “aha” moments leading her to a paradigm she describes:

We need “an authentically non-dual Christianity.”

1. that aligns with a post-Einsteinian universe (ENERGY not substance is what it’s all about; energy not substance is the cosmic constant).
2. that encourages all efforts toward a unified planetary ecology.
3. that is friendly to mystics.
4. that rings true existentially.
Three “Aha” experiences

Raimon Panikkar

A post- Einsteinian Consciousness

A contemplative new operating system which is “SEEING” from the heart
1. Raimon Panikkar’s theological consciousness.

“Jesus is the Son of God because we are all sons and daughters of God. God is meaning itself, throbbing through the entire dynamism, suffusing the attuned heart like the air we breathe, like atoms still reverberating in our bodies from the big bang.” p. 102
I was “slowly drifting toward a more unitive worldview” until Panikkar “put me across the line.”

- Non-dual vision
- **Christophany**: breathtaking non-dual rendition of the Christian mystical vision.
- The chapter on “The Mysticism of Jesus Christ,” in *Christophany* claims that the Trinity originated in the mind of Christ. “It encapsulates in a single elegant mandala the entire personal experience of Jesus himself in his relationship to divinity.” (p. 100)
Panikkar’s understanding of the Trinity: *cosmotheandric.*

Jesus understood God cosmotheandrically (the “flow” between cosmos-God-human) The infinite and the finite continuously *interabiding* one another, dynamically changing places through a process of continuing self-giving, or *kenosis* (literally *self-emptying*). **DYNAMIC INTERCIRCULATION OF REALMS**

1. “Abba Father” pole: Jesus’s finite selfhood reaching out to Daddy/Mommy God

2. Opposite pole: “I and the Father are one,” there is simply a **UNITY OF BEING,** no place where God stops and “I” begin, JUST A UNITY.

3. Between these two poles, the 3rd of Jesus’s master sayings: “It is good that I leave.” The perpetual motion of Jesus and God being one through self-giving (perpetual kenosis)
Energy, not substance is the coin of the realm

ENERGY

Panikkar’s “intercirculation of realms” is

cosmic,

quantum, and

Einsteinian

“portraying the paradox of form and formless more like virtual particles dancing in and out of existence in a single unified field.

p. 101

SUBSTANCE

The old “substance theology” categories
The heartbeat of the 21st century

The dynamic, evolving, interabiding world we are coming to find affirmed for more in science these days than in theology, still so stuck in defending an ancient and long since superfluous abyss between form and the formless. p.101
2. A post-Einsteinian universe consciousness

The Levels of Consciousness. There is a different consciousness with Einstein’s thinking than with Newton’s thinking. God is not a person or thing out there but is energy suffusing everything, everywhere.

In a post-Einsteinian universe (ENERGY not substance is what it’s all about; energy not substance is the cosmic constant).

Therefore,

“God is the web, the energy, the space, the light— not captured in them…revealed in that singular, vast net of relationships that animates everything that is.” (Barbara Brown Taylor, *The Luminous Web*, p. 74)
“I do indeed believe that the Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation.”

So does a rock,” the ocean, “and almost anything in this God-infused universe as long as we truly open our hearts to it.” p. 103f

Two ways of looking at sacredness:

1. The unchanging revelation of the one true God

Ken Wilber’s levels of consciousness. Each of us, in the course of our lives, passes through a series of levels of consciousness.

(and so does the entire human family.)

1. The undifferentiated” state of infancy.

2. The magical consciousness of early childhood, where the world is alive with “ghoulies and ghosties, long-leggity beasties, and things that go bump in the night.”

3. Mythic membership (identification with the group or tribe)

4. Rational;

5. Pluralistic; ("Co-exist"!)

6. “non-dual” states of integral and cosmic consciousness, where we begin to see all things from the perspective of oneness.
The Bible written by different levels of consciousness.

The Hebrew Scriptures’ stories of CB’s childhood about idol worship were really Consciousness level 2 (magical consciousness of early childhood – the gods of rocks and rivers) being displaced by consciousness level 3 (mythic/tribal membership – a God “out there” related to creation not through indwelling but through covenant).

The 12 tribes of Israel were wiping out vestiges of paganism in their own tradition so that there could be this new understanding of divine/human consciousness.
The Psalms led the breakthrough to Level 4 consciousness.

The rational consciousness (level 4) came into being beginning with the Davidic Psalms as the winds of the great “first axial age” swept across the planet in all world religions. Here is the rise of the ideal of a personal relationship and individual accountability with the great transcendent Yahweh.
Then levels 5 and 6: Integral and non-dual

“Suffering Servant” of Isaiah, the “Son of Man,” and Jesus ushered in the capacity of thinking from the whole, not from the part, and thus for the first time in the history of civilization to begin to envision the possibility of a collective humanity. p. 105
Then Jesus’s full non-dual consciousness

Flowing, compassionate, holographic, unbound by conventions of those lower orders of consciousness which require that things be separated from each other in order to make sense of them. Jesus literally envisioned a new world based on a new mode of consciousness; unity attained.

And, the planet was not ready for Jesus then. p. 105f
3. A new operating system

The “seeing” of the Heart.

“In the end, it’s all about seeing. But maybe not so much about what we see, and how we see… this great, elusive non-dual reality (both/and, not either/or) may have more to do with an upgrade in the operating system than any change in spiritual state.” p. 107

“Contemplative prayer is not only ‘resting in God,’ but is the gradual installation of a whole new system of perception – an upgrade in the operating system, as it were.” 108

An abiding in my heart, a non-dual gradual enfolding aliveness vs. a cerebral mode of inside and outside, subject and object perception focusing on differentiation.
Heart perception takes its bearings from the whole

Centering prayer is about emptying oneself of one’s ideas and thoughts and moving deeper than the head into the heart.

“Blessed are the pure (undivided) in heart for they shall see God.”

We have subtle subconscious faculties we are not using. Beyond the limited analytical intellect lies a vast realm of mind that includes psychic and extrasensory abilities; intuition; wisdom; a sense of unity; aesthetic; qualitative, and creative faculties; and image-forming and symbolic capacities. …a mind in spontaneous connection with the cosmic mind. This total mind we call heart.” (Kabir Helminski, *Living Presence*) p. 110
True nondual consciousness:

We sink from the separated way of looking at reality to perceiving from *No Separation*.

Barbara Brown Taylor: “At this point in my thinking, it is not enough for me to proclaim that God is responsible for all this unity. Instead, I want to proclaim that God is the unity – the very energy, the very intelligence, the very elegance and passion that makes it all go.” (*The Luminous Web*, p. 74)

Jesus was already there 2,000 years ago.