

Aware in a World Asleep: A Focus on the Inward Way

By Dr. Jim Young



In a very important way—spiritually—we are the called ones. On some level of being, we are answering an inner calling to be aware of the deeper meaning and purpose of life, so we can live faithful to that instead of the more superficial ways we see all around us. If you are reading this article, this is clear enough testimony in this regard. And you can rest assured that this is not only for your good, but will also serve others by your example. God

lends us to one another this way.

We can benefit spiritually by using a different means of inquiry to open the door of deeper meaning and life purpose. I like to call this sacred process, “The Inward Way.” Intellectual inquiry looks largely to outer authority, literal translation, linearity and rationality for answers. We can gain a much fuller understanding of how we can demonstrate life from the foundation of spiritual awareness by listening inwardly. As Fr. Thomas Keating says, “Silence is the language God speaks, and all else is a bad mistranslation.”

Aristotle posited the view that metaphysics—abiding the connection with inner Truth—deals not with the physical aspects of life but with the *ordering* of life, that is, because there is order to how life flows from one moment to another, there must be some single ordering principle. Some have interpreted this to mean that there is some source larger than we are, called God, and that this source orders all of life. Some say that God is love. Here is where we depart with the usual views about love. Love is not an act, an emotion or a personal feeling. Love is a frequency, a vibration, the inner resonance that represents our sense of communion with spiritual awareness, found only inwardly. What we are called to demonstrate is being at one with the awareness of spiritual consciousness. Some would call this spiritual awareness Christ consciousness, the spiritual meaning of at-one-ment.

Indeed, spiritual consciousness is a sudden awareness that lights our way, intuition heard as

inspiration, a sense of “rightness” for us that comes seemingly out of nowhere. Much like a tuner in a radio, we connect with the perfect resonance or frequency of the still, small voice, and bring its message into being. This view puts into place the process of living from some seemingly unknown or mysterious source—not our intellect, beliefs or opinions, mind you—something we can find only as we listen inwardly by silencing our own way of thinking and believing. Such a process demonstrates the real meaning of humility: admitting that we really don’t know what’s best for us, and getting out of our own way so Truth can be heard inwardly. And then followed, with all our heart, mind, soul and strength.

Let’s look briefly at a Scriptural reference as one means of moving forward spiritually with greater ease. In the Gospels we find the story of the young rich man inquiring of Jesus what he must do in order to follow his teachings. In this allegory, Jesus tells the inquirer that he must rid himself of all his riches. As we know, the young man—much like many of us, I suppose—finds this to be too much of a sacrifice. So Jesus comments: “It is easier for a camel to walk through the eye of the needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom.” The “riches” Jesus speaks about is not a reference to material wealth, but the vast collection of beliefs and opinions we use to guide us through life. This vast collection forms the storehouse that seemingly feeds us in material life, much like the hump serves the camel. We are so enamored of these erroneous sources that we treat them as treasures. We even fight to the death for them; we fracture relationships, and diminish our spiritual walk with them. The Kingdom refers to the infinite Source of spiritual consciousness, composed of inspirational messages we receive when aware—and which constitute the path of Truth we are to demonstrate, moment by moment.



If you have ever tried to thread a needle, you know that it can be a somewhat trying process. And, certainly, a thread too large for the opening will not be accommodated. To mix metaphors for a moment, what we are being told in this Scriptural reference is that one cannot travel the straight and narrow with extra baggage. That extra baggage is the huge container of beliefs and opinions we have gathered from outer sources. We are admonished, then, to leave the baggage behind, clearing us thus of the old in order to become aware of the vast Kingdom of spiritual Truth found inwardly.

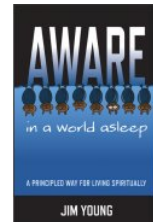
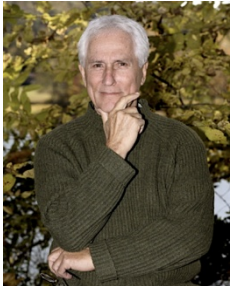
Indeed, we would be wise to comprehend that this higher description of love has no purpose but to fulfill spiritual awareness through our everyday demonstration. By shifting from ego consciousness and a life of self-importance—exerting the need to abide our own mental

configurations rather than Truth—we learn to overcome spiritual malnutrition. Spiritually, we are fed or nourished by communing with and dining on the awareness of inspirational resonance, abiding only the insight that enlightens us. This spiritual nourishment can and does lead us to transformation on many levels of being.

Initially, this shift in our approach could be confusing and seem difficult or onerous. It could even stir up some feelings of fear. However, if we focus *only* on the vibration or frequency of the *inner* Source we are to demonstrate, and not on *our* beliefs and opinions, this will simplify our approach quickly and accurately—and fear will fade from view. Don't be intimidated by another view or some outer authority; only ask within what deeper meaning The Inward Way could have for you, and then simply *listen* inwardly for a powerfully clear answer. Like meditation, no one can really tell you how to listen, but you can be assured that if you ask inwardly and simply show up *to* listen for the answer, all you need to move forward will become abundantly clear to you.

Mary Baker Eddy is helpful here: “The inward voice of truth, is, to the human mind, ‘as when a lion roareth.’ It is heard in the desert and in the dark places of fear.” Awareness of the roar is akin to discerning the Truth speaking to us, the love for the world and ourselves we are to demonstrate moment by moment. This is not an intellectual approach at all—it is a heartfelt one. Do not work at it, nor think about it. Just let it come to you. Simply let it be. This practice—The Inward Way—is about one thing, and one thing only: listening, while deeper meaning seeks our awareness.

About the Author: *Dr. James H. Young, former university president and chancellor, is an award-winning spiritual writer, poet and a widely collected documentary/fine art photographer. Young is a ministerial graduate of the Pecos Benedictine Monastery’s ecumenical school for spiritual direction. A cofounder of the Arkansas Metaphysical Society in Eureka Springs and The Aristotle Group in Hot Springs, Jim invokes the reframing of spiritual perspective in his life’s work. He also serves as the Interim Minister for the Creation Life Church (New Thought) in Hot Springs, AR. Young is an inspirational teacher who takes participants to the threshold of their own Truth, and is available for workshops, seminars, and presentations. For other books and offerings by Jim Young, visit: www.creationspirit.net.*



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