

ENGLISH ver 2

(W) Surrender!

Surrender and Awakening – an inner bridge to the sacred

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W1. Awake! Awake!

Being fully awake is the way to prepare for the joyful birth of God in our hearts and lives. Putting on the new self.

The words of Jesus:

*Therefore, stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come ... (Mt 24:42)
So too, you also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come." (Mt 24:44)*

So, it seems, we have to live attentively at all times, every minute if possible, in a fully awake state of openness to God. Being fully awake is the way to prepare for the joyful birth of God in our hearts and lives as the Son of Man. (If we are not fully awake, we are likely to be carried along by our own senses and urges).

The words of Paul:

"Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." ... Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord (Eph 5:14-19)

This birth in us is not up to us: the initiative for it belongs to God. What is up to us is to prepare the way, to make and keep always ourselves prepared. It is this state of watchfulness which permits the divine life to take over. Openness to God: is this about our thoughts, words, actions? On one level, yes. But firstly and fundamentally it is about surrender. Surrendering our will is what makes us prepared. Paul says this quite clearly:

Put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness (Eph 4:22-24)

The more we are open to the God, the more God will show us how to walk. In the words of the prophet Isaiah:

*"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, ...
He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." (Is 2:3)*

W2. Who are you?

Who are we, and who is the "new man"?

Sometimes Christians speak of Christ already living with us, sometimes we speak of being invited to wake up and let Christ come and take over (Paul's invitation in Eph 5:14-19), or of putting on the "new man" who is like God (Eph 4:24). At these times we are not speaking of something happening firstly in our actions, our words, and our thoughts, but of something mysterious in us that is deeper still. Who are we? The Jesuit paleontologist–philosopher–mystic Pierre Teilhard de Chardin declared:

"We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience."

As humans we need to wake up to who we really are, how to live and work in this world.

Changing my normal way of seeing into a spiritual way of seeing is what the Gospels mean by *repent* (the original Greek gospel word for repent is *meta-noia*, meaning: *go-beyond-ordinary-mind*)

Teilhard also said *"The day will come when, after harnessing space, the winds, the tides, and gravitation, we shall harness for God the energies of love. And on that day, for the second time in the history of the world, we shall have discovered fire."*

In our world as a whole this will clearly take quite a bit of time. But on an individual level? What is stopping me from harnessing, for God, the energies of love?

Perhaps all this is not for you? Well, yes, actually, it is. Jesus himself told you: *"you are the light of the world"*. *Matt 5:14*

Perhaps I feel am not ready? My heart is bare like the desert? Time is short! Go fearlessly into the desert of the heart. Maybe you will hear...

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

*"A voice of one calling in the desert,
'Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.' " (Mt 3:2-3)*

How to do this? Make sure your life is clean and sincere. Pray for your transformation, using words or thoughts. Rest in God without words or thoughts. Trust in Jesus, putting off the old self, embracing a new way of seeing, a way that is transparent so that God can come and see with you: Jesus *"will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire."* (*Matt 3:11*)

W3. Encouragement

Courage – be what you really are!

We are spiritual beings. In the Genesis account of creation of Adam, it is implied that we are the breath of God breathed into matter. Jesus calls us the light of the world, sons of the Father.

Paul speaks of the new man, made like God, that is ready for us to put on.

Jesus invites us to wake up and remember that we are spiritual beings, and realise that we are here to receive God's light and to shine it on again onto our brothers and sisters everywhere, to transform the world in love. How precious, then, becomes this life on earth! How precious, all the moments of our short time here!

We try to act with a heart that is pure. We open to God in prayer with words and thoughts, and in prayer beyond words and thoughts. We can usually expect some spiritual guidance and consolations on this path, but they may seem to take long in coming. Sometimes it may even seem that the Lord has forgotten us

Then we would do well to remember the letter of St James:

*Be patient, brothers and sisters,
until the coming of the Lord.
See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth,
being patient with it
until it receives the early and the late rains.
You too must be patient.
Make your hearts firm,
because the coming of the Lord is at hand.
(James 5:7-8)*

The prophet Isaiah assures us that God will surely come into our lives:

*The desert and the parched land will exult;
the steppe will rejoice and bloom. (Is 35:1)*

*They will bloom with abundant flowers,
and rejoice with joyful song.*

(Is 35:1-2)

And St Luke in his Gospel (through the words of Zachariah touched by the Spirit of God) promises that God will guide us

*In the tender compassion of our Lord
The dawn from on high shall break upon us,
to shine on those who dwell in darkness
And the shadow of death,
And to guide our feet into the way of peace.*

(Luke 1:78-79, part of the Canticle of Zechariah)

W4. The Incarnation and I

*The inner meaning of Christmas is the renewed birth of God, of Christ, in the depths of ourselves.
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The inner meaning of Christmas is the renewed birth of God, of Christ, in the depths of ourselves.

This is a limited metaphor, as Christ is in fact already always with us.

The breath of God, the Verb or Logos, is always inside us, and is what some mystics call the peak of the soul, or the secret divine ground of our soul. But it helps to think of a special birth taking place each Christmas, -- indeed at *any time* that we open ourselves to Christ, to God. Those are times of special grace. Even the most spiritual person needs such renewal.

When we turn towards God or even start looking for God, that means God has already found us.

The journey is a lifelong one.

Through prayer with words and thoughts, and contemplation, or *contemplatio*, without thoughts, we have the glorious possibility of linking up, or bridging, the finite and the infinite in ourselves.

A secret known only to a few is that “the work of one is the work of all”: that is, your progress in this direction will be a help to other people along the same path; and conversely the communion of saints has already, invisibly, been giving you a boost in *your* bridge-making. The biggest boost as well as the scaffolding for the bridge is Christ, the way, the truth and the life.

In this mysterious process, you are in Christ and Christ is in you. Take it more seriously (and joyfully) than anything else in your life, and this divine reality that is already in you will grow into God-Consciousness, and then you will truly incarnate the eternal Word. That is the real promise of Christmas.

I can try letting my spirit open to beauty and to Presence in nature and in people.

Loving one another is a chance to glimpse a spark of the great light, the great fire. Let us celebrate! Celebrate!

In the words of the Jesuit priest, scientist and mystic Pierre Teilhard de Chardin: *Love alone can unite living beings so as to complete and fulfill them... for it alone joins them by what is deepest in themselves. All we need is to imagine our ability to love developing until it embraces the totality of men and the earth.*

In the words of the first Letter of John,

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ...

God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. (1 John 4:7, 16)