

Step into the dynamic reality of 'oneness'

By Ann Shakespeare

Despite the huge advances made in science demonstrating that everything, and everyone, in our universe is fundamentally connected through one vast field of energy, we Christians still tend to shy away from the principle of "oneness" in favour of remaining firmly entrenched in duality.

This not only flies in the face of science but – much more importantly – it actually ignores the heart of the Gospel, which is that Jesus Christ came to die for our sins, to abolish separation and duality by removing the sinner, and to bring us into union with God the Father.

Before his crucifixion, Jesus prayed "that they all [believers] may be one, as you, Father, are in me, and I in you; that they also may be one in us" (John 17:21). This is echoed strongly throughout the New Testament letters in verses such as: "you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3).

Jesus came to fulfil and to replace the Old Covenant dualistic paradigm (in which God was largely afar off) with the New Covenant which proclaims freedom from this separation from God and a permanent relationship characterised by full union with God. However, this union is never forced upon us, because Love never forces. God has done his part; now he is waiting for our proactive response. In this regard, God's amazing humility and patience shine out in this verse in Paul's letter to the Corinthians: "the one who *joins himself* to the Lord is one spirit with him" (1 Cor 6:17; emphasis added).

Why is it then, generally speaking, that Christians do not embrace the truth of this oneness with God in Christ? In four decades of churchgoing, I don't think I have ever heard one sermon preached on the subject, except to interpret oneness as

in "one community" and "one body of believers", for example. Both of which are vitally important, of course, but they really imply multiplicity, not true oneness.

At this juncture, someone might point out that, by the same token, the Godhead is multiple – God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. Indeed it is! And yet it is not! This is the paradox of the One God.

But are we not invited to partake of that very same paradox? If we can accept the invitation and step into the paradox of oneness by faith, then that which seems totally illogical at the intellectual level proves itself to be practical and life-changing at the level of experience.

Thus we see, as in so many other aspects of the Christian journey, that faith opens the door to another dimension of reality.

So why the resistance? There are probably many reasons, but I believe that two key underlying reasons for our resistance are based upon pride and fear, respectively.

Pride of intellect: it is much easier and more "comfortable" to remain at the level of theory and metaphor regarding oneness, rather than venturing, through prayer, meditation and faith, into the realm of the unseen – into that which cannot be demonstrated empirically.

Fear: In some circles, the concept of oneness brings a fear of the influence of New Age philosophy or eastern religions, and the baby is thus thrown out with the bath water. This is tragic, because it is Jesus himself who invented oneness! We need not fear following his teaching and his Word, as long as we trust him and base our thoughts, prayers and meditations firmly within the context of his death and resurrection.

How, then, do we get over these various hurdles and find a way of aligning

ourselves with the biblical truth of oneness?

It is science and a greater understanding of God's universe that comes to our aid.

It is striking, and paradoxical, that it is the work of the international community of quantum physicists – of all faiths and none – that is helping (incidentally) by offering tremendous insight into New Testament scriptures. Their discoveries regarding the unity that exists throughout the entire universe address the Christian's "separated ego" issue by illuminating, in scientific terms, the many scriptures that refer to oneness and to our being united with God in Christ.

As Jesus demonstrated in his own teachings in the Gospels, we need the help of images and pictures in order to understand and contemplate truth that is invisible. The latest discoveries of quantum physics with regards to the fully interconnected nature of the universe, do indeed provide us with powerful pictures or "handles" on biblical truth.

These handles are invaluable gifts to enable us to deepen our understanding of the Christ and our relationship with him and with the universe in which we live. They inspire and encourage us to make the bold transition from intellectual observation and debate, and to draw upon our sixth sense – which is faith. Through faith we can meditate upon, and incarnate, the many scriptures that speak of our union with God.

In this way, we can grow progressively into our true identity in Christ and be amazed and humbled as he starts to work through us to bring about positive transformation in the world around us in ways that we could never imagine nor achieve in our limited human strength.

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