

H A R L A N R I C H A R D S

July 4, 2011

MY BELIEFS

I believe that we are all connected, a part of God here on the material plane. I believe that we have a duty to our brothers and sisters to love and help them in any way we can. I believe God has a plan for each of us and bad things happen to people to help them grow into their spirituality and commitment to God.

Although I have chosen to be a Christian (a student of A Course In Miracles), I do not believe that other religions or paths to spiritual attainment are not valid. Whatever path which will lead a person to a spiritual awakening and an awareness of God and our interconnectedness is a valid path.

I received my first awareness of unity with God by doing a 6-month long ritual created by Aleister Crowley based on the Sacred Magick of Abra-Melin the Mage. For the first time, I was able to see that I was a selfish, ego-driven follower of the Left-Hand path. In other words, all the years I thought I was on a spiritual path, I was actually stuck in my ego and focussed solely on what I could do for myself.

After that first awakening I slowly came to realize that I needed to become more selfless and place my focus on others. Eventually, I was led to Jesus. I have read the Bible and believe within it lies the spiritual message that many people have found to guide their lives. But it is more like a maze to navigate than a how-to book and as many people get lost in the maze as find God. The stories in the Old Testament are there to teach us lessons. There may be literal truth about historical events but to claim that things like the Adam and Eve story in Genesis are literal truth strains credulity.

I subscribe to Darwin's theory: There is a God and the way God created life through evolution is a greater and more profound proof of His existence than any book written by the hand of man even if it is inspired by God.

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I believe you can determine a person's level of spiritual awareness by his or her actions. A person who thinks it's ok for poor people to go without medical care, food or housing cannot have much of a spiritual basis. There seems to be a strong correlation between being a fundamentalist in any religion and a lack of spiritual awareness (but that is just a generalization, there are exceptions). Our prison system exemplifies the attitude of non-spiritual religious dogma. People are treated without compassion or love. Vengeance and retribution are the norm. When secular humanists held sway, life was held in greater regard. Law-breakers were still people and as much concern was given to their welfare as to victims of crimes. Sadly, that is no longer the case. As a country, we have become more dogmatic in our religious beliefs, less tolerant and less spiritual.

These are some of the things I believe. Each of us is free to find our own spiritual truth and live by it. May you all find your Spiritual Truth and come to an awareness of God permeating every aspect of your existence.

No End

There is no end, to the
Potential of Mankind,
For destruction, despite
Good intentions.
Advancing science attaches
Limbs, creates new life, works miracles.
Greatest threat to our future
Lies in men's hearts and minds,
Driven by greed, hate and anger,
Children enslaved in factories,
Drones killing innocents,
Suicide bombs of desperation.
Mankind has no future until
Every man has a future,
Free of torture, hunger, domination.

Harlan Richards

Truly Blessed

I am truly blessed
And I thank the Holy Spirit, after
So many years of depression,
Anger, hopelessness,
While I fought furiously for
Satisfaction, pleasure, happiness,
Taking all the world had:
Surfeit of sex,
Gluttonous gorging,
New clothes, new cars, new drugs,
The latest movie, hottest hit song.
Always seeking, craving, wanting,
While I stayed empty as a drum,
Until I stopped looking out, turned in,
And didn't like who I saw.
Desperate, despondent, determined to die,
I killed myself, incinerated my ego,
Let Phoenix rise from the ashes of my despair.
There, behind the clutter of my life,
I found the Holy Spirit,
And felt the words,
Not my will, but Thine, be done.

Harlan Richards

Clarity

Sun rises on a cool day,
Warm breeze caresses goose pimples,
Sensations slide across dendrites
Like wind rippling sand dunes,
Temporal ruminations pass quickly as
Clouds scudding across clear skies,
Blue above, green sward below,
Color vibrantly staining eyes,
Saturating soul, swooning satiety of beauty.
Sun setting, relieving senses,
Katydid and crickets sing
Moonlight into existence, while
Frogs call across placid river
In a mating dance of delight,
Starlight witnessing
Nocturnal dalliance.

Harlan Richards