



Hope for Today's Families

By Dr. Jim Jacobson

Reflections on: God & the World

Fall is finally here. The temperature has gone down and the leaves in the forests are finally turning red and yellow. We can enjoy the God's creation as well as the creator. Wendell Berry writes in his book Harmony, "*Perhaps the great disaster of human history is the one that happened to or within religion; the conceptual division between the holy and the world, The excerpting of the Creator from creation.*"

What I am as a parent is bound up with my view of self, others, God and the world. How I express myself through what I do says more to my children than anything I say. Methods of parenting, beliefs, and what I am as a person must be a coherent whole. How I understand reality makes a great deal of difference when I deal with my children and grandchildren. How I understand God and the world is involved in every decision I make and every technique I use in parenting.

Matthew Fox helps us unite the living Christ with all life. He paraphrased John 1:18 in this way. "*In the beginning was the Creative Energy; The Creative Energy was with God and the Creative Energy was God. It was with God in the beginning. Through it all things came to be made.*" Then on down he writes, "*The creative energy was made flesh, and pitched His tent among us and we saw his glory.*"

Many of the problems we face in our families today come from our view of the world. This view is often fragmenting. We separate the creator from creation, and humanity from the rest of creation. This understanding makes it more difficult for parents to teach respect for the created order and our environment. It also makes it harder to honor variety in life. We often see God as the old Sky God rather than as the creative energy in all life. God is not only in all life, but Jesus came into our world to show us the glory of God in every day life. Open your eyes and see that the world is full of God. We come alive to life when we find God in all life. We get up in the morning and look out at the rising of the sun and like a child we say, "It is so beautiful!"

Children will be able to have hope when they are taught a world-affirming way of living. They learn this from parents that live and act like God is real and a part of every day life. Holistic habits of thinking helps people grow into a community that becomes a resource for the entire family. We are one people under God united by our time together on planet earth.

The Psalmists wrote meditations for daily living. They used poetry to speak to us about God and the world. Poetry speaks to the soul, this is why much of the Bible is written as poetry. Listen to the paraphrased words of Psalm 19:4. "*How clearly the sky reveals God's Glory! How plainly it shows what God has done! No speech or words are used, no sound is heard; yet God's voice goes out to all the world.*" The poem **One** may help us see God in all life.

*No one lives alone and no one dies alone,
We are one body of humanity, united with the world,
We are members one of another, joined together in every moment of time,
If one member suffers, all suffer, if one rejoices all rejoice, **For we are one.**
The human family and created order are one; the physical and spiritual are one,
I can not say of the air, "I have no need of you!" or land, water and trees, "I have no need of you!"
Plants and animals, sky and sea, all are part of you and me, **for we are one.**
The physical spiritual balance is in us, this makes living in the world special,
Our decisions make a difference, to God and the world,
We create and destroy, relate and fracture, we are in the world, and the world is in us,
We are in God and God is in us, **for we are one.***

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Children are at home in the world. They feel the joy of being one with the natural world. They don't separate God from the rest of life. To them, "all things are bright and beautiful." Jesus calls us to be like children and enter God's Kingdom by enjoying God's creation. God made the world for our enjoyment, "Let us rejoice and be glad in it."

