

## ~ Chapter One ~

# OUR MODERN PROBLEMS

An authentic spiritual journey almost always begins with what St. John of the Cross called the “dark night of the soul.” That’s the messy, question-filled part of life. Although our natural tendency is to avoid taking an honest look at how we arrived at our negativity, disease, and anguish, living in truth requires taking a microscopic look at what’s inside our hearts and minds. We have to clean ourselves out in order to make room for something better. It’s a vigorous exercise, the most painful part of which is facing our ego and our suffering. Along with making peace with

the past, we must also offer true forgiveness to ourselves and learn to love ourselves with wild abandon. Next, we need to forgive and learn to love others who don't love us.

Given the current state of the world, it's safe to say that this cleansing and forgiving process is not our strong suit, either as individuals or as a society. Instead of putting new wine in a new skin, it seems easier to just recycle the old skin and opt out of the total spiritual makeover. Most of us successfully avoid this personal housecleaning by adopting mindless religious or spiritual practices that neither enrich us nor bring us any true sense of communion with God. Then we have to overcome additional obstacles to our spiritual work: hurdles like overeating, overexercising, overtexting, overdoing anything else we try, and being overwhelmed with life in general. Our work culture is so rushed we are expected to solve problems before our competitors do, so there is no space or time left in our lives to simply *be* with a problem and contemplate on it. Since our culture's emphasis is on doing, not being, the fastest thinkers win the race. We can't hear God over the din in the marketplace, nor in our personal lives, and it appears we are losing our spiritual guidance system, that deep sense of connection with the Divine Presence that is our internal compass. What's holding us back in the West?

## **A great spiritual divide is cultivated by politics, churches, and the media**

When it comes to assaulting oneness, we are our own worst enemies. American politics is no exception. Many feel we are slowly drilling out any connection Western culture has with God, a spiritually damaging proposition because it doesn't reinforce our unity. Yes, we are a secular nation, but still, we

are one nation under God...just like every other country on the planet. But here, our intertwined faith and politics have polarized and paralyzed our progress toward seeing every person as an individualized spirit under God's creation. The separation of church and state, of course, means that there's a degree of sensitivity when proposing legislation that seems to pertain to one's religious beliefs. Is it right for a person or group to lobby for laws justified by religion or belief in a higher power? Not really. Our laws are secular, not religious, so our behavior and the standards under which we govern ourselves must be derived from secular reasons. Murder is against the law, not because it's in the Ten Commandments, but because the large majority agrees there are great secular reasons to stop us from killing other people.

Although we learned all this in high school civics class, politicians have hijacked the American mentality on a number of controversial issues. Discussion of abortion, a procedure whose support varies between religious groups, no longer centers on whether or not our tax dollars ought to be spent there; it has morphed into a Republican versus Democrat issue. It finds the least support within conservative circles, the Catholic Church, Evangelicals, and the Eastern Orthodox Church, and the most support within a number of liberal secular organizations and liberal, mainline Christian and Jewish faith groups.

Since Americans cannot reach consensus on the topic, would it be sensible to make funding it optional for those taxpayers who want to contribute or find some other middle ground? Instead, the use of political framing at every opportunity to convey opposing perspectives and a "pro-life" or "pro-choice" stance simply fuels more controversy and further divides the nation.

Another movement has also been gaining momentum

lately. This is the Christian nation debate: are we or are we not a nation founded upon Christian principles? Some conservatives and pro-life advocates say our country was founded upon Christian principles and support legislation that politically interprets Christianity. If we are opposed to abortion because our religion says so, I think that is how our Founding Fathers wanted us to think, regardless of our political party or lack thereof. But if Christian congressional leaders who may hold the majority say, "I think the country should ban abortion because our religion says it is wrong," and then back it up by citing the Christian nation debate, I think we are entering a danger zone. What about the non-Christians?

In 1797, during John Adams's administration, the Senate unanimously ratified the Treaty of Peace and Friendship, which states in Article XI that "the government of the United States is not in any sense founded on the Christian religion." Would it really matter how we refer to our nation, unless we were interested in creating more separation? If we decided we were a Christian nation, would it influence the individual behavior of elected officials and cure our separation woes? We aren't ready to have that kind of debate until we can assemble a sufficient number of congressional leaders who can remember our oneness and give up their self-sustaining systems of selfishness. We're supposed to celebrate our diversity while remembering our unity, and hopefully elect people who govern from the center. As it stands, once elected, current leaders push their personal agendas so far outside the middle that Americans who are trying to maintain some sort of legislative balance feel like ping-pong balls being slapped across the net. Washington seems to have evolved into a self-sustaining system of selfishness. Congress has become a house of either-or and individual gain and loss.

In Congress, where little bipartisan congeniality and rationality exist these days, Christian and non-Christian politics are layered between lobbyists and legislative pushes. Power and control have been usurped by groups who have decided that citing God and a particular set of Judeo-Christian values is the best, most convenient way to energize a political base and garner more votes. Even moderate Christians and far-right conservatives cannot agree on what constitutes a “true Christian.” The politically moderate, fiscally conservative, unity-minded Christians of today are not viewed as sufficiently Christian by the far right, because they depart from them on several issues. They don’t want to humiliate gays or advance the kingdom of God through governmental action. They tend to respect all forms of life, but see a women’s sovereignty as important, too. Do we always have to be for or against something? And what of the interfaith minded? Or even the nonfaith minded? In addition to the controversy over when life begins, we are all over the board about school prayer (couldn’t we call it “morning meditation” so we don’t offend yet another special interest group?), stem cell research, displaying the Ten Commandments on public property, and many other highly flammable issues that have moral and religious tones. Now, the antireligious have prohibited the recitation of the *Ave Maria* at a public school graduation, and the Supreme Court agrees. I can respect the decision, but I wonder when we are going to turn on the news and hear about an incident or issue that unifies, not polarizes, the nation.

Americans are greatly confused about where faith and politics intersect, and when they do intersect, we become focused on ego consciousness rather than using the opportunity to recognize God’s presence in all creation, even if we don’t all agree on how that translates into federal

spending. I speculate that God would not take any particular position in Congress, other than to remind everyone about the love commandment (to love our neighbor as ourselves, as is repeated in the Gospels). As Senator John Danforth (an ordained minister) said, it is the only absolute standard of behavior and takes precedence when we sense conflict with our laws.

In a perfect nation, we would be able find the balance between instituting policies that uplift the All, the collective consciousness that is the hub of all life, while still respecting those who just aren't there yet. This unity-mindedness can happen, but our entire political system needs a oneness wake-up call. We are a diverse nation, a great experiment; we are often imperfect seekers of the truth, even though we do our best to serve humanity. Everyone needs a recess to contemplate the unity of all beings and intelligently find space to relate, regardless of the next election outcome. In the oneness movement, avoiding extremes is taught as a helpful tool for awakening. I wish our leaders could bring this simple philosophy into our political arena. Unity-mindedness is basically driven by common sense. It's an interfaith spiritual movement that doesn't have a political agenda.<sup>1</sup>

If I were in charge, I would advise everyone to enjoy God wholeheartedly and with great love. I'd ask them to speak of God often and remind each other that light vibrates everywhere, but is concentrated within the individual. Collectively, this consciousness can never be contained nor drilled out of the fiber of our nation. If everyone puts God first in their lives, all else will easily fall into place, and even

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1. Extremes to avoid are mentioned in the oneness teachings. They are: avoiding the extremes of certainty and uncertainty; indulgence and abstinence; dominance and subservience; possessiveness and indifference; resignation and extreme seeking; carelessness and obsession with perfection; and analysis and synthesis.

the most controversial issues can be managed wisely and judiciously. Maybe it's my practical and positive Midwestern nature, but I don't see what's so difficult about speaking freely and joyfully of our love for God. Let's set aside the political posturing and get back to the basics. It makes as much sense to seek God within as it does to outwardly rejoice in him as often as possible. Many of us are working toward that goal, despite what we see on the evening news. So much energy is wasted in blocking our natural expression of oneness. Everyone is always in, under, and within God, and humanity is certainly indivisible. If we can just recognize this and honor everyone's path, we will all be happier. We will stop wasting time keeping the lawyers in business over frivolous lawsuits involving God. Congress might actually pass a budget that works.

Our unity is also severely assaulted by media that thrives on controversy, argument, and negativity. Churches have happily jumped onboard to increase their membership, while fundamentalist talk-show hosts serve up scripture wars. It's an unfortunate exercise in one-upmanship by people who can argue their point faster and louder than anyone else on behalf of their version of what God wants us to do, selling fear-based images of sin and one-way tickets to salvation through religious dogma. I've seen commercials on these programs encouraging voters to "vote Christian." I am just an average American, one does my best to keep up with world events and be an informed voter, and I don't even understand what that means. If I don't vote for a "Christian" policy based upon a "Christian value set," does that mean I am anti-Christian? How can anyone be against the achievement of higher-level conscious awareness that is the birthright of every human being on the planet? Again, we seem to advocate more separation at every opportunity,

when we should be working toward connectivity. Congress and the media need a good, old-fashioned consciousness-raising session.

It's time for churches to step back and take a look at their intentions of dividing the nation. Last winter, I attended a program in a Unitarian Universalist church. I was met at the door by a person holding a brochure that explained why Unitarian Universalists are liberal Democrats, a vitally important voting bloc. I was reminded that if you are Unitarian, you cannot be a conservative. This brochure went on to show the congruencies of Unitarian Universalism and liberalism and describe what's currently wrong with the Right. I thought unity was a part of the word "Unitarian." Equally contradictory are the messages of a Catholic church my friend Rob attended one Sunday. There was a sign in the vestibule stating that members of the congregation must not believe in abortion, nor vote for congressional leadership that advocates abortion, if they want to attend that church. Rob found this sign offensive and pointless, inconsistent with the contemplative and quiet atmosphere he needed that morning. Church memberships have become voting blocs. No longer are they the spirit-oriented, judgment-free gathering places dedicated to God they were meant to be. We need churches that welcome everyone. We need more sensible media and politicians who have not lost sight of what is truly important about communing with the Presence. We've already seen the hazards of religion driven by extreme political agendas. If we fail to learn that people just want more honesty, positive language, and acceptance, we will be doomed to repeat history.

Everyone bears responsibility for healing this deep spiritual divide, because these behaviors spring from

humanity's belief in our separation from the Divine. No matter what tradition we practice or what part of the globe we may reside in, our belief system cannot sustain itself in any modern sense with this divisive conditioning. If we don't wake up to a new way of being and a better way of processing our emotions, experiences, and actions, we will eventually cancel each other out.

## **We belong to God and not a particular religion**

Spiritual individuals who don't identify with an institutional church tend to want to skip the religious labels. They might refer to themselves as "spiritual," but not "religious," because "spiritual" seems broader. As our concept of a global human community continues to expand economically and socially, many choose to opt out of the confines of religion, and choose a faith and a spirituality that works with their lifestyle. Church attendance across denominational lines has declined in the last ten years, partly due to declining fertility rates, but spiritual poverty has also been cited as the reason many are abandoning organized religion. Has the global youth culture become pluralistic? Or is our soon-to-be godless society degrading? I think it's a reflection of our awakening as a species; our search for less confinement and more ways to connect with the boundless human spirit. More people want to be more firmly centered in God and less planted in the pews, so they are renouncing religious labels. We truly transform ourselves spiritually when we elevate our capacity to love and live authentically, then inspire others to do the same. Enough information is already out there, and it seems we don't want more religion or gurus to do it for us. It's time for us to practice what we've learned.

The more unity-minded we become, the less important it seems to be to declare a religion, because to love God is to own the universe. God, or divine energy, maintains us the same way he maintains the universe, giving us a wide berth to develop ourselves as we see fit within a big support system. We're going to evolve as long as we love God and recognize our partnership. Does a lily make a conscious effort to grow its own petals? The Divine is our binding force and power system, and we are delusional when we think we're doing all the work. We need to stop trying to grow our petals, so to speak, and let ourselves be maintained by the divine energy. As science has made abundantly clear, energy is pervasive and constitutes every atom in existence. We want to connect with the divine energy. Does it really matter how it is labeled? When asked what religion I belong to, I always answer, "I belong to God." Like Rumi or Sri Aurobindo, I work on loving and honoring the Divine Presence within my own heart and mind. The more I do this, the more I easily see it in others, and then I feel Spirit expanding. Many who work with these ideas call themselves "spiritual"; it is hardly a godless label.

Underneath the spiritual and political face-off, there *is* the shared spiritual message of a global oneness community. This spiritual community is interested in maintaining harmony despite different sets of holy works, practices, and faiths. It loves and respects its diverse members, be they Christian or non-Christian, Muslim, New Age, Pagan, Jewish, or Buddhist, of blended faith, or nonreligious, and all of them love God with passion. What they want is the freedom of a true spirituality with accountability. They desire to encounter the sacred in normal, everyday experiences and lead a mystical life while fully engaged in the world. They want to know that anyone can be saved; that reincarnation is

possible; that our Western traditions and culture are not evil, but may be enhanced by the knowledge that enlightenment is within everyone's reach. They want the living truth to *breathe through them*. They want to enrich themselves with new spiritual practices that embrace the vibrancy of their own wisdom traditions, but at the same time, they don't want to feel guilty about doing so.

Contemporary Christians within the oneness community generally regard the Bible as written by spiritually minded people who may or may not have had an agenda, and believe this collection of inspired writings reflects a wide variety of views that have been edited over the centuries. They recognize that writers and readers, influenced by their own economic, linguistic, cultural, and political issues, have shaped and reshaped Jesus through time. They read other sacred texts, consult a broad range of scriptures from both East and West, and often use psychology, brain science, and personal stories to look deeper within for solutions to life's biggest challenges. They believe a loving God does not judge and has no labels. They enjoy learning about meditation and prayer and are just as likely to attend a *kirtan*<sup>2</sup> as a midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. With an interspiritual approach to nurturing the inner presence of God in their lives, they are inclined to see the Divine gloriously present in every individual, in all families, workplaces, and communities.

When we adopt a unity point of view, advocating church attendance or a merger of wisdom traditions is not necessary, nor is diversity a problem. Only our inability to look within has prevented us from reaching a higher level of consciousness. People are beginning to understand the necessity of self-

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2. A *Kirtan* is a Hindu devotional song about some aspect of God, in which the lines sung by a leader are repeated by the congregation.

reflection, which leads to the still waters of inner peace. It is how the world will eventually improve. Sacred texts, such as the Bhagavad Gita (a classic Yogic scripture which scholars date back to around the fifth century BCE), the Upanishads (Hinduism's New Testament), and the Christian Gospels give us clear, basic lessons on encouraging our egos to take a backseat, quieting our minds, and cultivating love, joy, forgiveness, faith, and compassion for all beings. They are being adopted by more people today outside of church, as are many daily practices of prayer, contemplation, and chanting. Communing with God from a higher level of conscious awareness is taking a front seat. Reaching Christ consciousness is no longer a secret guarded by saints and mystics, because anyone can reach the kingdom of heaven if they desire.

For centuries, mysticism has been cultivated behind the walls of ashrams and monasteries. It hasn't been available to the public before, certainly not in mainline churches, but today, this vitally important information is being presented in various forms and digestible chunks by modern-day mystics, philosophers, and other spiritual leaders. We need to open our ears, revisit the basics, share some stories, and quit worrying about East versus West. We need to turn back to the texts we best resonate with and seek the truth of our oneness. If not, all the churchgoing and spiritual practice in the universe won't bring us inner peace or the sense of communion with God we yearn for.

## **Belief in separation obstructs our perception of unity**

To claim the birthright of our own divinity, we must care of our personal business *first*. When we develop self-

awareness, we make room for the Presence to work through us. To prepare for the New Age (and blast off into a new vibratory realm to change the world), therefore, we have to start from the beginning and reflect on our past suffering and family problems. I know it's no fun to take responsibility for our own joy; it's much easier to place the blame for our perceived challenges elsewhere. But self-reflection and self-responsibility are the only ways to clear the pathway to truth if we don't want to enter a religious order, which doesn't work for most of us living in modern-day suburbia. With some prayer and application, we can learn to recognize the Presence in us so fully that there can be no differentiation in our existence and God's. We already have at our disposal the most beautiful and enriching written wisdom, owned by all of humankind, so let's embody the light. Everyday life can become the cocreative experience it was originally meant to be.

To work in conjunction with the Divine Presence, we need to be conscious that *we exist as one*. Cocreation is our natural state. The universe is one big, receptive, energy sphere. It reflects our intentions, thoughts, and actions, so we can learn to be conscious cocreators with the Divine Presence. For years, my spiritual work was simply getting people to think positively and affirm what was right and good in their lives. I taught people how to broadcast through their words and energies that they *are* whatever they think they are. When we invite success, prosperity, love, or any number of wonderful qualities into our experience, we are working with natural laws. We enjoy the results. It's great practice.

But it's not enough. Those of us who seek to be Christ lights and attune our consciousness with God (and as a result, create loving miracles of healing and abundance in our experience) must go beyond positive thinking and realize

that we are one with the Father, no matter our perceived differences. That's how to find the kingdom within. It's also nice to have a mystical experience of a unified universe, a deeper connection, a sense of the eternal, that doesn't discount our Christianity but rather refreshes it.

*Oneness is our natural state.* It is a complete harmonic convergence with the Divine, where we draw ourselves back to conscious oneness with all creation. It is our realization of God's own reflection in the son of man, in all of humankind. *In all of us.* To have the Christ light within, or "have Christ in you," is to obtain that level of consciousness. A Christed one is an enlightened person who has awakened to his or her own divinity and light, and who embodies the higher vibration and fully reflects God.

## **Surrender and silence are unfamiliar to the Western mind**

However your journey has been going so far, I'm guessing that if you've already knocked on God's door and asked to enter the kingdom, you've had to surrender yourself in some way, probably to uncertainty and abstraction. You might also have faced surrendering the cunning part of you, the part that schemes and strategizes and has the power to manipulate. Surrender, of course, goes against the grain of the Western mind and our market-driven culture. We like facts, certainty, and three easy payments of only \$19.95, results guaranteed in thirty days or less. Surrender is something we don't do very well, but when we put aside our weaknesses and obsessions with the ordinary world, healing and insight begin. When we align our own will with divine will, which has no boundaries and is informed by wisdom, we are not relinquishing control of our lives, but rather using our will

to attract and bring goodness and loving-kindness to all.

Through surrender, grace enters the picture. I've always thought of grace as God's love and ability to operate within us. It makes its appearance known to us in many forms: through blessings, serendipitous circumstances, freedom, forgiveness, and love. Receiving grace puts us in a place where we tenderly invite ourselves into unity consciousness, or oneness. Oneness is direct, personal experience of God. It's not only a mystical place of peace, wisdom, and bliss, but it is also *home*. It's the place we yearn for our entire lives. The place where there is no separation between us and the Divine Presence. And it's the ultimate high, a very good buzz we can get without having to drink an apple martini.

The Christ realization is an internal experience. It's not at all about being a Christian or identifying with any specific religion, but about experiencing truth in our own individual consciousness. Birthing the Christ-self means we have *cleaned house* (translation: gotten rid of our old baggage and emotional suffering) and can now live a balanced life in the present moment. We volunteer to surrender our old thought patterns, uncover our egos, and then take a long, hard look at them so we can let go of self-doubt, judgment, and negative conditioning. It actually takes a lot of courage to do this. We examine our faulty beliefs, for example that we are sinners or inherently bad, and make a conscious choice to change our outlook and self-perception. Letting go of anything familiar is always difficult, but it is the first step.

We must be willing to replace negative conditioning with the successful practice of the higher ideals of compassion, forgiveness, unconditional love, and adherence to the natural laws. This means we regularly lie down in the garden to reflect on the truth of who we are and have a regular conversation with God, whom we consciously invite into our

decision-making process. It means we *participate in love* and apply it across the board. And when we understand that our place is in a higher reality, and that life is not just all about what's on earth and our physical existence, then we can rise beyond our Christ-self and come into union with God. *Brahman*, as it is known in Sanskrit, the ancient language of the Vedas and the Upanishads, is the unified ground of *Being* in which all forms and thoughts arise. The Hindus believe they do not *have* Brahman, or God, in everything. Everything is present *within Brahman*, that which is all-encompassing. There is nothing independent, because our entire existence is an expression of the One that is a state of self-fulfillment and joy. We lack nothing. Separation is an illusion. God is present, is our only reality, and our expanded self is one with him.

Jesus spoke of this intimacy and complete harmony with God. From the depths of his fully realized Brahman consciousness, he encouraged us to uncover our own God consciousness. He knew that only through a properly ordered inner state can we manifest great works in our outer world, because we constantly animate creation with ideas and thoughts. Jesus knew that God resides at the center of everything. God dwells in the heart of every atom and knows us from the inside out. So, in the truest sense, God *is* our thoughts and feelings, and Divine consciousness resides within us. It's the kingdom we've heard about so frequently. To get in, Jesus encouraged us to awaken and be "reborn" from above, from the light of our authentic being, which is a form of surrendering our old ways of thinking about ourselves in favor of new ways.

After reordering our inner states and entering into harmony with God, we must learn to love God supremely. We have to make time to do so. And practice often. With the pace

we've set for ourselves in this busy Western world and our achievement mentality, we've lost the art (and meaning) of true communion. Holy Communion is about spiritual union with God. It can be found in a few minutes of tranquility—meditation or silence, breathing, walking, dance, yoga, or a multitude of contemplative habits. Observing silence, or *mauna*, is actually a spiritual practice that calms the mind so Brahman, the Absolute Self, can be perceived clearly. Western culture does not yet understand the benefits of quietude. We have grown accustomed to noise and offer little support for contemplation, although I see this beginning to change.

Spiritually speaking, devotees who have quieted their minds and reached perfect stillness are far beyond ordinary peace. They're in a deep state of bliss, in total harmony with the ineffable. They are drinking in the Divine. The difference between those who experience oneness occasionally in their spiritual practice and an ascended spiritual master is that a Christed one resides in that state all the time. He or she can continually operate at that frequency, passing the good vibes on to everyone and everything, altering conditions everywhere on earth. This is what happens when we become God in action, or a divine human. It takes some discipline and practice, but it can be done. Jesus and other great spiritual masters encourage us to realize our own divinity and assure us it is possible. I can't think of a better time in history to start realizing our potential.

What have we got to lose?

## **We don't understand oneness**

The greatest masters on this planet have agreed that self-realization, or the unfolding of God within us, is *already present within us*. We don't need to subscribe to any particular

religion, culture, spiritual practice, or dogma. It's not a private club. It's just there. Our ability to be a Christ exists the moment we arrive on the planet, Christian baptism or not. *Our entire life* is a conversation with the Presence, who is showing us how to become that which we already are, which is divine. It's the entire reason we're here.

Our purpose is not only to understand God intellectually, but also to experience him through the art of living. It's to become one with God's infinite intelligence, which is embedded in every particle of creation. To raise the Christ vibration within us so that each of us is a breathing manifestation of *Kutastha Chaitanya*, the Krishna consciousness of the Hindu scriptures. The Sanskrit word *Kutastha* means "that which remains unchanged." *Chaitanya* means "consciousness." In the West, we call this "Christ consciousness." It's an intelligence that is present in all creation, a pure reflection of Spirit in the created realm.

We are already empowered to walk this path of ancient mastery and live divinely as cocreators with God. Jesus, Krishna, and Yogananda are examples of our potential, and they belong to everyone. Their light survives in our sacred texts today, and if we choose to let it, this light can animate us. Their messages of self-divinity, translated and taught by the many avatars and spiritual guides who have walked this planet, are available to every human being. They still joyfully extend this invitation to us. Every one of us can rise to meet our higher consciousness and discover our own divinity.

But why does it take so long? And why don't we *feel* God's presence?

Part of our problem is that we are conditioned to believe in our own imperfection, sinfulness, and unworthiness. But it's time we outgrew this negative approach to spiritual

development and let go of past emotional traumas, dramas, and all forms of self-imposed suffering. Spending more time in the present, and releasing outdated, unfit beliefs, is a conscious choice. Without making that choice, we prevent ourselves from fully realizing our divine nature. We block the experience of oneness with God and the rest of humanity. When we seek the inner kingdom in our individual, spiritual journeys, we can make better sense of our everyday conundrums and accomplish great works.

Many people are apprehensive about oneness. They think it's just another doctrine, a clever way to relinquish our rugged, Western-style individuality. But nothing could be further from the truth. Oneness is a congruent, timeless teaching that already has a long shelf life. No matter its origin, the practice of spiritual peacemaking and embodiment of pure love leads to awakening. Remember, *true spiritual messages always support one another*. I've rejoiced over the sheer intellectual beauty of Jesus's message, but my contemporary teachers have brought this material to life. I've hugged Mata Amritanandamayi, meditated with Sai Maa Lakshmi Devi, and laughed with the guides of the Oneness University. Any one of them will explain that everyone on this planet is worthy of everlasting and unconditional love from our Source. Last time I looked, this was Jesus's message to the masses. From a Hindu perspective, realizing self-divinity and being a fully illuminated human being is completely doable today, not tomorrow in a galaxy far, far away, or in the next lifetime. When we merge the best ideas from the East and the West, therefore, we can find many ways to understand and move toward unity consciousness. Since the essence of God inhabits everyone, we are all traveling to the same place anyway.

Birthing our Christ consciousness and maintaining a

higher state of awareness gives us the *choice* to be divine humans. We are *already* in the process of becoming divine. This light lies dormant within us, and we only need to realize this natural state to become enlightened. It is a state of awareness of our own divinity. A divine human communes with God anytime, anywhere, and ushers in the New Age with peace and joy, right here, right now, in the present moment.

What are we waiting for? Let's do it!