

Double Vision

*In God's sight we do not fall: in our own sight we do not stand. And both of these are true, as I see it.
But the way God sees is the higher truth.*

During our lifetime here we have in us a marvellous mixture of both well-being and woe.

Peace and love are always in us, living and working, but we are not always in peace and love.

Julian of Norwich

Julian wrestled for years over her lived experience, and she came to see that the issue was not a question of either/or, but both/and. This paradox or tension, she saw, is never resolved by ignoring or denying either of the poles between which our lives are stretched. Rather we must embrace this tension as the very ground for our growing understanding of the truth, and the very reality where we will encounter God. Here is nothing less than the paradox of the Cross of Jesus: in its vulnerability and weakness we can meet the power and strength of God.

...behind and beneath the smooth wheels of the socially constructed world are two abiding facts: unreconciled pain and unexhausted compassion, the history of men and women and the history of God with them (with us).

Rowan Williams

*There are only two feelings.
Love and fear.*

Michael Leunig

There are only two realities: Dread and the surviving sense of a possible happiness.

Adrienne Rich

Philip Carter is a retired Anglican Priest. He was the inaugural president of the Australian Ecumenical Council for Spiritual Direction (AECSD). He ran the Julian Centre in Adelaide, an independent and ecumenical centre for spirituality, from 1997-2009.

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If we want God to be real, then we must be real ourselves. We deal with reality, not fantasy: we find hope in the way things are, not how we would like them to be. This means facing ourselves as we are: facing our fears, anxieties and doubts: facing our illusions, even our delusions, and our projections, and how we so readily blame others. Telling and facing our truth sets us free.

There is another world, and it is in this one.

Paul Eluard

All the time something is happening, something else is happening as well. The spiritual life is simply paying attention to what is, to everything that is, not only within us, but outside of us- and opening ourselves up to the possibility that that in and through everything that is, in the reality we find ourselves in, we are being addressed.

Instead of knowing ourselves solely in the reality of being chosen and loved by God, we must now know ourselves in the possibility of choosing.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

*Though we live in a world that dreams of ending
that always seems about to give in
something that will not acknowledge conclusion
insists that we forever begin.*

Brendan Kennelly

[Hope] is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense regardless how it turns out.

Vaclav Havel

God's first gift to us is to be able to say "I am"- to discover our treasure, that we are loved and accepted as we are. This then becomes the ground for our hope, where we find, often in seemingly impossible circumstances, the courage to choose to become fully alive and fully human.

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