

Chapter 16

The Journey into Profound Humanness

Profound Humanness is our home, but it takes a journey to get there. We are away from home. In Chapter 15 I described what “away-from-home” looks like. In Chapters 12, 13, and 14, I described what “home” looks like. Our true humanity is profound, a life of Wonder, a journey into Awe, a courageous heart of autonomous strength, a joyous stillness of enchantment with Being, a holistic devotion of out-flowing compassion, and much more.

So how do we get “home” from our particular “away-from-home”? Experiencing the futility, hopelessness, and despair of being away from home is step one. We are away-from-home because we somehow thought a particular “away” was home. As long as that illusion reigns, we will not journey home. The journey home begins with a doorway called “despair,” despair over our life of being away-from-home. There is no other doorway home than despair over being away. When conscious despair begins to eat holes in our contentment, we are on our way home, or we might be if two other blessings happen.

Blessing number two is thoroughly noticing the deep truth that we are welcome home, that Reality with a capital “R” does not punish or condemn us for being away. Away was the punishment. Home is forgiveness and a fresh start in being our true being.

Blessing number three is discovering that we can choose to accept this grand gift of being home. Healing our lives is as simple and as complicated as that.

As you have read this book this far, you may have grasped some of the ways that you are not at home and experienced further insight on what being home might mean. If so, all that is left to be more fully home is to notice that you are welcome home and access the opportunity to choose to be home. You will, of course, need to continue choosing being home over all the temptations to return to some foreign land of estrangement. It was John Wesley with help from Joseph Wesley Mathews who taught me that arriving home is both 100% gift and 100% my choice. Though this does not match my traditional mathematics, this paradox is 100% true. Once I am home, I have to opt to be home and dedicate my life to living at home.

There is nothing more to say except that home keeps expanding in wonder and newness, and that coming home is never entirely over. It has seemed to me that in the early days of this homecoming process, home was like a visitation from some other universe. Home seemed strange, a mountaintop experience, a special retreat, an unusual state of being that interrupted what I considered to be “normal.”

Then somewhere along the way, home became “normal,” and being away from home became “abnormal.” My identification of myself had changed. I began to see myself as a profound being who also has a personality, instead of being a personality who from time to time has experiences of my profundity. This turning point in the homecoming journey transforms everything. It means experiencing that nothing is more important to me than coming home and staying home, because I see that this profound home is my home, the home that I am made for, the home that is the best case scenario for my one and only life.

But even the just mentioned profound turning point is not the end of the journey home. I still have many recalcitrant elements in my life that do not desire to stay at home. Like unruly dogs, these elements have to be trained to stay at home. Perhaps another metaphor is better – certain elements in my life are still melting into the fires of profound living. In this sense the journey home is never over. That is why we need religious practices. We may have outgrown some religious practices, but we still need

practices that enable us to come home and stay home. Being home does not mean an end to the need for religious practices, but the beginning of a whole new understanding of religious practices and why we deeply need them.

I turn now to **Part Four: The Enigma of Religion** in which I will share a fresh definition of religion and show how the practice of “good” religion can be good for us.