

CREDO . . .

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The word “credo” is Latin for “I believe . . .” and is a means of grounding one’s faith stance with statements. Such words as “credit” and “credible” stem from the same root, indicating faith and trust. The words I use in these statements I own for myself, and are not intended to close out alternative words that may be chosen by others.

Following is my credo:

1. I believe my self-differentiated identity is based upon my genuine and full relationship with Other.
2. I believe Other to be that which is outside my selfhood to which I am called to be in relationship.
3. I believe Other to be the embodiment of all Creation, that being persons, art and nature.
4. I believe in the inherent goodness of humanity that has the capacity for love, compassion and justice.
5. I believe this goodness is best expressed by and between two or more people in mutual relationship.
6. I believe the source of this goodness is in human behavior stemming from a deep well of mystery.
7. I believe the deep well of mystery is revealed through our full presence with Other as “subject.”
8. I believe this goodness occurs when in relationship with Other as “subject” (a person, art or nature).
9. I believe we are born into a broken world and we are called to love, compassion and justice.
10. I believe the call comes from the deep well of mystery that binds us together as human family.
11. I believe the deep well of mystery is best expressed in language of reverence, metaphor and symbol.
12. I believe this deep well of mystery is trans-rational and I name it God within the biblical tradition.
13. I believe God to be verb, named as aspects of Love, Compassion and Justice, among many others.
14. I believe humans bring God into the world as effect and affect by one’s actions and relationships.
15. I believe evil exists in the world, either expressed individually and/or institutionally.
16. I believe evil is spawned when Other is seen/used as “object,” as an “It.”
17. I believe evil to be the absence of God due to an intentional act of human will.
18. I believe evil is possibly redeemed when the transgressor sees Other as “subject,” as a “You.”
19. I believe the human condition is fraught with uncertainties.
20. I believe “sin” to be one’s best intentions gone awry causing pain and hardship to Other.
21. I believe one’s “sin” is redeemed through forgiveness by the Other transgressed.
22. I believe “resurrection” is emerging from the depths of despair and pain into a new life of hope.
23. I believe “salvation” to be unbidden grace for a new beginning with hope and for fulfillment.
24. I believe grace to be one’s sense of wholeness, of connection to the holy, and to Other.

25. I believe one is offered unbidden grace by the presence of God through human love.
26. I believe one is given unbidden grace when God is brought into human mutual relationship.
27. I believe in the unity of body and soul/spirit.
28. I believe I was born into this world without asking and will leave it despite my objections.
29. I believe "heaven" is a state of being as a part of the blessings and joy of the human condition.
30. I believe "hell" is a state of being as a part of the pain and despair of the human condition.
31. I believe the authority of one's religiousness/spirituality is grounded in one's experience.
32. I believe religious and spiritual disciplines are a matter of individual conscience.
33. I believe all sacred texts are from the human condition within a given historical period.
34. I believe all sacred texts are a people's searching for the deep well of mystery, for God.
35. I believe all the prophets and exemplars embodied in the sacred texts are fully human.
36. I believe Jesus was a Judean prophet in the time of Roman occupation and oppression.
37. I believe his teachings were in opposition to the oppression and suffering, seeking justice.
38. I believe his teachings have as much relevance today as those of any other prophet or exemplar.
39. I believe life and all that is in it is ever unfolding as Creation.
40. I believe humanity is co-creator of Creation, participants in the unfolding of life and all that is in it.
41. I believe in the joy of human creativity as a celebration of and by the deep well of mystery.
42. I believe my credo will unfold as my experience and conscience is manifest from day to day.

From a theological position, mine rests upon Religious Humanism (a concern for the here-and-now of the human condition) and Natural Theology (empirical process of honoring experience). My theology can best be summed up as influences from the Process Theologies of Unitarians Henry Nelson Wieman and Charles Hartshorne. Wieman observed that through human interactions it is possible for a power not of our own making be invoked and that is the essence of religious experience, that of transforming creativity. There is as well the profound influence by Jewish theologian Martin Buber. It is Buber who astounded me when I read in one of his books, "God is in the meeting of two people." My aspired relationship with Other is based upon his two ways of being: that of a relationship of "I-It" (or Other as "object") and an "I-You" (or Other as "subject").