



# The World Community for Christian Meditation

Published on *The World Community for Christian Meditation* (<http://www.wccm.org>)

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## Sunday of Lent Week 4



Fear and resentment are two of the most corrosive forces in the

human heart. When we are in their grip we are convinced they are justified. Each wreaks their harm throughout all dimensions of our life because they grow, or fester, in the conviction that we are not loved simply for ourselves. We may know love, even be in love, but its light takes time to penetrate to the darkest depths of our mind. Salvation, redemption, enlightenment, liberation - consist in the light of love dispelling all the remaining darkness.

Consciousness is so much the consequence of love we could say that consciousness is love. Where we do not experience love we are as yet unredeemed, unconscious.

Today's gospel of the prodigal son should be called the story of the two brothers. We focus on the younger one who sows his wild oats. He seems like us or what we would like to be, young, profligate and fun-loving. Then he runs out of resources and creeps home with his tail between his legs. He is frightened of his father's response. His brother is apparently less attractive, less popular; the obedient one who stayed at home doing what his father expected. But now his father expects him to celebrate his wayward brother's return and this is too much. He is resentful. The two brothers are the two sides of the ego, fear and anger, low-level consciousness, unable to understand love.

The father is everything we don't expect a patriarchal tyrant to be like. God is never what we imagine. He ignores the young boy's pious apologies. He is moved by pity when he sees him, embraces him warmly and kisses him tenderly. To the older son's bitterness he shows not anger but patience and kindness, reminding him that everything he owns belongs to the boy as well. Neither son seems to get the point. They are loved for who they are.

Words can only persuade so far. Actions speak louder. Meditation is pure action. Something happens when we become silent and still, letting go of thoughts and of the fears and resentments they carry. In silence and stillness, when the mind finds its natural condition of equanimity, we can no longer project these corrosive and mistaken perceptions onto reality. There is a brief moment, the blink of an eye, when we lose everything including our selves. Then love appears, a light illuminating all reality as the sun brings out colour, never to be

forgotten.

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