

6. Planetary Transformation and the Next Christianity

Spirit Realism Supports Nine Interlocking Social Transformations

	from an Obsolete Societal Commonality	to our Next Societal Commonality
POLITICAL	1. Imperial Unilateralism Globalization from Above 2. Aristocratic Rulership The Empowerment of Wealth 3. Combative Decisions-Making Adversarial Win-Lose Arrangements	Interregional Multilateralism Globalization from Below Democratic Responsibility The Empowerment of People Consensus Decision-Making All-Win Discovery Arrangements
ECONOMIC	4. Carbon-Fuel-Driven Economy Spending our Savings Account 5. Profit-Driven Economy Making Money is the Value 6. All-out Use of the Earth Anthropocentric Exploitation	Solar-Energy-Driven Economy Living within Our Means Service-Driven Economy Human Contribution is the Value Human/Earth Balance Mutually Enhancing Support
CULTURAL	7. Cultural/Racial Tyranny I am my Group 8. Patriarchal Gender Patterns Assumed Male Prerogatives 9. Boxed-in Authoritarian Religion My Religion is Right	Honoring Human Diversity I am my Planet Feminine/Masculine Balance Creativity Released and Valued Open Interreligious Dialogue Spirit Experience is the Authority

These nine overarching societal shifts could be broken down into 999 or more subparts and tangential issues, but such fragmentation makes seeing a whole picture difficult. It is important right now to see the whole and to use terminology that is memorable. Almost all of us are open to at least one of these nine transitions. Almost none of us are fully open to all of them. To be closed to even one of the nine is to be closed to the full meaning of any one of the others. This is not understood by citizens of our democratic nations who vote for politicians who commit to one or two of these while being obstinately conservative on all the others.

These nine transformations go together like nine baseball players on the same team. We cannot win the game of a viable future without a catcher or a center fielder. We need all nine. And these nine transformations are even more closely related than nine ball players. The full meaning of each transformation is diminished without the presence of the other eight.

We need political leadership that is fully dedicated to all nine. We need a constituency of millions who support such leadership and refuse to tolerate less enlightened leaders. Obviously, during these extensive transitions, we will be choosing between the more enlightened and the less enlightened leadership. Before we get to choose the strong leadership we need and deserve, we will have to build strong movements that enlighten ever-larger constituencies of citizens who see the validity of all nine transformations.

Creating a fresh, vital form of Christianity is one part of transition number nine. Similar movements need to take place and are taking place in virtually every world religion. Building a valid movement of Christian practice means leading Christian people from their religious box into fruitful patterns of Christian nurture and into unbigoted living in this interreligious era. Such a revitalized Christianity would be committed to all nine of the above transformations. If we do not see these connections we have climbed back into some sort of religious box. These nine transformations presuppose and support each other. To choose any one of them is to choose them all.

Choosing to focus on religion is choosing to focus on the least popular and the least obvious of the nine. Those who think that religious transformation is the easiest are not understanding religious transformation in the light of the whole nine. If religious transformation is understood as something going on in its Christian box or Jewish box or Muslim box or Buddhist box or any other box, then religious transformation might be viewed as easier than the other nine. But being in a box is our key religious problem. Stirring the contents inside our old religious box does not produce the transformation needed.

The Christian resurgence we need is one that is just as concerned with aristocratic rulership, all-out use of the Earth, and patriarchal gender patterns as it is with unboxing fundamentalist Christianity. We need to see that all nine of these transformations are intimately related. Not only U. S. fundamentalists but conservative religious groups throughout the world tend to support all or most of the obsolete social patterns indicated on the left side of the above chart. All nine of these transitions are powered by the same movement of Spirit that moves us to renew Christianity. Furthermore, renewing Christianity supports the positive outcome of the other eight transformations. This is especially true in lands where the Christian heritage is embedded. The gifts of this embedded heritage need to be released. Christian resurgence comes into being to answer this call. I prefer the term "resurgence" to "renewal," for we face something deeper than renewing antiquated institutions. We face dying to old forms and being resurrected to a practice of forms of Christian living that have not existed before.

When we who are Christians focus on Christian resurgence, we are assisting Jewish resurgence, Muslim resurgence, Buddhist resurgence, and all the other aspects of transition number nine. Similarly, all positive religious movements assist us Christians in our creation of a valid and viable Christian resurgence.

Any movement that is validly pursuing any one of these nine master transitions is assisting Christians to do Christian resurgence. And if we who are doing Christian resurgence are doing our job well, we are assisting all nine of these transitions. Furthermore, the manner in which we do Christian resurgence affects every other planetary transformation. Thus, it behooves us who do Christian resurgence to do it well, not only for ourselves but on behalf of all beings.