

On Making Visible What Is Real

In 1943, the tenuous mid-point of America's emersion in the second world war, a book appeared on the shelves of stores all over the country. It was written by the famous Quaker philosopher and preacher, Rufus M. Jones. When it came out, no one knew then what we know now by the almost perfect hindsight of history. All of the news then was practically draped in black crepe and the struggle against evil was horrific with "no end in sight" to signal any "mid-point" measurement.

Jones titled his book, *New Eyes for Invisibles*, and in word stacked upon reassuring word, this gentle Quaker giant reminded the anxious of those invincible realities that sustain the spirit and sooth the soul of each of us. Dr. Jones shared the experience of the old son of a former slave here in the south. "During a great star shower, when it looked as though the heavens were crashing down, someone asked the old man if he was scared. 'No I'm not scared,' he said, 'them's only the little ones that are falling. Them seven big ones up there ain't moved an inch.'" The point was made. We must come back to the realities that abide.

Like Rufus Jones sought, we need to be re-convinced now, in these days running at light-speed, that each of us should put our world on pause and reconsider those realities around us that abide.

And one fundamental way to strengthen our inner being is to consider those background verities that are daily shoved to the shadows by the glare of a strobe spotlight of "news" projecting dysfunction and chaos. The merely flashy word isn't always that which is the lasting word. It rarely is. In such a theater, it is hard for us to see what is really real. So what is real?

What is real is the fact that for every person who wants to hurt others, there are tens of thousands of us who want to help others. That is reality. It has always been reality. The number of human beings upon this earth who care for other human beings, who care for family and friends and even strangers, so vastly outnumber the true sociopaths that you and I would be astonished to see the statistics.

Just think about it. It makes sense. If it the opposite was true. If those who wanted to hurt others, who felt no sense of inner pain at the pain of another, if they were the majority, humanity could not exist. A single cave would have been our tomb. But to the contrary, we have flourished and grown and built and developed and covered the earth. Of course there is evidence that human malevolence is omnipresent. But it is not the ruling majority. It will always be a tiny minority party. People who want to help others overwhelmingly outnumber the few who want to hurt others. And those few are the pathetically sick.

If this is true about people. And it must be. Then why do we continue to ride the seesaw of a history that rocks up and down between grow and decay, grow and decay. Why cannot the majority party of caring people seize the day and forever grow communities that go from strength to strength in our ability to help each other.

I believe that it is because we have failed to exercise a primary method of helping one another. We simply cannot "see." We can't see who is on the caring side and

therefore we don't know what team practically anyone is on. And that is why we must make visible that which is real.

What is real in every city in the world is simply this: the people that want to help others are everywhere around us in wonderfully staggering numbers! So we need to make what is real... visible. If we can "see" then we can connect. And if we connect then we can commit to common life together. It is then that we will break the bonds that have restrained our true progress here on planet earth.

So what must we do to become visible to each other? Here in one community, Shreveport and Bossier City, over forty thousand folks, rich and poor, male and female, young and old, black and white and brown, have become visible to each other as those who want to help others and not hurt others. We call this visible reality, "The We Care Team." Each person has walked out of the shadows into the light on this stage by letting their caring become visible. We have signed a "I Care" card and told one thing we are doing to help another. We have received a "We Care" lapel pin, and a bumper sticker for our care, to show other like minded, we are here. It reassures us to see the majority.

And now we are engaged in "Operation Visibility," by giving all of the forty thousand a simple yard sign that reads, "WE CARE." Imagine driving down every street in every neighborhood in our community and "seeing" what was invisible and yet real all the time. It will give us new eyes for the invisibles when we make visible that which is real. How powerful to know that the biggest gang in town also cares the most. So come and join with us! God bless you all.