

Spirituality & Community

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www.spiritualityandcommunity.com

New Serial: *Jarvis the Duck*



The Sermon on the Mount The Doctrine of Jesus

The Compass Rose
by John

Poetry Issue

The Truth of the World
Uma Khemani

Drunk with Wonder
Steve Ryals

Butterflies
Kurt Venables

Contents

Who We Are	3
The Sermon on the Mount	5
The Doctrine of Jesus Matthew (King James Version)	
Jarvis the Duck	10
Cloud Delight- First Installment of this New Serial Kurt Venables	
Poetry Issue	
<i>The Compass Rose</i> by John	13
<i>Drunk with Wonder</i> Steve Ryals	18
<i>The Truth of the World</i> Uma Khemani	19
<i>Butterflies</i> Kurt Venables	20

Who We Are

www.spiritualityandcommunity.com

Welcome! Seeking spiritual fulfillment? True happiness and mental wellness? Well, that's what we're all about. Spirituality & Community is a magazine, web site, and online community for those seeking answers to life's deepest questions. ***We are dedicated to promoting spirituality, true happiness, mental wellness, and appreciation for a diversity of spiritual beliefs.***

A New Age of Light

Our focus is spirituality, which we view as an inner search for happiness and fulfillment. We are concerned with what lies within the heart. ***We believe that within everyone lies a pure love that we call the Light or the Lord within. We believe that one must open one's heart to the Light to attain spiritual fulfillment and that only this brings true happiness and mental wellness.*** The Light is the essence of humanity. ***Ultimately, we find our way by casting our gaze inward.*** We will search this inner world over until we find our home:

***We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.
T.S. Eliot, Little Gidding***

We believe that mankind is entering a new age, an Age of Light. We see a growing spiritual crisis in the world today. Our culture has brought us unprecedented material well being, but we seem further away than ever from true spiritual wholeness. We also perceive an increase in mental health issues in our society and believe this to be linked to spiritual detachment. Many wander endlessly in search of the material gratification that will bring them happiness. Many have lost faith in religions and traditions. Others sincerely believe in traditional religions but remain unfulfilled spiritually and unhappy. Unfortunately, too many are so close-minded they refuse to ask what is missing from their lives. Yet, many hunger for spiritual wholeness and are searching for answers. ***We believe that we are entering a new age of enlightenment in which genuine spiritual progress will be made and that spiritual development depends upon a genuine appreciation for a diversity of spiritual beliefs.*** An appreciation for diversity of belief provides us with a fresh view of the beliefs of others, allows us to take from each set of beliefs that which rings true, and enables us to synthesize a personal spirituality that makes sense for each of us. When we view the beliefs of others with our hearts, we see truth shine through. We look with the highest regard to traditional beliefs and religions for guidance, and we also look forward. ***We believe that the past is not the end but the beginning.***



What We Do

Spirituality & Community produces a magazine and encompasses an online community. Both aspects serve as the basis for bringing together those who share our aspirations and beliefs, to meet each other and exchange ideas. We provide many opportunities for exploring spirituality and communicating with others:

- Spirituality & Community magazine*
- Features on the site*
- Online chats* (as interest arises)

The magazine is based on a Reader's Digest® type model. It is comprised primarily of reader submitted material. It is the primary mechanism for a member to both explore spirituality and communicate his or her ideas to others. Features are also posted on the site. When interest is sufficiently high, we will hold chats online. *We sincerely hope that you will find truth within, and we wish you only the best on your own personal journey!*

The Sermon on the Mount

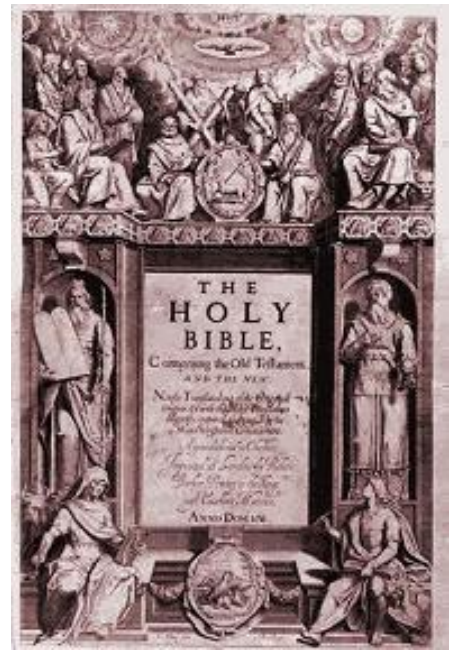
The Doctrine of Jesus

Matthew (King James Version)

The Sermon on the Mount is the first major description of Jesus' doctrine described in the New Testament. This piece, from Matthew 5 – 7, outlines Jesus doctrine of love, humility, faith in God, and pursuit of spiritual treasures rather than earthly ones.

Chapter 5

- ¹ And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:
- ² And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,
- ³ Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- ⁴ Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
- ⁵ Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
- ⁶ Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
- ⁷ Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
- ⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
- ⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.
- ¹⁰ Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- ¹¹ Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.
- ¹² Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.
- ¹³ Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.
- ¹⁴ Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.
- ¹⁵ Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.
- ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.
- ¹⁷ Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.
- ¹⁸ For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.
- ¹⁹ Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.
- ²⁰ For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.



²¹ Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

²² But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

²³ Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;

²⁴ Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

²⁵ Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

²⁶ Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

²⁷ Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

²⁸ But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

²⁹ And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

³⁰ And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

³¹ It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

³² But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

³³ Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

³⁴ But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

³⁵ Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.

³⁶ Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.

³⁷ But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

³⁸ Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

³⁹ But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

⁴⁰ And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

⁴¹ And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

⁴² Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

⁴³ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

⁴⁴ But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

⁴⁵ That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

⁴⁶ For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

⁴⁷ And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?

⁴⁸ Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

Chapter 6

¹ Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

² Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

³ But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

⁴ That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.

⁵ And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

⁶ But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

⁷ But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

⁸ Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

⁹ After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

¹⁰ Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread.

¹² And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

¹³ And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

¹⁴ For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

¹⁵ But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

¹⁶ Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

¹⁷ But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

¹⁸ That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

¹⁹ Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

²⁰ But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

²¹ For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

²² The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

²³ But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

²⁴ No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

²⁵ Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

²⁶ Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

²⁷ Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

²⁸ And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

²⁹ And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

³⁰ Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

³¹ Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

³² (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

³³ But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

³⁴ Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Chapter 7

¹ Judge not, that ye be not judged.

² For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

³ And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

⁴ Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

⁵ Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

⁶ Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

⁷ Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

⁸ For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

⁹ Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

¹⁰ Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

¹¹ If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

¹² Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

- ¹³ Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:
- ¹⁴ Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.
- ¹⁵ Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.
- ¹⁶ Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?
- ¹⁷ Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.
- ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.
- ¹⁹ Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.
- ²⁰ Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.
- ²¹ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.
- ²² Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?
- ²³ And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.
- ²⁴ Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:
- ²⁵ And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.
- ²⁶ And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:
- ²⁷ And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.
- ²⁸ And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:
- ²⁹ For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Jarvis the Duck

Kurt Venables

Cloud Delight

Jarvis is a young duck that lives on a small pond in The Great Poplar Forest. These are the chronicles of his adventures.

Early one beautiful summer morning, Jarvis was walking in the woods near The Pond. Jarvis is a good sized duck, a little bottom heavy like most ducks. He has soft white feathers, but a few unruly ones sprout from his head like stubborn weeds growing in a well groomed garden. He had just graduated high school that spring and was out on his own now, having moved out of his parents nest. Jarvis was a little preoccupied that morning, thinking about an incident that had happened the previous afternoon among some of the other ducks who also lived at The Pond. He was thinking about how two of the ducks were making fun of a smaller duck, calling him “pip-squeak” and saying he was “only marginally brighter than a common water lily”. He remembered how other ducks nearby were laughing. These two, Malcolm and Trixie, and a few of their friends, liked to talk down to the other ducks. Jarvis felt sorry for the little duck and did not laugh with the others.

Most ducks didn’t venture very far into the forest, but Jarvis was quite distracted and had traveled a fair distance into the woods when he heard a merry bird song coming from a blackberry bush. He peered behind some ferns to see a little blue bird. The bird was a beautiful shade of sky blue and was quite fit looking.

“Good morning,” said Jarvis.



“Hello, how’s it going?” said the little blue bird. “Just having some breakfast.”

“It is a beautiful morning for blackberries,” said Jarvis.

“Please help yourself,” said the bird. “Do you live at The Pond?”

“Yes, do *you* live nearby?” said Jarvis.

“Yes, but there are not many other blue jays in this neck of the woods I’m afraid.”

“I’m Jarvis by the way.”

“I’m Jay.”

Jarvis got along fine with the other ducks at The Pond. He was actually well liked. He was very clever and had a quick sense of humor. He did very well when he was in school, being especially good at Astronomy and Flora. Even the “uppity” ducks on the pond didn’t tease or bother him much. Yet he always felt that he didn’t quite fit in. So he was happy to find a little friend that seemed to be a bit alone as well. Jarvis paused and looking up at the sky said, “The clouds are beautiful today.”

“Yes, the sky is gorgeous. Good flying weather,” said Jay.

They marveled for some time as several clouds passed by. “I’ve always wondered how they stay up,” said Jarvis, now both of them lying on their backs looking up at the sky.

“Do you mean the clouds?”

“Yes, well, everything else on earth falls down, except us birds and some insects, and even we and the bugs do after a while, if we don’t flap.”

“But the sun and the moon don’t fall,” said Jay.

“Yes, and the stars; that *is* a mystery as well. But they at least seem somehow to be part of the sky. Clouds seem to be part of the earth. You can touch them. Yet they do not fall.”

“I’ve never thought about it, but it does seem odd now that you mention it,” said Jay.

They marveled at the clouds for some time more. “They do come in an almost impudent variety,” said Jarvis.

“You mean ‘an infinite variety’?” asked Jay.

Jarvis just looked at Jay with a wide smile. He wasn’t sure if Jay quite followed his unique sense of humor.

“Sanctuary much for that one,” said Jay.

“I see that you fully expectorate my levity,” said Jarvis.

“Profusely,” said Jay. They both laughed.

They marveled as the clouds passed. After a while, Jarvis said, “I guess I don’t like mysteries. I like to understand things.”

“I often find it easier to understand someone if I put myself in the other’s place,” said Jay. “Perhaps we should try to imagine that we’re clouds to try to understand them.”

“Yes, that’s worth a try,” said Jarvis, and they both closed their eyes and tried to imagine they were clouds. Jarvis was concentrating very hard on what it would be like. They imagined for some time. After a while, Jarvis heard a soft, rhythmic whistle coming from Jay. He was breathing in and out deeply and slowly, with a whistle when he exhaled. Jarvis just continued to stare at the clouds; then he began to think about the incident that happened the prior afternoon.

“Wha ...? Sorry, I guess I find being a cloud very ... relaxing,” said Jay as he jerked awake.

“Yes, it is, though I was actually putting myself in the place of a small duck I know,” said Jarvis.

“A small duck?”

“Yes, some of the other ducks were making fun of him, calling him ‘pip-squeak’. I was putting myself in his place, and it didn’t feel very good. I just don’t think that’s right,” said Jarvis.

“Me neither,” said Jay. “First, talking down to others is so childish. Secondly, those who are a little different are no less worthy of respect and love. Besides, smaller birds are usually excellent flyers.”

“You know, Jay,” said Jarvis, “even though you and I are different, we’re actually more the same than the other ducks and I.”

“Really.”

“Yes, I think so,” said Jarvis, and after some brief discussion of aerial acrobatics, Jarvis said that he had to go back to The Pond for some lunch and that he would come back to see Jay again some time. As he was leaving, Jarvis spied a little patch of

yellow-green flowers growing under a tree.
“Cucumber root.”

“Excuse me,” said Jay.

“The root of this flower tastes like a cucumber.” Jarvis and Jay both pulled up a flower and tasted its root.

“Yes, *exactly* like a cucumber,” said Jay, “but I don’t like cucumbers.”

The Compass Rose

(Excerpt)

by John

YUDHISHTARA

Such as they are,
these poems were written
only because of you.
They do not exist
outside this place.
Without you,
they disappear
like smoke
in the wind.

ANY WAY

I want the truth
straight through
and all around:
like white on rice,
like a house
afire.
I want the truth
in any way,
shape,
or form:
hard as a
diamond,
soft as
a mother's touch.
I want the truth
clear as a bell,
right as rain,
sweet as a lover
calling
my name.

BELOVED

Nothing is real.
The rolling hills,
the trees shimmering
in the breeze,
the bright blue
dome of the sky,
the houses shining
in the sunlight,
the people walking by,
are just a backdrop
for your incandescent
Love.
Peace.

YUDHISHTARA

The creation
of the compass
was god-sent to all sailors,
giving direction to the unknown,
and they celebrated its power
and saving grace
with the insignia
of the rose.

I'M NOT GOING TO SAY

When people ask me,
why do your eyes
look like that?
I'm not going to say,
I'm falling in love
with God.
I'm going to say,
"I have an allergy.
There must be
something blooming."

ALL THE SEASONS

This life
is like the weather,
and sometimes all the seasons
seem to pass
in a single day;
the coldness of winter
and its pain,
the joy of spring
and its promise,
the lazy warmth of summer,
the sweet melancholy
of fall.
And sometimes all the seasons
seem to jumble up
and pass in almost
a single moment:
spring is frozen
in its tracks by the cold;
a hot summer storm
melts a passage
through the ice;
and among
a litter of dead leaves—
bright, green shoots
magically appear.

THE HIDDEN ONES

It is quite amazing
but I swear it's true,
that person walking
next to you
could be
a fountain
of love.
The woman who
cleans your house?
It could very well be
the Beloved Herself
on her knees
washing
your floor.
And the man who
leans out his window
and says "hello"

for no reason at all,
could care more
about you
than you can
possibly imagine.

OUR OWN HEARTS

It's so sad
how men will
(myself included)
baby and treasure a car.
The best oil
every three thousand miles
like some sacred rite;
fussing over
the odd engine sound
as if the car
were sick child
in need of a doctor.
And how women will
tend a garden,
adoring every little shoot,
and exclaiming
over every bloom,
while our own hearts
are neglected,
seizing up for want of love,
dying on the vine
from the simple
lack of attention.

CELEBRATING HERSELF

What exactly
is the purpose
of a rose?
None whatsoever,
except the Beloved
celebrating Herself
through our eyes.
She is so
wonderfully vain.

LOVE

The love
I aspire to
crosses rifts
and separations.
It does not hold back.
It flies over canyons
and rivers
like a flight
of sunlit doves.

OUTSIDE MY WINDOW

There is
a beautiful tree
right outside
my window,
and if I turn
and look at just
the right angle,
I can see
the morning sun,
bright as fire,
shining through
the dense,
green leaves.

I COULD TELL YOU

Where do knowledge
and love meet?
I could tell you
his name
but you won't
find him there.
He passed that point
a long time ago
and is sitting now,
waiting for you,
in the center
of your heart.

For more see: www.iuniverse.com (search Bookstore for Compass Rose)

Drunk with Wonder

Steve Ryals

**Drunk with wonder
I gaze at the wild,
Lustrous pearl
Of my personality
Shining in the center
Of the One Heart
Like a candle flame
In the heart of the sun
And know my Source
My Destination -
When I let go of knowing
I become the sun
Assume the crown
Of creation
And am Home –**

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From- Drunk with Wonder: Awakening to the God Within
For more, see: www.drunkwithwonder.com

The Truth of the World

Uma Khemani

**The light of time
Ignited
Once again
Transmigration.
Into a world of time and space
Hither,thither,
Wandering,
Seeking happiness.
Until
Once again,
Engulfed by time,
Unto death**

© 2006 Uma Khemani

Butterflies

Kurt Venables

**Beauty is, but beauty hides
A butterfly lies inside
An incarnate rainbow, as slight as light
Butterflies were made for flight**

**A wondrous vision to behold
A deeper truth cannot be told
Unfold your wings, now find the sky
For butterflies were meant to fly**

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