

OK, it is time to resolve to step away from our consumer stupor and save the Earth. Think of this as the last decade to wake up and stop destroying our planet and our children's future. First stop and listen to the inner hubbub of familiar rationalizations for business as usual, our inalienable human rights, and our treasured freedom to exploit everything for profit.

Then take a deep breath, put on a coat and step outside into the splendor of the natural world that embraces and cherishes us. Listen and look around, and up and down, as if you were an indigenous person whose ancestors had been living on this land for a thousand years. Oral tradition has taught you about every plant and creature. As you listen you can see into everything in the entire living world of the creation. You are simply part of the web of the living biosphere. You know where your food comes from, you know the call sounds of danger, and you are both alert and at peace.

Stay as long as you can, and resolve to return to this living world every day. Promise to teach your children the knowledge they need to face the future. But before you step back into the warmth and comfort of your home, hold close to your heart the fact that our society intends to destroy this interconnected living world, rather than create a sustainable future. Is this your choice also, or will you join with friends and colleagues and confront the powerful interests, corporations and politicians?

Creating a viable future will not be easy, as the shift we need is a threat to so many deeply held beliefs. Many came from a century of cheap energy from burning the fossil fuels, which has driven rapid climate change and the extinction of species. In fact all the waste streams from nearly eight billion people must be brought under careful management.

But there are deeper issues of our concepts of human power and authority that are more than a thousand years old. You may have glimpsed this when you stepped outside into the mindset of the indigenous people of your land, where the concept of human power over nature did not exist. In our world, the rise of science and the industrial revolution has given humanity immense knowledge and power on the mechanistic level, but a rather limited grasp of the web of life. I know this well as I trained as a scientist. But without direction from Earth-centered moral values, the unguided use of our science and technology has led to the disaster of climate change. To our horror, we find the Earth system is clearly out of human control. All we can do, unless we choose to be utterly stupid, is slam on the brakes.

Every year I give many talks to schools, citizen and business groups and churches. For many years I half understood why science and religion had been kept apart for centuries. I could see this was comfortable for institutional power. Scientists were also taught not to challenge political authority, but I challenged this forty years ago. However the clash between the scientific and indigenous worldviews raised deeper issues. I was troubled for years why the Christian churches collaborated with the colonial powers to crush indigenous people on a global scale. Yes, indigenous traditions were a threat to church authority and doctrine. Yet the founder of Christianity was clearly deeply connected to the natural world. So being a scientist, I started looking for the truth. What I found was revolutionary to me, but obvious in retrospect.

The Aramaic name of Jesus was Yeshua. He spoke Aramaic, an indigenous language where every story has several levels of meaning (*The Hidden Gospel* by Douglas-Klotz). Yeshua's world was the indigenous world, and one of his core teachings was "Come with me into my world, the world of the Creator, where

you will see the truth of the living web of the Creation; and that truth will set you free to act on behalf of the Creator". This truth is one more key to the deep global issues we face, hiding in plain sight. How did Christianity lose its way?

When the Roman emperor, Constantine, converted to Christianity**, he realized this religion could benefit the imperial Roman Empire. He summoned the bishops to the Council of Nicea in 325 AD, and offered a deal. Define Christianity in clear doctrinal form, and choose the Greek gospels with their dualism and understanding of human power; and suppress the holistic and mystical Aramaic gospels. So Christianity became an institutional religion with a dualistic framework that later influenced both the rise of science and the separation of science and religion; but it lost its indigenous roots. Sadly, many Aramaic speaking Jewish and Assyrian Christians, who understood what Yeshua had actually taught, became the heretics who perished over the next century or two.

To save the Earth, we now face the beautiful but challenging task of reconciling our scientific worldview with the indigenous understanding of Jesus. So step outside into the real natural world for a second time: it is closer than you think.

*** It is believed his wife became a convert*