Spirituality
Soul Seeing



(Unsplash/Yewon Ahn)

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When I was a counselor at Angel Guardian Orphanage in the summer of 1960, I loved telling bedtime stories to the kids in their dorms. I'd just begin, and the story would tell itself. Their favorite was the tale of "Christopher Holiday, the Tattooed Boy."

Christopher lived with his mother in a cottage with a bountiful garden. She would hold him close and whisper: "Always remember, you are good, you are beautiful, you are One." To be honest, I didn't know why I said "One," or even what it meant.

One day, a strange voice lured Christopher into the forest. He got lost, fell asleep and awoke in a dark room. Looking into a broken mirror, he screamed. A face stared back — a face with bat's ears, clown's tears and a tiny clown's frown. While he slept, the voice had tattooed his face. Christopher thought: "I am no longer good, no longer beautiful, no longer One."

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Ashamed, he ran away. Through brambles and streams, he wandered until he reached a traveling circus in a city called Nowhere. Hungry and weary, he took a job on the sawdust stage. The barker cried: "See Golda, the three-headed princess! Herculo, the strongest man! Vera, the bearded lady! But most of all — Christopher Holiday, the Tattooed Boy, dancing for you!"

Christopher danced in a clown's suit, twirling a red-and-white umbrella. Children laughed, teenagers jeered, men mocked, women turned away. No one saw the single tear on his cheek. Still, he danced.

One night, he fled again. "Help me," he sobbed. "Someone, help me, please!"

At that moment he heard carousel chimes. The merry-go-round glowed in the moonlight, its horses frozen mid-ride. On the other side sat a boy — smiling, radiant, with bat's ears and clown's tears, just like Christopher!

"My mother loves every child as if each were her only one," the boy said. "And she loves all children as if they were One. She says: 'You are good, you are beautiful, you are One.' "

"That's what my mother said to me!" Christopher cried.

The boy leaned close. "Look into my eyes. You'll see who I am — and who you are."

Christopher gazed and saw the perfect image of himself smiling back. At that moment, he remembered. His mother's hand caressed his cheek. Love returned.

> Always remember, you are good, you are beautiful, you are One.
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That night, Christopher sat on a carousel horse and listened to the new boy glowing within him. The boy he always was. He knew love again — the way it used to be, the way it always is.

This happened long ago. But it happens now, too. Yesterday, today, forever.

Take a trip to Nowhere. There your mother holds you, whispering: "You are good, you are beautiful, you are One!"

And at the edge of Nowhere, in the Circus of the Universe, Christopher Holiday dances still — older, yet the same — dancing under the sun for everyone. He will dance for you, love you whether you let him or not. And when you look into his eyes, you will see yourself. You will love yourself. And you will hear your mother sing: "You are good, you are beautiful, you are One."

Well, dear reader, that was a tale told 65 years ago, and told again to my own children. Did I mention that Vickie and I named our firstborn Christopher?

Christmas is the feast of Oneness. The child in the manger, the boy on the carousel, is the Christ child — the reminder that we too are born of love, inseparable from our mother and from one another. Like sunbeams from the sun, we shine together, never apart.

Let's say it together: "I am good, I am beautiful, I am One."