

OST Fall Lecture Series
Fall 2023
October 4, 11, 18
Ron Rolheiser

Living in the Light and the Truth – Discipleship 101 and the Honors Program

Overall Outline ...

1. October 4th – **A Biblical Perspective** – On Living in the Light and the Truth
 - *Living in the light as the refusal to lie and as metanoia*
 2. October 11th – **An Anthropological/Theological Perspective** – On Living in the Light and the Truth
 - *Living in the light and the truth as living out the divine energies inside us*
 3. October 18th – **A Practical Perspective** – On Living in the Light and the Truth
 - *Some Commandments for the Long Haul for living “in sincerity”*
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October 18th – A Practical Perspective on Living in the Light and the Truth – *Some Commandments for the Long Haul for Living in Sincerity*

- I. **Our struggle for Sincerity**
 - The etymology of “sincerity”
 - *Sine* (without) *Cera* (wax)
 - *Sin* (Not mixed, clean) *Ceres* (growth)
 - Our struggle to be sincere – “*whatever is received is received according to the mode of the receiver*”
 - Our perception and thought is colored by
 - group think
 - ideology
 - wound and trauma
 - bias – historical and other
 - countless other factors
 - Sincerity as touching the transcendental properties of God stamped inside us
 - *Oneness*
 - *Truth*
 - *Goodness*
 - *Beauty*
 - Sincerity as touching and acting out of our “mystical center”

- What is our mystical center?
- Discernment vis-à-vis *What do I have to do?*

II. Some Commandments for the Long Haul for Living in Sincerity

*I've got no banter,
I'm all judgement and edges, an edgy white lady
Wondering what to do, what to do next
As in Jesus is coming, look busy. (Elizabeth Poreba)*

1. Struggle to name the moment with sincerity

- Not everything can be fixed or cured but it should be named properly (Richard Rohr)
- A symptom suffers most when it doesn't know where it belongs. (James Hillman)
- Read the signs of the times. (Jesus)

2. Commit to the truth for its own sake

- Save your own sanity
- Never mess with your own sanity
- Never compromise yourself

3. Sin bravely – admit mistakes and weaknesses

4. Have a confessor

- Without a confessor we will inevitable lose honesty
- We can learn from 12-step programs

5. Consent to being a “lonely prophet”

- Accept that, like Jesus dying alone, we sometimes need to accept being “unanimity-minus-one”
- Deep loneliness can also be deep intimacy

6. Have an “unlisted” number

- Be non-ideological
- Don't slide down either side of the roof
- Don't go to the left or to the right – go deeper!

7. Hold your moral ground

- Love and be gracious, even as you hold your own moral ground
- And consent to live in that tension and to help carry that tension for others

8. Find support, knowing that holding truth, like compassion, is collective

- *“What we dream alone remains a dream, what we dream with others can become a reality.”* Edward Schillebeeckx
- Work with others to create islands of sanity in the sea of chaos
- But don't “find a tribe” – that is dangerous

9. Listen to a variety of important voices

- The voice of our own conscience
- The voice of scripture
- The voice of the poor
- The voice of artists
- The voice of theologians, philosophers, social critics, novelists
- The voice of your church leaders
- The voice of the young, the enthusiasts, and those in fervor
- The voices of the melancholy and depressed
- The voices of humor

10. Take a regular inventory - ten Symptoms to watch for as warning signs of lack of health

- Constant low-grade depression – *“my world has grown colourless”*
 - Frequent anger or rage - *“I want to hit somebody!”*
 - Addictions of any kind - *“There’s certain things I can’t control”*
 - Deep (soul-felt) lack of enthusiasm – *“What’s enjoyment!”*
 - A helpless sense of being caught on a treadmill – *“I can’t get a grip on my life!”*
 - The sense that my family or community are moving away from me – *“Why doesn’t anyone ever see it my way!”*
 - Lack of gratitude – *“Life isn’t fair!”*
 - The tendency to either canonize or demonize everyone – *“Mostly I’m living with idiots, though I know some real saints!”*
 - Self-hatred in not being ever able to feel that you are good enough – *“I can’t forgive myself for this!”*
 - Frequent jealousy of others and an inability to praise others – *“Nobody seems to be all that interested in my life!”*
 - Over-seriousness – *“There’s nothing funny about life!”*
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