

CONFORMED TO CHRIST

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Discoveries in the maturing Christ-centered life

Mary Sharon Moore

AWAKENING VOCATIONS

Eugene, Oregon

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marysharonmoore.com

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None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live,
we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord;
so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.
(Romans 14:7-8)

He indeed died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for him who for their
sake died and was raised.
(2 Corinthians 5:15)

I have been crucified with Christ; yet I live,
no longer I, but Christ lives in me.
(Galatians 2:20)

INTRODUCTION

Deep into my sixties I discover something about myself: I am on a mission. And I can describe my mission in one sentence.

My mission is to *remain* in Christ and to *reveal* him everywhere.

In fact, at this point in my life I can say that my mission is to spend my life, to throw my life away, for the sake of remaining in Christ, for the sake of revealing the reign of God.

I did not choose this mission. This mission chose me. And it continues to choose me, sending me to where I had not thought to go.

Perhaps you know this experience of “being chosen.”

My mission, I discover, is to be conformed to Christ, as Saint Paul urges at every turn. So conformed to Christ that, eventually, you will not really be sure where I leave off and Christ begins.

Ultimately, I discover, my work is to disappear in Christ. Not to become invisible or to make myself small. But to be fully present to the other while holding space for the radiant power that flows from Jesus’ resurrection for the good of this other, for the good of others, in this particular time.

I have learned that if I count the hours of sleep I sacrifice to this mission, or the comforts of home I forego in its cause, I am not fit for the mission entrusted to me.

If I consider the uncertainties in my assignments, or look back longingly at the financial security I have declined, I am not fit for the mission entrusted to me.

I am discovering what every baptized man and woman must discover at some point, and in a way that thoroughly rearranges all logical sense of purpose: I live, as Saint Paul writes, no longer for myself but for him who died and was raised from the dead.

And I discover, to my astonishment, that I cannot walk away from this mission.

Down to the marrow of my bones I now understand that whether I live or die, whether I am known or obscure, successful or a perpetual B+ student, *I am the Lord’s*.

I cannot really express the joy I feel each time I touch the truth of this discovery.

Nor can I adequately describe this necessary work of the maturing Christian, to live “hidden with Christ in God.” I experience not a withdrawal but a deep engagement, an urgency of presence to the other, so that the Lord Jesus may be free to encounter each one, as he desires, through me.

I pray that I will always remain true to this missional joy. And I pray that this missional joy may be yours, also.

Our common mission, in the end, is to be so conformed to Christ that there will be only one heartbeat, the heartbeat of the Father; only one longing, the longing of the Son; and only one breath, who is the Holy Spirit.

Mary Sharon Moore
Eugene, Oregon
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