

## The Three Pages of Life

### Introduction:

From the very beginning of The Big Bang, the universe has contained three exquisite gifts: change, diversity, and equality. There are a significant number of threes all around us in so many manifestations within the universe and there are some very interesting studies about this frequency. Keep in mind that when we refer to ourselves as people we speak of three significant aspects of our humanity: body, mind and spirit.

Here is one article noting the use of the number three and how many aspects of life in general seem to come in groups of three: "Why Three?" [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1010658/?page=1>]

- In a simple parlor game participants are asked to select a number from one to ten and write it on a piece of paper. About 50 percent of people select the number three. Why?
- The Kabbalah, an ancient Hebrew religious book that is obsessed with numerology, cites many important groups of three - Except for one (deity), no number is more important than three except perhaps for seven.
- In Christianity there is the importance of the Holy Trinity.
- Medicine, too, has its "holy trinities" as many lab tests are commonly ordered times three. To observe evolutionary changes more than three days are needed. Administration orders are renewed every 72 hours - three days - prognostic numbers like, "Take this medicine for three days and call back"; or, "Wait three days and then we'll consider a different approach."
- The medical fascination with three may be built out of solid clinical experience or scientific reason.

It is not strange or unique that the totality of our lives can be divided into 3 Pages, or segments that may help us understand how we grow and develop from birth until our passing from this earth. Each phase is vital with its own special aspects in enabling us to become all that we are meant to be as individual persons. This diversity of personal development may help us identify our own independence and may also demonstrate a need for interdependence with others to fully satisfy our being in community with others. Each Page will help prepare our bodies, minds, and spirits to evolve properly and be ready for the next Page bringing us to a wholistic completeness from birth to death. By being consciously aware and cooperative with each Page we can participate and enhance our ability for living well.

NOTE: the consistent references to "three" throughout the paper.

### **PAGE 1:** (Conception, Birth, Independence)

Conception: This is where the miracle of the continuation of life is perpetuated; it begins when two sources of existing life come together and share egg, sperm and DNA to extend and maintain human life on earth. Then the three developing trimester process of three months each begins the creation and preparation of another child. The "normal" gestation period is about 40 weeks, but may range from 37 to 42 weeks and still be considered a normal pregnancy. This intricate and magical process is still not completely understood and every gestation is unique and can have problems causing an abortion. This process of evolution uses the DNA from

the combined egg and sperm from two existing human lives and begins the formation of another human baby to enter the world.

Some people have an idea that science disenchants the world, it removes the magic, it flattens everything out. Nothing could be further from the truth. If anything, science re-enchants the world as it deepens the mystery around us. This truth exists all the way down to the quantum world of subatomic particles and all the way up to the grand leap from nothing into something that started off the entire cosmos. ... When a parent witnesses the birth of a child they are often overcome with the sense of the "miraculous" as they witness a fully formed individual emerge from the birth canal. How did this happen? In the familiar words of the psalmist:

For you created my inmost being;  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made. (Psalm 139:14)

[\[http://randalrauser.com/2013/01/mystery-magic-divinity-the-miracle-of-human-gestation/\]](http://randalrauser.com/2013/01/mystery-magic-divinity-the-miracle-of-human-gestation/)

### Birth:

Birth is the occasion when a new person is ready to enter the world and the start of life as a physically separate being. Sometimes, in the period of gestation, more than one individual baby may be ready to come forth during the birthing period. The birth is the announcement that this new person comes from the lives of two human sources, and the beginning of this child's life entering the world to grow and develop with compassion, love, and grace. This is the beginning of an interdependent relationship with the universe, a Covenant, "an agreement that brings about a relationship of commitment between God and people," and with the caregivers for the new child sharing God's compassion, love, and grace.

The second stage moves each child forward from basic care for one of education and guidance into social information, knowledge and understanding for integration into the engagement with family, friends, and community. This is a time when they move from a period of innocence to becoming aware of their own accountability and responsibilities for being a part of humanity. Toward the end of this period they begin to grow in assuming more and more responsibility in their development of character so as to move into their stage of independence.

### Independence:

Independence is probably the most difficult stage of transition for every child in becoming a responsible adult. The teen age years are notable with separation anxiety for both the teen and the parents. Having spent more than a dozen years living within an environment of support and adherence to parental customs and rules it becomes a time of decision and separation. What will the teen keep and utilize for their own lifestyle and how much may become different as they form their own personhood. From ages 12 through 18 and beyond, when they approach the legal age of becoming an adult, there are a plethora of ideas, customs and decisions to be made.

"During adolescence, teens often struggle with their body changes, mood swings and social issues. Preventative healthcare habits during ages 12 to 18, such as skin care, hygiene and healthy body size, can last a lifetime. Learn how to navigate the adolescent years, including how to foster healthy conversations with your adolescent about peer pressure, body self-image, rape and alcohol/drug abuse."

[<http://my.clevelandclinic.org/childrens-hospital/health-info/ages-stages/adolescence>]

Fortunately there are many resources available, like the Cleveland Clinic cited above, as well as within local physical, medical and psychological resources, both civic and religious, for parents and teens to receive support for proficient growth and development during this often stressful time.

This is the period that ends the first Page of one's development from the magic and mystery of conception, the excitement and process and growing after birth, and the continuing family environment until the time for "leaving home" closes this Page.

## **PAGE 2: (Who Am I - What is my Calling - Life of Service)**

### Becoming whom I am meant to be:

It is in this central and middle period of our lives that we experience the activities of the core principles of our universe - change, diversity, and equality - every day. It is in "Page 2" of our lives that we hopefully discover why we are here, how we need to prepare for our role(s), and learn how to be flexible throughout the whole of this period. "Page 2" generally begins in our 20's and continues until our 70's; from the time we move away from our parents until we enter our retirement years in approximately 50 years. It is when we become independent and prepare for our interdependence as citizens of the world and the core principle of change forces and allows it to happen.

Thanks to the core principle of diversity we are given an immeasurable opportunity for choice! The makeup of our universe provides for uniqueness, "Being the only one of its kind: Characteristic only of a particular category or entity: Remarkable; extraordinary." According to National Geographic News entitled, "No Two Snowflakes the Same" Likely True, Research Reveals - [[http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2007/02/070213-snowflake\\_2.html](http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2007/02/070213-snowflake_2.html)]

In another question about Identical Twins: "Identical Twins Not Really Identical?"

Identical twins have almost the exact same sequence of A's, T's, G's and C's in their DNA, but usually there are a few differences. ... Every time a cell divides, it has to copy its DNA. Our cells do a very good job when they copy our DNA, but sometimes they make a mistake, called a mutation. So each twin will have a few mistakes in his DNA that are unique to him.

All of us are walking around with mutations in some of our cells, and for the most part, they don't do much. But, if we have mutations in our sperm or egg cells, those can get passed on to our children.

Because of this identical twins will have a few DNA differences even though they look the same. And some of those differences will get passed on to their children.

[<http://genetics.thetech.org/ask-a-geneticist/identical-twin-paternity-test>]

When we look at the core principle of Equality we see how each core value is essential to the whole. Equal is defined as, "Having the same quantity, measure, or value as another." Within our universe change nor diversity in any way effects nor affects the quantity, measure or value of another because all changes and diversities are of equal importance to the total composition of the universe.

So it may be said of our human makeup of Body, Mind and Spirit. Equal attention should be paid to each part since we would not be fully human without all three. According to the scriptures we are a composition from the elements ("dust") of the universe into which God breathed the animation of our being:

Genesis 1:27, "So God created humans in his image. In the image of God they were created."

Genesis 2:7, "Then the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the earth and blew the breath of life into his nostrils and man became a living being."

BODY: 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 (GW), "Don't you know that your body is a temple that belongs to the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit, whom you received from God, lives in you. You don't belong to yourselves. You were bought for a price. So bring glory to God in the way you use your body."

MIND: Romans 12:2 (GW), "Don't become like the people of this world. Instead, change the way you think. Then you will always be able to determine what God really wants—what is good, pleasing, and perfect."

SPIRIT: Galatians 5:16 (GW), "Let me explain further. Live your life as your spiritual nature directs you. Then you will never follow through on what your corrupt nature wants."

As living human beings we have the opportunity and obligation, having been born into this world and raised to become independent and become interdependent with other adults bringing leadership, stability and shape in caring for our world. In almost all of the religions that have creation stories, this theme is a strong suggestion as to our importance as human beings. At the beginning of "Page 2" in our life sequence of interdependence, we begin a process of focus on body, mind, and spirit to determine our unique place, along with other adults, in defining and fulfilling whom we are meant to be.

Finding and using our gifts of service:

In our world today, unlike many who came before us, we have the advantages of using multiple gifts throughout our lives as cited in this section called "Page 2." Until rather recently this was not always true, especially before I was born in 1938. From the time of the Industrial Revolution until a time in the 19th and 20th centuries, it was more customary to follow in the working tradition of your family. Large and small companies were established in most first world countries, especially here in the industrial areas of the United States. "The Rise of American Industry" noted in the following link shares this variety:

"The Canal Era, Early American Railroads, Inventors and Inventions, The First American Factories, The Emergence of "Women's Sphere," Irish and German Immigration, An Explosion of New Thought, Religious Revival, Experiments with Utopia, Women's Rights, Prison and Asylum Reforms, Hudson River School Artists, Transcendentalism, An American Philosophy, Slavery" and many more as contained in this link: [<http://www.ushistory.org/us/>]

This progressive evolution of lifestyle here in America alone, including many changes that have developed over the last five centuries, are prolific and unique examples of the core principles of the universe: change, diversity, and equality. Each one of us, in our own lifetime, has the privilege to be a part of this on-going development of time, talent and treasure we mention in "Page 2" of life. We have multiple choices in the discovery and use of our particular talents and vocations to share with others. Since many of the older traditional jobs no longer exist, we have the freedom and privilege to become, as the U.S. Army slogan reminds us, "Be all you can be." This freedom of choice however does not always make it easier for us to thoughtfully choose a purpose and what we might be doing in service to ourselves, our families, and others.

Having the right to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness," as clearly noted in the United States Declaration of Independence, let us not waste any opportunity to claim and fulfill our destiny as mature adults! Now, more than ever before, the variety of our "Page 2" experiences are absolutely more obtainable and possible than in any earlier century, especially in America. Without appropriate soul searching identification of who we are meant to be, along with an appropriate education and preparation to fully become what we choose to be, we may have little hope of obtaining the preparation necessary toward fulfilling and completing our "Page 2." As the scriptures encourages us in Philippians 2:13, "continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling;" a fear (total respect for who you are) and trembling" (the anxiety and excitement to complete the job).

Coping with multiple changes throughout our "calling" years:

As the universe continues to expand and flourish, we ourselves also need to continue to expand and flourish if we are to fulfill our "Page 2" experiences to full completion. Remembering the core principles of the universe - change, diversity and equality - we must continue to expect change, diversity and equality within this time (of about 50 years) determining our calling in serving ourselves and others. The major difference today is in the word Expansion - "The rapid activity of becoming larger and more extensive," in the length of our "Page 2"; the speed of change, the amount of diversity, and the accommodations of equality. I am reminded of a portion of two scriptures, 2 Peter 3:18 (GW), "But grow in the good will and knowledge:" ... and 2 Timothy 2:15 (GW) "Do your best to present yourself to God as a tried-and-true worker who isn't ashamed ..." Growing, improving, and doing our best in the length of time throughout our progressive calling(s) is perhaps the main focus of today's progress throughout our "Page 2" days of life.

As we noted regarding our "Page 2" experience, it could be around 50 years of our total life experiences. A lot of things may come and go during this length of time to give everyone many opportunities for change, diversity and equality through the total duration for who we are and how we will serve. Some of us may remember the length of time that our parents worked and served in traditional jobs for large companies and businesses; that was customary. Their jobs were somewhat selected for them as they followed in the tradition of similar

professions for many generations. Before the 20th century, women were mainly destined to be working in the home and caring for the family, while most men had a job outside the home obtaining financial support for their households.

Things began to change for both men and women during the course of the 20th century, especially beginning with WWII and the special need for a large work force to equip the armed forces abroad. During this period the traditional roles of both men and, especially women, began to change and increase to meet the growing needs of country and family. This was the beginning of careers, "A chosen pursuit; a profession or occupation." A job, "A regular activity performed in exchange for payment," remains and is still important but the need for higher education and preparation became necessary for new opportunities. This amplified the importance of finishing high school and the need for moving forward toward colleges and universities due to the increasing specialties in almost every field. This may have also led to the "equality" of the sexes in human relationships within the home and family as well as the interdependence in all areas of living.

These changes have also led to an explosion of goods and services with new inventions and tools of every sort. We have both religion and science to thank in the evolution of this fullness in our world. Religion offers us the three basic core values of imagination, inspiration and revelation, while science offers us the three basic core values of observation, hypothesis and theory. Religion was basic to the beginning of our journey, especially prior to the Common Era. While humans have always been rather observant of the world, even from earliest times, a more formal beginning of observation in science began with Astrology. This formality of observation became more important when tools, like the telescope and microscope, gave us new eyes to see more beyond our world — large and small. By the time of The Enlightenment, around the 16th century, these tools enhanced our physical observations and expanded the prowess of the research and development we now enjoy. Using the core of hypothesis, "A tentative explanation for an observation, phenomenon, or scientific problem that can be tested by further investigation," scientists began to formulate a core of conclusions into Theory, "A proposition that is maintained by argument."

Now, in the 21st century, we are becoming more grateful for our human history as we have learned to combine these six core values of both science and religion together. We continue to gain in growing proficiency by combining and holding them together in the trinity of body, mind, and spirit. This combination enables us to deal more effectively with the universal core values of change, diversity, and equality and to grow in our abilities to care for this world, begin ventures into outer space, experiencing an even new interdependence for life and living. Our lives can now be more sacramental, "an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace," to incorporate the fullness of our call to interdependence and wholeness!

These gifts are how we will be able to prepare for and face the rapidity of change, diversity, and equality as the universe continues. Recognizing and understanding that everything all around us is from that beginning, the Singularity, the Big Bang, continues to provide the essence as we expand continually into a new future! With more people claiming their space over almost the entire world, there is more opportunity for our expansion and renewal into new worlds as well. Today, with the core values of religion and science, we can increase our ability to change more easily, to expand and provide for more diversity in order to bring about the actuality of living out our equality of interdependence enriching our lives. As long as we work together with a Godly Spirit of

compassion, love and grace, sharing modern opportunities for education and preparation, increasing new and creative resources for ease of sharing and working together, we will enjoy a more mature inclusiveness for the pursuit of happiness into a majestic future!

### **PAGE 3:** (Retirement - Slowing Down - Passing into a New Future)

#### Retirement:

The age of retirement changes as human history continues. While there are stories, in our scriptures and early history, of people living for much longer years than now, we must take into account that time can be measured in many different ways. The year differences in older accounts may be explained in various ways.

It isn't only biblical figures who lived to well-seasoned ages of 900 years or more. Ancient texts from many cultures have listed life spans most modern people find simply and literally unbelievable. Some say it's due to misunderstandings in the translation process, or that the numbers have symbolic meaning—but against the many explanations are also counterarguments that leave the historian wondering whether the human lifespan has actually decreased so significantly over thousands of years. For example, one explanation is that the ancient Near East understanding of a year could be different than our concept of a year today. Perhaps a year meant an orbit of the moon (a month) instead of an orbit of the sun (12 months). [<http://www.ancient-origins.net/human-origins/did-ancient-people-really-have-lifespans-longer-200-years-002093>]

What is commonly known as 'average life expectancy' is technically 'life expectancy at birth'. In other words, it is the average number of years that a newborn baby can expect to live in a given society at a given time. But life expectancy at birth is an unhelpful statistic if the goal is to compare the health and longevity of adults. That is because a major determinant of life expectancy at birth is the child mortality rate which, in our ancient past, was extremely high, and this skews the life expectancy rate dramatically downward. [<http://www.ancient-origins.net/news-evolution-human-origins/life-expectancy-myth-and-why-many-ancient-humans-lived-long-077889>]

Perhaps this verse in the book of Psalms is not far from a norm, especially when birth records are documented. Psalm 90:10 (GW), "Each of us lives for 70 years—or even 80 if we are in good health. But the best of them bring trouble and misery. Indeed, they are soon gone, and we fly away." Today there appears to be quite a few who are living to ages over 100, especially when there are birth records available to certify our ages at death. In the USA we still have a retirement age for Social Security of 65 years and, because more are living five or 10 years longer than that today, there is an attempt to lengthen it soon. Regardless, some retire earlier while other retire later than 65.

Retirement, "Withdrawal from one's occupation or position, especially upon reaching a certain age," in many cases remains a personal choice. Mandatory retirement is generally unlawful in the United States, except in certain industries and occupations that are regulated by law, and are often part of the government (such as military service and federal police agencies, the Federal Bureau of Investigation) [The Age Discrimination in

Employment Act of 1967 (29 U.S.C. § 621 to 29 U.S.C. § 634]. The age of retirement varies for individuals, and there are a variety of rules established by many employers, but retirement is probably the best when worked out for the mutual benefit of both sides. Earlier retirement is usually because of physical problems or possibly to facilitate their earned benefits by moving into another field to continue other employment opportunities by choice or advantage. For whatever reason, retirement is certainly a milestone for change in one's progress of life.

### Slowing Down:

As one grows older and much of our life has passed, especially for those who do not notice any ill effects in body, mind or spirit, the process of slowing down can be a concern. Especially after passing the traditional retirement age of 65, the reality of our progression towards the ending of life casts a new phase in our whole being. In this article from the NIA (National Institute of Aging) we are introduced to an awareness of some effects as we begin to slow down:

#### What is aging?

In the broadest sense, aging reflects all the changes that occur over the course of life. You grow. You develop. You reach maturity. To the young, aging is exciting—it leads to later bedtimes and curfews, and more independence. By middle age, another candle seems to fill up the top of the birthday cake. It's hard not to notice some harmless cosmetic changes like gray hair and wrinkles. Middle age also is the time when people begin to notice a fair amount of physical decline. Even the most athletically fit cannot escape these changes. Take marathon runners, for example. An NIA-funded study found that their record times increased with age—aging literally slowed down the runners. ...

Gerontologists look for what distinguishes normal aging from disease, as well as explore why older adults are increasingly vulnerable to disease and disability. They also try to understand why these health threats take a higher toll on older bodies. Since 1958, NIA's Baltimore Longitudinal Study of Aging (BLSA) has been observing and reporting on these kinds of questions. As with any longitudinal study, the BLSA repeatedly evaluates people over time rather than comparing a group of young people to a group of old people, as in a cross-sectional study. Using this approach, BLSA scientists have observed, for example, that people who have no evidence of ear problems or noise-induced hearing loss still lose some of their hearing with age—that's normal. Using brain scans to learn if cognitive changes can be related to structural changes in the brain, BLSA scientists discovered that even people who remain healthy and maintain good brain function late in life lose a significant amount of brain volume during normal aging.

However, some changes that we have long thought of as normal aging can be, in fact, the signs of a potential disease. Take, for example, sudden changes in personality. A common belief is that people become cranky, depressed, and withdrawn as they get older. But an analysis of long-term data from the BLSA showed that an adult's personality generally does not change much after age 30. People who are cheerful and assertive when they are younger will likely be the same when they are age 80. The BLSA

finding suggests that significant changes in personality are not due to normal aging, but instead may be early signs of disease or dementia.

The rate and progression of cellular aging can vary greatly from person to person. But generally, over time, aging affects the cells of every major organ of the body. Changes can start early. Some impact our health and function more seriously than others. ...

Scientists are increasingly successful at detailing these age-related differences because of studies like the BLSA. Yet studies that observe aging do not identify the reasons for age-related changes, and, therefore, can only go so far toward explaining aging. Questions remain at the most basic level about what triggers aging in our tissues and cells, why it occurs, and what are the biological processes underlying these changes.

[<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/publication/aging-under-microscope/what-aging>]

As the universe expands with age, our world has experienced many changes in the 200,000 years of human existence and we, with all of life, share in the universal core values of change, diversity, and equality. It is very important, as humans, to accept and cope with this important aspect of slowing down. We might learn to enjoy who we are by keeping an attitude of dignity with the feeling of gratitude for having been partners in the whole scheme of Relativity -  $E = mc^2$ ; taking our place in the total "Science" of life.

**"Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind." - Albert Einstein**

Passing Into a New Future:

To begin this topic, I share with you this famous idiom:

*"Our new Constitution is now established, and has an appearance that promises permanency; but in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes."* — Benjamin Franklin, 1789.

As we have noted in the words of Albert Einstein and in the idiom of Benjamin Franklin, allow me some closing thoughts from two important aspects of human life. Science is based on - observation, hypothesis, and theory - all of which can be demonstrated with verifiable facts and Religion is based on - imagination, inspiration, and revelation - of which all is based on belief and experience without proof. These two important Human resources are vital for speaking about "passing in a new future! Perhaps we might start from "the beginning" considering several of the following acronyms:

GOD (SINGULARITY)

God Is Love

**LOVE**, [Limitless Offerings Veraciously Expended]

From the beginning of everything we have been blessed with everything we need for life. We have also been told that perfect love casts out fear.

**FEAR**, [False Evidence Appearing Real]

Franklin D. Roosevelt said, "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself!" Without the core values of religion and science and how they work together, we can engage in a lot of stress and confusion in life.

## **LIFE**, [Living Into Future Existence]

Part of the reality of life is to know, understand, and accept the values of life and death which have no end.

## **END**, [Entering New Destiny]

From our conception and birth we have many beginnings and endings. Everything, all of our atoms and cells that make us body, mind, and spirit is recycled, "extract and reuse" and renewed as we grow and advance. Science teaches us that matter can neither be created nor destroyed as noted in the theory of Relativity. We, as it were, are always passing, "brief duration; transitory" into a new future!

Here are three areas of consideration regarding our "passing into a new future."

Transformation: defined as, "A marked change, as in appearance or character, usually for the better"

Human life, as is everything in the universe, experiences transformation in many ways but probably death is the most dramatic for everyone. In life we have the tendency to fear and dislike change. As we age, especially in body, change in appearance is not always considered for the better. There is also a change in character, "The combination of mental characteristics and behavior that distinguishes a person or group," of which many aging persons are proud, especially in mental and behavioral characteristics. In Christian scriptures, when talking about living by **FAITH**, [Finding Authenticity In Today's Happenings] we read this in 2 Corinthians 5:16-18 (GW):

So from now on we don't think of anyone from a human point of view. If we did think of Christ (the anointed one) from a human point of view, we don't anymore. Whoever is a believer in Christ is a new creation. The old way of living has disappeared. A new way of living has come into existence. God has done all this. He has restored our relationship with him (God) through Christ, and has given us this ministry of restoring relationships.

When we are told about **the Resurrection of the Body** in the whole of Chapter 15 of 1 Corinthians we have a summary of these words: 1 Corinthians 15:40-44 (GW):

There are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies. Heavenly bodies don't all have the same splendor, neither do earthly bodies. The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon has another kind of splendor, and the stars have still another kind of splendor. Even one star differs in splendor from another star.

That is how it will be when the dead come back to life. When the body is planted, it decays. When it comes back to life, it cannot decay. When the body is planted, it doesn't have any splendor and is weak. When it comes back to life, it has splendor and is strong. It is planted as a physical body. It comes back to life as a spiritual body. As there is a physical body, so there is also a spiritual body.

Keep in mind that these writings were written when all believed in an "earth-centric" universe - the heavens above, the flat earth beneath, and the underworld under the flat earth. It would be another 1,500 years later that the universe, as we now understand it, would begin to be commonly accepted as the norm.

In science we see examples of change and transformation all the time. [Water (H<sub>2</sub>O), depending on temperature, can be water, ice, or steam but it still is H<sub>2</sub>O.] We tend to focus on what we see and not often about what we think (mind) or feel (spirit). Science brings us the totality of observation, hypothesis, and theory while the religious enables our imagination, inspiration and revelation. Transitions are inclusively essential to our being for all that we are meant to be.

Metamorphosis: (a complete change of physical form or substance)

When each of us began to become a part of life in the world, from conception through our birth, we had little if any part with that. It was not through any decision we made and throughout that whole time of change we were part of the mystery of metamorphosis. Once we were born, we did begin to have some part in our growing changes and development as adults; we had to eat, sleep, crawl and walk, as participants in becoming adults. Even then we never had full control of every aspect of change because we are always partners with the universe and its core values of change, diversity, and equality.

**ALIVE**, [Always Learning Inspired Vitality Engaged]

As part of our religious understanding, from the beginning of the Bible, we became living beings in the first creation story in Genesis 1:26 (GW), "Let us make humans in our image, in our likeness. Let them rule the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the domestic animals all over the earth, and all the animals that crawl on the earth." Then, in the second story of creation, Genesis 2:15 (GW), "Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to farm the land and to take care of it."

**CARE**, [Constantly Appreciate and Respect Everything]

God shared a covenant with Adam and Eve and came in the cool of the evenings to share his compassion, love, and grace. God continued to covenant with all people on earth, with Noah after the flood (Genesis chapter 9), and with Abraham after God called him out of his homeland to bring him to a new land and way of life. Genesis 12:3 (GW), "I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you, I will curse. Through you every family on earth will be blessed." The Covenant, "A binding agreement; a compact" was primarily about **behavior**, extending love, kindness, and blessing God and all people; the action of interdependence that brings power within the construct of prayer with grace.

**POWER**, [People Offering Ways Enabling Renewal]

**PRAYER**, [Perusing Reasonable Alternatives Yet Expecting Resolution]

**GRACE**, [God's Recreational Activity Causing Excellence]

Additional acronyms that encourage good behavior in the light of this progressive revelation of our faith and the expansive and informative reality of science:

**RESPECT**, [Realizing Every Single Person's Existence Causes Togetherness]

**SAFE**, [Sufficiently Aware Factually Efficient]

**SHARE**, [Simply Having And Readily Expending]  
**SMART**, [Showing Maturity Accepting Researchable Truth]  
**TEAM**, [Together Everyone Accomplishes More]  
**WELCOME**, [Willingly Engage Limitless Care Opening More Equality]

Being proud and aware of the beauty of the earth, our island home, we can sense the pride and joy of our knowledge of this progressive revelation within our Faith and our growing understanding of Science. A song we sing to extol this grandeur:

**America, The Beautiful**

*by Katharine Lee Bates – 1913*

O beautiful for spacious skies,  
For amber waves of grain,  
For purple mountain majesties  
Above the fruited plain!  
America! America! God shed His grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea!

Born from Above or Born Again:

We should clearly understand and relax in the comfort of our being when coming to the end of our human life. We have come into this world in a poetic understanding of being "born from above" and we leave this earth in a poetic process of being "born again." Passing away is not a process of destruction but a process of transformation.

John 3:3-7 (GW), "Jesus replied to Nicodemus, "I can guarantee this truth: No one can see God's kingdom without being born from above." Nicodemus asked him, "How can anyone be born when he's an old man? He can't go back inside his mother a second time to be born, can he?" Jesus answered Nicodemus, "I can guarantee this truth: No one can enter God's kingdom without being born of water and the Spirit. Flesh and blood give birth to flesh and blood, but the Spirit gives birth to things that are spiritual. Don't be surprised when I tell you that all of you must be born from above.

Our present understanding of the universe shows us that birth and death are part of the eternal cycle of everything! Relativity makes it perfectly clear that Energy and Matter can neither be created nor destroyed. The energy of the speed of light in a vacuum is the enabling power. The Gospel of John puts it this way, John 3:16-17 (GW), "God loved the world this way: He gave his only Son so that everyone who believes in him will not die but will have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but to save the world." As Father Richard Rohr said it, "Frankly, it all comes down to this: God doesn't love you because you are good. God loves you because God is good!" AMEN!

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