Sarah Kretschmann

**Who do you say that I Am?**

*I am Divine Fullness.*

Our world daily seeks to convince us of our emptiness, clouding visions of abundance with images of scarcity. In a society of consumerism and capitalistic greed, our greatest temptation is the notion that our fullness can come from anything but the grace of God. We seek fullness in things we buy. We seek fullness in the monetary markers of success. We seek fullness in praise and attention from our neighbors. All the while filling landfills, filling pockets of the wealthiest, filling our atmosphere with more and more greenhouse gases.

Our lives, our bodies become playthings of a capitalist empire. Continuously marketed to as the world conditions us to believe in the lie that we live in a world of unattainable perfection not holy fullness. Convinced of our emptiness, we forget our fullness through Christ. Our lives, our bodies; filled and redeemed.

Christ calls and enables us to be radically full. Radically full of hope. Radically full of generosity. Radically emboldened in love. Saying, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear.”[[1]](#endnote-1) Because the weapons of consumerism and apparitions of progress are no match for the grace of God and the fullness of Christ.

Filled with the Holy Spirit, may we be an assembly of called people tasked with the work of equipping one another for the work of liberation from the temptation to believe we are anything but full and provided for through Jesus Christ.[[2]](#endnote-2)

*I am The Wild Sustainer.*

Our Creator is a God of unending miracles. The Creation story did not end in Genesis but continues on every day. As Wendell Berry states, “The Creation is not in any sense independent of the Creator, the result of a primal creative act long over and done with, but is the continuous, constant participation of all creatures in the being of God.”[[3]](#endnote-3) And through the incredible mystery of the incarnation, Jesus demonstrates God’s participation in the being of humankind as well.

We are completely dependent upon the Triune God for our sustained being. When Jesus provides the bread of life, we are satisfied. [[4]](#endnote-4) When the Holy Spirit is present, there is new life in the world.[[5]](#endnote-5) When God takes breath away, we return to dust.[[6]](#endnote-6)

When we read scripture only within the ivory tower of academia or the neat confines of the pews, we are apt to completely overlook the wild miracles that surround us every day. Think about it. We live in a world of magnificent cedars,[[7]](#endnote-7) roaring young lions,[[8]](#endnote-8) innumerable creeping things of the sea.[[9]](#endnote-9) Even the earth itself trembles[[10]](#endnote-10) at the greatness of our God.

For our God, clothed with honor and majesty and wrapped in light as with a garment,[[11]](#endnote-11) miraculous is the common mode of existence. God doesn’t perform miracles only in those places deemed holy or through the actions of the ordained. Throughout the bible, God’s vessels for the miraculous are not priests and holy authority but shepherds, servants, fishermen. Miraculous encounters with the divine are not restricted to temples but in pastures, in the wilderness, on mountains, in the sea.

Bless the Lord, O my soul – my soul formed from the very earth itself and breathed into life and relationship by a God who sustains wildly by the radical grace of the saving Christ.

*I am the Oneness of All Creation.*

 In Jesus is the oneness of all creation in holy kinship.[[12]](#endnote-12) Jesus invites us all into one family proclaiming, “For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”[[13]](#endnote-13) The kingdom of God is an inbreaking one and open to all.

Jesus describes the Kingdom of Heaven in parable like a person who sowed good seed in their field. How might we be feeding the fertile soil and cultivating fruits of the Kingdom by living godly lives here in time and on into eternity? A good place to begin would be with our care for not only one another but for the very land itself.

We are created not only in the image of God but from the very soil which gives sustenance and life to all that grows. Humans come from humus[[14]](#endnote-14) and God said it was good.[[15]](#endnote-15) The fertile soil from which we were made in the image of God[[16]](#endnote-16) is not somehow excluded from kinship but intimately entangled with us. In the divine command to honor thy father and mother[[17]](#endnote-17) is a call to honor the earth itself from which our genealogies began.

Any vision of reconciliation with the earth must also include a harsh deconstruction of inequality in our world. Because, “if we save the planet and have a society of inequality, we wouldn't have saved much.”[[18]](#endnote-18) This radically different social and economic system can only be realized with the presence of God with us, not in some abstract theological argument but right there in the messiness alongside creation.

 Jesus welcomes us into the body of Christ. The ultimate oneness of the church through the Lord’s Supper brings us together to take, eat of the body of Christ and drink of the blood of the covenant poured out for all for the forgiveness of sins. Paul takes this oneness a step further in 1 Corinthians asking, “do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?”[[19]](#endnote-19) How might we interact differently with our bodies if we remembered our oneness as members of Christ?

1. Matthew 6:25 [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Matthew 6:32-33 [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Wendell Berry, “Christianity and The Survival of Creation,” *Cross Currents*, Vol. 43 Issue 2, p149, <http://www.crosscurrents.org/berry.htm> [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. John 6:35 [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Acts 2:28 [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Psalm 104:29 [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. Psalm 104:16 [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Psalm 104:21 [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Psalm 104:25 [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Psalm 104:32 [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. Psalm 104:1-2 [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Inspired by Julian or Norwich’s discussion of oneness and Jesus as Mother.
"In our Father, God Almighty, we have our being; and in our Mother of Mercy [Jesus] we have our reforming and restoring: in whom our Parts are oned and all made perfect Man; and by reward-yielding and giving in Grace of the Holy Spirit, we are fulfilled." (Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love*, <http://people.bu.edu/dklepper/RN212/julian.html>, Chapter 58, 156)  [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. Matthew 12:50 [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Genesis 2:7 [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Genesis 1:31 [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. Genesis 1:26 [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. Exodus 20:12 [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. James H. Cone, “Whose Earth Is It Anyway?” *Cross Currents*, Spring/Summer 2000, 50th Anniversary Edition, <http://www.crosscurrents.org/cone.htm> [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. 1 Corinthians 6:15 [↑](#endnote-ref-19)