

Realizing our potentials

Pastor John Hicks

First United Methodist Church

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made -- to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.”

This prologue to John is focused not on what we have been, or even what we are now. Rather it focuses on what we can yet be. A great thought now that we have entered into the new year!

There was a young man pedaling around a college campus on a bicycle. He was wearing a T-shirt. On the T-shirt it said, “I’m going to be a doctor.” There was also a sign on the back of his bicycle. It proclaimed: “I’m going to be a Mercedes.” There was someone who understood his potential.

All of us have unrealized potential. When each of us came into this world, we brought with us an amazing amount of potential.

The Suzuki method that has helped millions of children learn to play the violin is an example of realizing some of this potential. Suzuki shared that he had two moments in his life that gave him his insights.

Suzuki’s first revelation came when he was visiting a building that served as a giant incubator for thousands of Japanese songbirds known as larks. The breeders of these larks take literally thousands of eggs and incubate them in giant, warm, silent halls that act as a gigantic nest. There is only one sound that the tiny songbirds hear as they break through the shells of their eggs. It is the sound of another lark, a very special adult lark, that is chosen because of its singing ability. Suzuki noticed to his amazement that every little chick that hatched automatically began to copy the master singer lark. Even more remarkable, after a few days he observed that each chick, having started out by purely copying songs, began to develop its own variations on the original Master Song. The breeders wait until the chick

musicians have developed their own styles, and then select from them the next Master Singer, and so the process continues.

Suzuki's reasoning: "If a bird's tiny, tiny brain can learn so perfectly, then surely the human brain, with its vastly superior abilities, should be able to do the same and better!" This line of reasoning led Suzuki to his next revelation: "Every Japanese child learns to speak Japanese!"

It seems like an amazing grasp of the obvious, but what Suzuki had realized was something so apparent no one could see what it meant. Any baby, born in any country, automatically learns, within two years, the language of that country. This means that every normal baby's brain is capable of learning millions of potential languages.

This means, that given the proper environment, the human creature is capable of acquiring an amazing amount of information and skills in a short time. God has placed within each of us enormous potential, mental potential, physical potential, but the greatest of all is spiritual potential, the potential to become children of God.

Notice, the Scriptures don't say that Christ came into the world so that we can improve our I.Q. or that we will be able to run the 440 in record time. It says that whoever receives Christ and believes on His name has the potential to become a child of God. What does that mean? It means that you and I have the potential to be like Christ. We have a potential within our hearts and souls for peace, a potential for joy, a potential for hope, a potential for love, and a potential for forgiveness that is greater than we can possibly imagine.