

FOUR MOVEMENTS BACK TO THE KINGDOM



Four Movements Back to the Kingdom

*A symphonic meditation on suffering, truth,
inversion, and betrayal*

*in search of the Kingdom Jesus never
abandoned.*

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Introduction

This piece has emerged from a life spent among the rubble of modernity.

Since the early 1960s, I've carried one unshakable question:

What has Christianity to do with science?

Which holds the key to the truth?

I was formed in the twilight of Christendom and the rise of postwar scientific optimism. The two were never at war in my heart, but they never made peace in the world around me. One taught me to seek wisdom in ancient stories. The other trained me to demand evidence, to measure, to doubt.

This tension has not undone me—but it has shaped me.

And now, in this late chapter of history, when science and Christianity alike have been hijacked by empire and progress myths, I feel the call to **lament**, **reclaim**, and **reweave**. Not to solve the riddle—but to sing it differently.

What follows is a kind of **symphonic poem**—

four movements in word and image,

tracing the spiral from grief to inversion to betrayal to the faint, glowing memory of the kingdom that was never gone.

These are not theological assertions.

They are meditations.

Prayers, perhaps.

Echoes of a deeper truth that lives in elephants and pigeons, in soil and silence, and in the presence of a Teacher who never asked us to worship him—only to follow.

Terry Cooke-Davies
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First Movement: Lament for the Cross



“And they watched him die...” – Luke 23:35

This is not blasphemy. This is the mirror that empire avoids.
This is not a reenactment—it is a recognition.
In every age, the crucifixion continues. In every age, we must ask:
Where do we stand, and what do we see?

*O cross, once drenched in the sweat of the condemned,
how did you become a brand logo for conquest?*

You once stood naked on a hill,
a site of unbearable solidarity,

a quiet rebellion where God refused to play God.

Now you hang in marble halls,
framed in gold,
blessing bombs and billionaires,
used to silence dissent
and sanctify exploitation.

Forgive us.

We turned your protest into policy.
Your agony into advertisement.
Your radical “with-ness” into “us-versus-them.”

We wear you on lapels,
but do not carry you in our bodies.

We claim your blood,
but won’t touch the wounds of the world.

We kneel at your altar,
but pass the hungry without looking.

We preach your power,
but flee your powerlessness.

And still you whisper:

*“I was not nailed up to make you kings.
I died between thieves, not senators.
I cried out to a God who did not intervene—
not because the divine had abandoned me,
but because it had entered the suffering,
fully, irrevocably, forever.”*

You were never about triumph.

You were about truth—
raw, unvarnished, inconvenient truth.
The kind that can’t be monetized or militarized.

So let this be said to every counter-elite
hiding their empire behind a verse:

*Your gospel is hollow.
Your victory is theft.
Your revolution is a rerun
of every bloody bait-and-switch
that draped a flag over a corpse
and called it freedom.*

And let it be said to those with ears to hear:

There is another way.
Not back, not forward—but deeper.

To the wood.
To the body.
To the breathless moment between betrayal and forgiveness.
To the cross that does not conquer—but *connects*.

*Let the false cross burn in the fire of your grief.
Let the real one rise—not as a monument, but as a mirror.*

Look into it.
Weep.
And then—
walk.

Second Movement: Jesus Didn't Teach Religion. He Taught Reality.



“The poor you will always have with you.” – John 12:8

We often read Jesus as a moral teacher—laying out commands, rules, ideals.
But what if we've missed something deeper?
What if Jesus wasn't teaching morality at all,
but something far more disturbing and true?

What if Jesus was teaching reality?

When he said, "the poor you will always have with you,"
he wasn't just offering a sociological footnote.
He wasn't just defending a moment of beauty with perfume.
He was naming something real—something the rest of creation already understands:
that suffering, limitation, and grief are not glitches in the system.
They are part of the field.

This is not fatalism.
This is not resignation.
This is truth-telling, in a world addicted to denial.

*Not all suffering can be solved.
Not all pain is avoidable.
Not all death is preventable.*

And perhaps:

Not all grief should be prevented. Some should be shared.

That's what elephants do when they gather around their dead.
That's what pigeons do when they search for a missing mate.
They don't argue theology.
They don't seek moral justification.
They don't ask, "Why did this happen?"

They simply remain.
They grieve.
They witness.
They know.

And perhaps Jesus was calling us back to that kind of knowing.

We've mistaken the cross for a symbol of triumph.
We've mistaken poverty for a problem to solve.
We've mistaken tragedy for a failure of will.

But the cross was never about escaping suffering.
It was about entering it—without superiority, without explanation.
It was about suffering-with—and not looking away.

*But we, in our hubris, believe we are somehow above the reality from which we emerged
and to which we must return.
We think our science will save us.
We think our empire can manage death.
We think our progress exempts us from the ache of being creaturely.*

So we turn away
—from the poor
—from the dying
—from the mirror of the cross.

We turn away
from the pigeons who mourn
and the elephants who stay.

And in doing so, we forget what the animals remember:
To grieve is to love.
To stay is to honour.
To suffer-with is to be whole.

Jesus didn't create a religion.
He revealed a pattern.
He showed us what the world really is—and how love responds to it.

Not by conquering.
Not by escaping.
But by staying present, even when it hurts.

Especially when it hurts.

**Let those who have ears to hear...
stay.**

Third Movement: The Great Inversion — The Gospel of Collapse and Compost



“The last shall be first, and the first last.” – Matthew 20:16

“Unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies...” – John 12:24

“Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold...” – W. B. Yeats

We were told that growth is good.
That bigger is better.
That to move forward is to ascend.
That progress is a stairway to heaven, and science its scaffolding.

But reality doesn't move in lines.
It breathes in **cycles**.
It dances in **reversals**.

And the one who saw it most clearly
was not a prophet of progress,
but a teacher of inversion.

The first shall be last.
The master shall serve.
The child shall lead.
The dead shall rise.
The crucified shall be crowned.

Not as metaphor.
As map.

Jesus didn't come to build a kingdom.
He came to unravel one.
Not to raise up a new empire,
but to compost the old one with parables, touch, and tears.

He taught in riddles,
because truth sounds like nonsense to those who believe
the ladder only goes up.

You want to save your life? Lose it.
You want to be great? Become small.
You want to see God?
Look in the eyes of the sick, the strange, the despised.

This is not charity.
This is **reality reframed**.

The universe itself is built on inversion:

- Stars are born in collapse.
- Forests grow from death.
- Soil is made of rot.
- Love becomes real only when self becomes porous.

Even science—when honest—knows this:

- Entropy increases.
- Systems fail.

- Equilibrium is an illusion.
 - Life is built not on certainty, but on **tension and transformation**.
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And yet we, modern heirs of empire,
still worship growth.
Still fear endings.
Still name collapse as failure.

We think the point is to win.
Jesus thought the point was to **wake up**.

And if waking requires falling—
so be it.

This is the good news no one wanted:

That collapse is not catastrophe.
It is clarity.
It is not the end of meaning.
It is where meaning begins.

The real gospel isn't that death is undone.
It's that death is not the enemy.
It's part of the turning.

So fall, says the seed.
Fall, says the Christ.
Fall, says the forest.

And let yourself be **remade**
not by rising,
but by remembering who you were before you learned to climb.

Fourth Movement: The Great Betrayal — How Empire Found a Home in the House of God



“This is the heir; come, let us kill him and take his inheritance.” – Matthew 21:38

“They have taken the body of my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.” – John 20:13

“We had hoped...” – Luke 24:21

The seed fell.
The cross stood.
The silence after death stretched long across three days
—and three centuries.

And in that silence, the story began to shift.

It started with memory.
Then meaning.
Then myth.
Then machinery.

Until love became law.
And law became leverage.
And the gentle inversion of the gospel
was turned back upright by steady imperial hands.

They took the carpenter’s table
and made it a throne.
Took the bread of the poor
and turned it into doctrine.
Took the crucified
and painted him in gold,
held high by the very powers he died to unmask.

He had overturned tables.
They built cathedrals.
He had touched lepers.
They built purity codes.
He had said *“blessed are the poor.”*
They made alliances with kings.

He had said *“my kingdom is not of this world.”*
They made it exactly that.

This is the betrayal that still bleeds:

That the ones who claimed to follow the Teacher of Reality
used his name to build a fortress against it.

They took up the cross—
not to carry it,

but to wave it.

They declared victory
where Jesus had whispered surrender.

And they told the world:
This is Christianity.
This is salvation.
This is truth.

But it was empire,
wearing the skin of Christ.

And yet...

Even betrayal is not the end of the story.

For those with ears to hear,
the silence still speaks.
The parables still stir.
The seed still falls.

And somewhere, in the shadow of every steeple,
the Teacher still weeps,
still walks unrecognized on the road,
still breaks bread in back rooms,
still stirs in those who remember
what it felt like before the story was stolen.

So now we come to the end.
But not to closure.

To the mirror.
To the whisper.
To the question:

What now?
What kind of people shall we be
in a world that has crucified reality
and called it progress?