

How to Transcend

Beautiful rainy morning.
Woke up at 3:30, never snoring.

Vitality in my body, moving through this park.
There may not be a sunrise, but I embrace the dark.

Pitter-patter upon my umbrella,
Not the most intelligent fella,

But I know one thing for certain:
I've seen beyond the curtain.

Connecting to the Source

I was a Peace Corps volunteer in Zambia, Africa. I spent a year in a rural village as a fish farmer. I learned the local language and integrated myself with the Bemba tribe.

The most incredible thing I witnessed in the village was human flourishing—on a level I haven't seen anywhere else in the world.

Mothers return home with babies on their backs and firewood on their heads.
Men build churches and homes.
Boys make bricks from sand and mud.
Girls sweep floors and prepare food for the day.

Everybody has a role to play.

Every morning, you hear the pounding of mortar and pestle. Food is prepared before sunrise. Buckets of water are carried from the well. Before the sun even rises, the day is already moving.

Each morning I would walk to the well, where everyone gathers to draw water and carry home the most vital nutrient of all. These wells are the foundation of the community. Without the well—without water—there is no life.

To build a well, you must dig deep, cutting through soil to reach an underground stream. It requires struggle, effort, and endurance. But once you reach it, the water flows endlessly, nourishing the entire community.

I see God in this.

Confronting God is like digging a well. There will be pain. There will be suffering. There will be uncomfortable truths. But only by descending can you rise.

Agape Love

When you are connected, you are fulfilled. You are satiated. Love moves through you without force.

You no longer seek validation.
You no longer need to be filled from the outside.

Instead, you love freely, without expectation. You stop seeking to be loved and begin seeking to love.

When that love flows, nothing can fracture your spirit. Pain, hatred, gossip, and noise lose their weight. They pass through without sticking.

You laugh—not from bitterness, but from clarity.

Life softens. The static fades.

Death, Family, and Tribe

One of the most striking cultural differences I witnessed in Zambia was funeral culture.

If you passed a home where mourning was taking place, it was appropriate to stop, to sit, and to grieve—even if you did not know the family.

In a tribe, family extends beyond blood.

The hierarchy was simple: God, tribe, land. There was no need for bureaucracy or enforcement. People submitted to something greater and shared what was necessary for life.

My host sister was twelve years old when she died during my Peace Corps service. The family mourned for weeks. People traveled from distant provinces to be present. They prayed, ate, slept, and grieved together.

Death mattered.

Grief was communal. Meaning was shared.

Photography and the Kingdom of God

I understand the Kingdom of God as presence.

The present moment—ironically—is the ultimate gift.

To be outside, under the sun, moving the body freely through the world, feels like a quiet rebellion against time. When you move, you step outside the clock. God exists beyond time.

Photography sharpens this awareness. It brings me closer—not by adding meaning, but by stripping distraction away.

Follow the Light

As a photographer, I don't plan what I will find. I follow the light. Light is my compass.

Each morning, I walk—through parks, forests, or along a trail beside the Schuylkill River that leads to a cliff behind the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

At the edge stands a pavilion crowned with Hermes, the messenger of the gods, gazing toward the horizon.

I stand there, letting the sun enter my eyes. The river moves. The canopy breathes. It is the most beautiful view in the city.

With the sun on my face, I feel bliss. It feels like God gives me a kiss. I send my message on Mercury's wings, and the message is simple: gratitude.

I am grateful to walk, to see, to explore, and to photograph.

Each day I remind myself that I am just a big kid who knows nothing—eager to play, eager to learn, eager to transform.

To Go Beyond

To transcend is to move beyond the horizon.

It is to remain in motion, attentive, alive. The flow state dissolves time. Patterns emerge. The body responds before thought arrives.

The sounds, sights, and smells of the street invigorate me. Without vitality, curiosity fades.

Life is a song, and you are a note. Your task is not perfection, but alignment.

Vitality in the body becomes the physical expression of spiritual clarity.

Wisdom and Mortality

We are flesh.

We cut.

We bleed.

We desire.

We suffer.

We are imperfect—and that imperfection is what makes us human.

To confront mortality is to confront God.

Like Sisyphus pushing his stone, meaning is found in the act itself. Clicking the shutter. Taking the step. Never reaching the peak, yet still moving.

My daily prayer is simple:

Ask. Seek. Knock.

Wisdom is knowing that you know nothing.

Knowledge can be acquired instantly. Wisdom is earned slowly—through experience, failure, and lived reality.

Amor Fati

And so, with each click of the shutter, I affirm life.

I am saying yes.

I am expressing gratitude for the life God gave me.

As I move beyond the horizon, walking through the world, I remind myself: I may not live forever—but at least I can make a photograph.