



**Richard Rohr introduces his newest book,
The Universal Christ
Unedited Transcript of Video**

I'm sure you're all familiar with the coins of the United States of America, on one side of every one of them it says, proudly, piously, in God we trust. Then, if you turn it over, and of course it's in Latin, and most of you didn't have to learn Latin but I did, it says, *e pluribus unum*, out of many, *e pluribus*, one. Now, our religious way of describing that one, that *unum*, if we want a shortcut word for it, is Christ. Don't think of it first of all as a religious concept. Think of it as a descriptor for every thing. Every thing at least that we can see, every thing, every visible moment of this creation is a manifestation of the eternal Christ that existed since the beginning of time.

Jesus has only existed within the last 2000 years, that leaves 13.6 billion years uninhabited by God. If you think that God only entered the universe, as some Christians seem to do, with the birth of Jesus, the Christ preceded Jesus by 13 billion years. Now, I hope you see the implications of that, this creates a basis for what I'd call a natural religion and the universal religion, that this isn't tribal any more, this isn't ethnic, this isn't bound to one historical story that happened in Israel.

I'm not throwing out Jesus, 'cause I think he brings the universal message to an individual focus that we can fall in love with, and relate to, and love, and we need that. So what we've got, when we make the act of faith, that we believe in Jesus Christ, we're actually making two acts of faith. To believe in Jesus is the personal, relational, devotional, fall in love level with God. Christ is the universal, all inclusive, no exceptions of everything that exists.

That's a good combination if you can hold them in creative balance, and that's what I hope to do in the book. You'll have to decide if we succeed at that. But in many ways, even more than *The Divine Dance*, although this is a sequel in effect to *The Divine Dance*, for many people I think this will be a game changer. Because they can no longer put Jesus back into a box that is merely tribal, sentimental, Jesus is my personal boyfriend, where I have this relationship that doesn't include everything and everybody else.

So when I titled the book, although we argued about it for over a year with the publishers, we called it Another Name for Every Thing, separating every and thing, almost to help people make the point, that we're talking about physicality, materiality. That this physical universe is the first incarnation, the first manifestation, or as the early Franciscans said, my own community, "The first Bible." I know that's shocking to those of us who think the Bible was just written 2000 or 3000 years ago, and it only started being printed 500 years ago, but you see how that leaves us in such a small arena, where God has not been available to most of what God created, most civilizations, most races, most eras could not have known God.

All I'm saying is that can't be true. What God has been involved with since the beginning of time is giving away God, making the Godself available, not hiding God. And so, if you want look for God, just look, and what you see is already a manifestation.