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Martin Luther King, Jr.: [01:00:39]“I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; "and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together

Joseph Campbell: “We have not even to risk the adventure alone, for the heroes of all time have gone before us. The labyrinth is thoroughly known. We have only to follow the thread of the hero path, and where we had thought to find an abomination, we shall find a God. And where we had thought to slay another, we shall slay ourselves. Where we had thought to travel outward, we shall come to the center of our own existence, [01:01:39] and where we had thought to be alone, we shall be with all the world.”

Bill Moyers: Over the past 30 years, no series I have presented on public television match the response that greeted Joseph Campbell and the Power of Myth. When the series first aired in 1988 our stations all over the country were barraged by calls and letters asking them to repeat it. They did, again and again, turning Joseph Campbell himself into something of a mythological figure. [01:02:39] Millions watched. The Companion book became a bestseller and Campbell's ideas were much discussed and debated in classrooms, bars, living rooms and the media. He died before the interviews were broadcasted, so he never knew what a stir he'd caused. He had lived a quite but committed life teaching for almost four decades at Sarah Lawrence College and making himself a master of comparative literature and religion. That's how he came to see Myths as the transient link between the human and the Divine. In cultures everywhere, he found they were the stuff of dreams, the theater of the imagination, the stage where Gods roamed. If in Modern times, Myth had lost some of their hold over politics, religion and art. They remained nonetheless, a powerful landmark in the personal search for meaning. When Joseph Campbell died at the age of 83, fourteen years ago, he was working on a monumental historical atlas of world mythology. Among the 20 books he wrote or edited were “The Hero with a Thousand Faces” and the four-volume [01:03:39] study of mythology called "The Masks of the God.” Scholars and students sought him out, so do poets, writers and artists, performers like the great Frog Dance of Mickey Hart and the storytellers like his friend George Lucas. Lucas' trilogy Star Wars had been deeply influenced by Campbell's work. We take these conversations at Lucas' Sky Walker ranch in California. Over the last two summers of Campbell's life. We talked about the first storytellers about gods and goddesses, love and marriage, ritual, art and psychology. But we always came around to his favorite subject "The Hero with a Thousand Faces.”

Bill Moyers: Why The Hero with a Thousand Faces?

Joseph Campbell: Well, because there's a certain typical hero sequence of actions which can be [01:04:39] be detected in stories from all over the world and from many, many periods of history. And I think it's essentially you might say the one deed done by many, many different people.

Bill Moyers: Why are there so many stories of the hero or of heroes in mythology.

Joseph Campbell: Well, because that's what worth writing about. I mean, even in popular novel writing you see these, the main character is the hero or a heroine and that is to say someone who has found or achieved or done something beyond the normal range of achievement and experience. A hero properly is someone who has given his life to something bigger than himself or other than himself.

Bill Moyers: So, when all of these cultures whatever the costume the hero might be wearing. What is the deed?[01:05:39]

Joseph Campbell: Well, there are two types of deeds. One is the physical deed, the hero who has performed a war act or a physical act of heroism saving a life, that's a hero act. Giving himself or sacrificing himself to another. And the other kind is the spiritual hero who has learned or found a mode of experiencing the super normal range of human spiritual life and then come back and communicated it. It's a cycle – it's a going and return that the hero cycle represents. But then this can be seen also in a simple initiation ritual, where a child has to give up his childhood and become an adult. Has to die you might say to its infantile personality [01:06:39] and psyche and come back as a self-responsible adult. It's a fundamental experience that everyone has to undergo. We're in our childhood for at least 14 years, then to get out of that posture of dependency, psychological dependency into one of psychological self responsibility requires a death and resurrection and that is the basic motive of the hero's journey. Leaving one condition, finding the source of life to bring you forth, in a richer or more mature or other condition.

Bill Moyers: So, that if we happened not to be heroes in the grand sense of redeeming society, we have to take that journey ourselves, spiritually, psychologically inside us.

Joseph Campbell: That's right. And Otto Rank in his wonderful, very short book[01:07:39] called "The Myth of The Birth of The Hero." He says that everyone is a hero in his birth, he has undergone a tremendous transformation from a little, you might say, a water creature living in a realm of the amniotic fluid and so forth and then coming out becoming an air breathing mammal that ultimately will be self standing and so forth. It's an enormous transformation and it is a heroic act, that's a heroic act on the mother's part to bring it about is the primary hero, hero form you might say.

Bill Moyers: Still a journey to be taken after that.

Joseph Campbell: There is a big one to be taken.

Bill Moyers: And that journey is not consciously undertaken. Do heroes go out on their own initiative.

Joseph Campbell: Well, there are both kinds. A very common one that appears in Celtic Myths of someone who has followed the lure of a deer or a animal that he's been following and then carries him into[01:08:39] a range of a forest and landscape that he has never been in before and then the animal will undergo a transformation become the

queen of the fairy hills or something like that. That is one of not knowing what you are doing, you suddenly find yourself in full career of an adventure. There is another one where one sets out responsibly and intentionally to perform the deed. For instance, when Ulysses' son Telemachus was called by Athena, go find your father, that father quest is a major hero adventure for young people, it is the adventure of finding of what your career is, what your nature is, what your source is. He undertakes that intentionally. Then there's one into which you are thrown and pitched, for instance being drafted into the army. You didn't intend it,[01:09:39] there you are in. They are in another transformation. You've undergone a death and resurrection. You put on the uniform you are another creature.

Bill Moyers: So does the heroism have a moral objective?

Joseph Campbell: The moral objective is that of saving a people, or saving a person or saving an idea. He is sacrificing himself for something, that's the morality of it. Now, you from another position might say, that's something that shouldn't have been realized you know. That's the judgment from another side but it doesn't destroy the heroism of what was done. Absolutely not.

Bill Moyers: Well, that's a different angle on heroes than I got when I was reading as a young boy the story of Prometheus going after the fire and bringing it back and benefiting humanity and suffering for it.

Joseph Campbell: Yeah. I mean Prometheus brings fire to mankind and consequently civilization. That's by the way a universal thing. [01:10:39]

Bill Moyers: Oh. It is.

Joseph Campbell: The hero, the fire theft theme with a – unusually with a relay race after it. Often it's Blue Jay or a Woodpecker or something like this that steals the fire and passes it on something else and something else then one animal after another. And they burned by the fire as if they're carrying it on, without a council of the different colorings of animals and so forth. It's a world wide myth, the fire theft.

Bill Moyers: Do these stories of the hero vary from culture to culture?

Joseph Campbell: Well, it's the degree of the illumination that – or action that makes them different. There is a typical early culture hero who goes around slaying monsters, now that is in the period of history when man is shaping his world out of a wild savage unshaped world. Well, it has another shape but it's not the shape [01:11:39]for man. He goes around killing monsters.

Bill Moyers: So, the hero evolves over time like most other concepts and ideas and...

Joseph Campbell: Well, he evolves as the culture evolves. Now Moses is a hero figure. In his ascent of the mountain, his meeting with Yahweh on the summit of the mountain and coming back with the rules for the formation of the whole new society. That's the hero

act. Departure, fulfillment, return and on the way there are adventures that can be paralleled also in other traditions. Now, the Buddha figure is like that of the Christ. Of course, 500 years earlier and you could match those two traditions right down the line. Even to the characters of their Apostles or their Monks. Christ, now there is a perfectly [01:12:39] good hero indeed formerly represented that and he undergoes three temptations. The economic temptations, where the devil says you look hungry young man, change the stones to bread. Jesus said that, "Man lives not by bread alone but every word from the mouth of God." Next, we have the political temptation. He's taken to top of a mountain and shown the nations of the world and says you can come into control of all these if you'll bow to me. And then, oh, you are so spiritual, let's go up to the top of Herod's temple and say you cast yourself down and the God will bear you up and you won't even be bruise your heel. So, he says "you shall not tempt the Lord your God." Those are the three temptations of Christ. In the desert, the Buddha also goes into the forest has conferences [01:13:39] with the leading gurus of the day and goes past them. Comes to the Bodhi tree, the tree of illumination undergoes three temptations. They are not the same temptations, but they are three temptations and one is that of lust, another is that of fear and another is that of social duty, doing what you're told. And then both of these men come back and they choose disciples who helped them establish a new way of consciousness in terms of what they've discovered there. These are the same, heroic deeds, these are the spiritual hero deeds. Moses, the Buddha, Christ, Mohammed. Mohammed literally and we know this about him. He was a camel caravan master but he would leave his home and go out into a little mountain cave [01:14:39] that he found and meditate and meditate and meditate and meditate. And one day a voice says write and we've the Quran, you know, it's an old story.

Bill Moyers: Sometimes, it seems to me that, we ought to feel pity for the hero instead admiration. So many of them have sacrificed their own needs.

Joseph Campbell: They all have.

Bill Moyers: And they're often – what they accomplish are shattered by the inability of the followers to see.

Joseph Campbell: Yeah. They come out of the forest with gold and it turns to ashes. That's another motif that occurs.

Bill Moyers: In this culture of easy religion cheaply achieved. It seems to me we forgotten that all three of the great religions teach that the trials of the hero journey are or a significant part of it that there is no reward without renunciation and without the price, the Quran speaks. [01:16:39] Do you think that you should enter the garden of bliss without such trials as come to those who passed before you?

Joseph Campbell: Well, if you realize what the real problem is and that is of losing primary, think, primarily thinking about yourself and your own self protection, losing yourself, giving yourself to another. That's what a trial in itself is it not? There is a big transformation of consciousness that's concerned. And what all the myths have to deal

with is transformation of consciousness. That, you're thinking in this way, and you've now to think in that way.

Bill Moyers: Well, how is the consciousness transformed?

Joseph Campbell: By the trials.

Bill Moyers: The test that the hero undergoes?

Joseph Campbell: Tests or certain illuminating revelations. Trials and revelations is one that's all about.

Bill Moyers: But who in society in a day is making any heroic myth at all for us? Do movies do this? Do movies create hero myths?

Joseph Campbell: I don't know. From my experience of movies, I mean the significant experience I had of movies was since I was a boy and they were all really movies and then talkies, they were black and white movies. And I had a hero figure who meant something to me and he served as a kind of a model for myself and in my physical character and that was Douglas Fairbanks. I wanted to be a synthesis of Douglas Fairbanks and Leonardo da Vinci, that was my idea, but those were models were roles that came to me.

Bill Moyers: Does a movie like *Star Wars* fill some of that need for the spiritual adventure for the hero.

Joseph Campbell: ah, perfect and it does this cycle perfectly. It's not simple morality play. It has to do with the powers of life and their inflection through the action[01:17:39] of a man. One of the wonderful things, I think about that this adventure into space is that the narrator, the artist, the one thinking up the story is in a field that is not covered by our own knowledges, you know. Much of the adventure in the old stories is where they go into regions that no one's been in before. Well, we've now conquered the planet, so there are no empty spaces for the imagination to go forth and fight its own war. You know, with powers and that was the first thing I felt there is whole new realm for the imagination to open out and live it's forms.

Bill Moyers: Do you when you look at something like *Star Wars* recognize some of the themes of heroes throughout mythology.

Joseph Campbell: Well, I think that George Lucas was using [01:18:39]standard mythological figures. The old man as the adviser – well, specifically what he made me think of is the Japanese sword master.

Old Man: "Remember, a Jedi can feel the force flowing through you."

Joseph Campbell: I've known some of those people and this man has with character.

Bill Moyers: Well, something mythological too as we bear in the sense that the hero is helped by this stranger who shows up and gives him some instrument a sword or sheaf or shaft of light.

Joseph Campbell: Yeah. But he gives him not only a physical instrument but a psychological commitment and a physiological center.

Ben Kenobi: “This time let go your conscious self and act on instinct.”

Joseph Campbell: he had him exercising with that strange weapon and then pulled the master that's real Japanese stuff.

Bill Moyers: When I took [01:19:39]our two sons to see it, they did the same thing the audience did at that moment when the voice of Ben Kenobi says to Luke Skywalker in the climatic moment.

Ben Kenobi: “Use the force Luke, let go Luke.”

Bill Moyers: The audience broke out into it.

Joseph Campbell: They did.

Bill Moyers: Elation into applaud.

Joseph Campbell: You see this thing communicates. It is in a language that is talking to young people today and that's marvelous.

Bill Moyers: So, the hero goes for something, he doesn't just go along for the ride. He is not a mere adventurer.

Joseph Campbell: Well, the serendipitous adventure can take place also. You know, what the word serendipity comes from? Comes from the Sanskrit, Swarna Dwipa, the isle of silk, which was a form of – formerly the name of Ceylon[01:20:39] and it's a story about a family that's just rambling on its way to Ceylon and all these adventures takes place. So, you can have the serendipitous adventure as well.

Bill Moyers: Is the adventurer who takes that kind of trip, a hero in the mythology?

Joseph Campbell: He is ready for it. This is a very interesting thing about these mythological themes. The achievement of the hero is one that he is ready for and it's really manifestation of his character and its amusing the way in which the landscape and the conditions of the environment match the readiness of the hero. The adventure is that he is ready for is the one that he gets.

Han Solo: “Look, I ain't in this for your revolution, and I'm not in it for you, Princess. I expect to be well paid.”

Bill Moyers: The mercenary Solo begins as, as a mercenary and ends up as up a hero.

Joseph Campbell: He was a very practical guy,[01:21:39] a materialist in his character at least as he thought of himself. But he was a compassionate human being at the same time and didn't know it. The adventure evoked the quality of his character that he hadn't known what he possessed.

Han Solo: "I love you."

Princess Leia: "I know."

Joseph Campbell: He thinks, he is an egoist, he isn't. And that's a very lovable kind of human being I think, and there are lots of them functioning beautifully in the world. They think they work for themselves very practical but now that there is nothing else pushing them.

Bill Moyers: What do you think about the scene in the bar?

Joseph Campbell: That's my favorite not only in this piece but many, many pieces I've ever seen. Well, where you are is on the edge you're about to embark into the outline spaces and...[01:22:39]

Bill Moyers: A real adventure.

Joseph Campbell: The real adventure. This is the jumping off place and there is where you meet people who have been out there. They run the machines that go out there and you haven't been there. It reminds me a little bit in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, that atmosphere before you start off the adventure, you're in the sea port and there is all sorts of sea men who'd been on the sea and that's their world and this is the space people also.

Luke Skywalker: "I have a bad feeling about this." "The walls...."

Princess Lea: "Don't just stand there. Try to brace it with something."

Bill Moyers: But my favorite scene was when they were in the garbage compacter and the walls were closing in and I thought that's like the belly of the whale that you guys are in.

Joseph Campbell: That's what it is, that's where they were. I mean the belly of the whale.

Bill Moyers: [01:23:39]What's the Mythological significance of the belly.

Joseph Campbell: It's the decent into the dark . Jonah and the Whale, I mean, that's just standard motif of going into the Whale's belly and coming out again.

Bill Moyers: Why must the hero do that?

Joseph Campbell: The whale represents the personification you might say of all that is in the unconscious. Secondly, and reading these things psychologically water is the unconscious. The creature in the water would be the dynamism of the unconscious, which is dangerous and powerful and has to be controlled by consciousness. The first stage in the hero adventure when he starts off on adventure is leaving the realm of the light which he controls and knows about and moving towards the threshold and it's at the threshold, that the monster of the abyss comes to meet him [01:24:39] and then there are two or three results. One, the hero is cut to pieces and descends into the abyss in fragments to be resurrected or he may kill the dragon power as Siegfried does when he kills the dragon but then he tastes the dragon blood as he has to assimilate that power and when Siegfried has killed the dragon and tasted the blood, he hears the song of nature. He has transcended his humanity you know, and reassociate himself with the powers of nature which are the powers of our life and in which our mind removes us. You see this thing up here, this consciousness thinks it's running the shop, it's a secondary organ. It's a secondary organ of a total human being and it must not put itself in [01:25:39] control. It must submit and serve the humanity of the body.

Darth Vader: "Join me, and I will complete your training."

Joseph Campbell: When it does put itself in control, you get this Vader the man who has gone over to the intellectual side.

Luke Skywalker: "I'll never join you."

Darth Vader: "If you only knew the power of the Dark Side!"

Joseph Campbell: He isn't thinking or living in terms of humanity, he is living in terms of a system, [01:26:39] and this is a threat to our life we all face it. We all operate in our society in relation to a system. Now, is this system gonna eat you up and relieve you of your humanity or are you going to be able to use the system to human purposes.

Bill Moyers: Would *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* help us to answer that question, about how to change the system so that we are not serving it?

Joseph Campbell: I don't think, it would help you to change the system but it would help you to live in the system as a human being.

Bill Moyers: By doing what?

Joseph Campbell: Well, like Luke Skywalker, not going over but resisting its, its impersonal claims.

Bill Moyers: But I can hear someone out there in the audience saying, 'well, that's all well and good for the imagination of George Lucas or for the scholarship of a Joseph Campbell, but that doesn't – isn't what happens in my life.'

Joseph Campbell: You bet it does. If the person doesn't listen to the man's of his own spiritual and heart life and insists on certain program, you are gonna have a Schizophrenic crack up. The person has put himself off center. He is aligned himself for the programmatic life and it's not the one the body's interest in at all and the world full of people who have stopped listening[01:27:39] to themselves. In my own life, I've had many opportunities to commit myself to a system and to go with it and to obey its requirements. My life would have been that of a Maverick, I would not submit.

Bill Moyers: You really believe that the creative spirit ranges on it's own out there beyond the boundaries.

Joseph Campbell: Yeah, I do.

CONTENT

Bill Moyers: Something of the hero and I no mean to suggest that you see yourself as a hero.

Joseph Campbell: No, I don't, but I see myself as a Maverick.

Bill Moyers: So, perhaps the hero lurks in each one of us when we don't know it.

Joseph Campbell: Well. Yes, I mean our life revokes our character and you find out more about yourself as you go on and it's very nice to be able to put yourself in situations that will invoke your higher nature rather than your lower.

Bill Moyers: Give me an example?

Joseph Campbell: I give you a story. I'm dealing with an Iroquis story[01:28:39] right now. There is a motif that comes in American Indian stories very often what I call 'The Refusal of Suitors.' A girl with her mother lived in a wigwam [0:28:53] on the edge of the village. She was a very handsome girl but extremely proud and would not accept any of the boys. They proposed to her through the mother and the mother was terribly annoyed with her. Well one day they are out collecting wood and they have gone a long way from the village and while they are collecting the wood a terrific darkness comes over them. Now this wasn't the darkness of the night descending. When you have a darkness like that there is some magician at work somewhere. So the mother says well lets gather some bark and make a little wigwam for ourselves and collect wood for fire[01:29:39] and we just spend the night here. So, they do that and the mother falls asleep and the girl looks and there's this magnificent guy standing there with a wampum sash and glorious feathers and all this kind, black feathers. He says I've come to marry you and I'll await your reply. She accepts the guy and the mother accepts the man and he gives the mother the wampum belt to prove that he is serious about all this so he goes away with the girl, she has acquiesced] [0:30:16]. Mere human beings who weren't good

enough for her but here is something that really ah. So she is in another domain. Now the adventure is marvelous. She goes with him to his village and they entered his lodge, the people in there greet her and she feels very comfortable about it and all. And then the next day he says I'm going off to hunt.[01:30:39] So he leaves the lodge and the door is closed with a flap, there's a flap when he closes the flap she hears a strange sound, so there is the whole day and she just in the hut and the evening comes he hears that strange sound again and the door flap has flung off and in comes this prodigious serpent with his tongue darting and he puts his head in her lap and says now you must search my head for lice and see if by then she finds all kinds of horrible things there kills them all and then he withdraws and in a moment after the gate door has been closed it opens again and in he comes is the same beautiful young man again and said were you afraid[01:31:39] of me when I came in just now. No, she says. She wasn't at all afraid. Next day he goes off to hunt and then she leaves the lodge to gather wood and the first thing she sees is an enormous serpent basking on the rocks and then an another and then an another and she began to feel very badly very home sick and discouraged. Then the evening the serpent then the man again the third day when he leaves she decides she gonna try to get out of this place, so she goes out and she is standing in the woods thinking and a voice speaks to her and she turns and there is a little old man there and he says darling you are in trouble the man that you married is one of the seven brothers, they are great magicians. And they are like many people of this kind their hearts are not in their bodies. There is a collection of seven hearts [01:32:39] in a bag that is hidden under the bed of the eldest to whom you are married you must go get that and we'll deal with the next part of the adventure. She goes in and find the bag of hearts and is running out and a voice calls after her, stop, stop, its the voice of the magician and she continues to run he says you may think you get away from me but you never can and just at that point she hears the voice of the old man. He says I'll help you dear and he is pulling her out of the water and she didn't even know she was in the water.

Bill Moyers: What does that say to you.

Joseph Campbell: That's to say you have moved out of the hard land, the solid earth and the infield of the unconscious. And she had pulled herself in to the transcended realm and got caught in the negative powers of the abyss and she is being rescued now by the upper powers, [01:33:39] what you have done have been to elevate yourself out of the local field and put yourself in the field of higher power, higher danger and are you going to be able to handle it. If you are not eligible for this place into which you have put yourself there's going to be a demon marriage is going to be a real mess. If you are eligible it can be a glory that will give you a life that is yours in your own way.

Bill Moyers: So these stories of mythology are simply trying to express a truth that can't be grasped in the other way.

Joseph Campbell: It's the edge, the interface between what can be known and what is never to be discovered because it is a mystery transcended of all human research, the source of life, what is it? No one knows.[01:34:39]

Bill Moyers: Why are stories important for getting at that?

Joseph Campbell: Well, I think it's important to live life with knowledge of its mystery and of your own mystery and its give life a new zest, a new balance, a new harmony to do this. Therapy and psychological therapy when people find out what it is that's ticking in them they get straightened out and what is that life is? I find thinking in mythological terms has helped people, visibly you can see it happen.

Bill Moyers: How, what does it do?

Joseph Campbell: It raises anxieties, it puts them in accord with the inevitable's of their life. And they can see the positive values of what are the negative [01:35:39]aspects of what is positive. It's whether you are going to say no to the serpent or yes to the serpent. It's easy as that.

Bill Moyers: No to the adventure?

Joseph Campbell: Yeah, the adventure being alive of living.

PLEDGE BREAK

Bill Moyers: When I was growing up, Tales of King Arthur, Tales of the Medieval Knights, Tales of the Dragon Slayers were very strong in my world.

Joseph Campbell: Dragons represent greed really. The European Dragon guard's things in his cave and what he guards are heaps of gold and virgins. And he can't make use of either of them but he just guards. There's no vitality of experience either of the value of the gold or of the female whom he is guarding there. Psychologically the dragon is one's [01:36:39] own binding of one self to one's equal and they are captured in your own dragon cage. And the problem of the psychiatrist is to break that Dragon open him up so that he can have a larger field of relationships. Jung had a patient come to him who felt alone and she drew pictures of herself as caught in the rocks from the waist down she was bound in rocks and this was on her windy shore and the wind blowing and her hair blowing and all the gold, which is the sign of the vitality of life was locked in the rocks. And the next picture that he had her draw had followed something he had said to her. Suddenly a lightening flash hit the rocks and gold came pouring out and then [01:37:39]she found reflected on rocks roundabout the gold and there was no more gold in the rocks. It was all available on the top. And in the conferences that followed those patches of gold were identified. They were her friends, she wasn't alone but she had blocked herself in her own little room and life but she had friends. Do you see what I'm meaning?

Bill Moyers: Absolutely.

Joseph Campbell: This is killing the dragon. And you have fears and things. This is the dragon that's exactly what that's all about. At least the European Dragon. Chinese Dragon is different.

Bill Moyers: What is it?

Joseph Campbell: It represents the vitality of the swamps and the dragon comes out beating his belly saying Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, you know. That's another kind of dragon. And he is the one that yields the bounty[01:38:39] and the waters and all that kind of thing. He is the great glorious thing. But this is the negative one that cuts it out.

Bill Moyers: So what you are saying is if there are not dragons out there and they may not be...

Joseph Campbell: The Real Dragon is in you.

Bill Moyers: And what is that real dragon?

Joseph Campbell: That's your ego holding you in.

Bill Moyers: What's my ego?

Joseph Campbell: What I want, what I believe, what I can do, what I think I love and all that. When I regard as the aim of my life and so far that might be too small. It might be that which pins you down. And if it's simply that of doing what the environment tells you to do it certainly is pinning you down. And so the environment is your dragon as it reflects within yourself.

Bill Moyers: How do I slay ?

Joseph Campbell: How do you...?

Bill Moyers: ...slay that Dragon in me. What's the journey I have to make, you have to make, each of us [01:39:39]has to make? You talked about something called a soul's high adventure.

Joseph Campbell: My general formula for my students is, follow your bliss and you find where it is and don't be afraid to follow it.

Bill Moyers: Can my bliss be my life love? Well, my life's work, Is it my work or my life.

Joseph Campbell: Well if the work that you are doing is the work that you chose to do because you are enjoying it, that's it. But if you think Oh gee, I couldn't do that, you know, that's you dragon, its locking you in. Oh no, I couldn't be a writer. Oh no, I couldn't do what so and so is doing.

Bill Moyers: Unlike the classical heroes we are not going on our journey to save the world but to save ourselves.

Joseph Campbell: And in doing that you save the world. I mean you do, the influence of a vital person vitalizes. There is no doubt about it. The world is a waste land. People have the notion of saving the world by shifting it around and changing the rules [01:40:39]and so forth and now any world is a living world if it's alive. And the thing is to bring it to life and the way to bring it to life is to find in your own case where your life is and be alive yourself it seems to me.

Bill Moyers: It's the power of the teacher isn't it to bring vitality to others, to make others see the vitality in them.

Joseph Campbell: Well, it happens. That's one of the delights of teaching. I mean when you are not teaching in order to have an easy job but because you really have something to teach and you love young people and you want to give what you have got or found to them. And to see them come alive is this, the reward of teaching.

Bill Moyers: Do you say I have to take that journey and slay those dragons do I have to go alone?

Joseph Campbell: If you have someone who can help you that's fine too. But, ultimately the last trick has to be done by you.

Bill Moyers: In all of these journeys of mythology there is a place everyone [01:41:39]wishes to find. What is it? The Buddhist talk of Nirvana. Jesus talks of peace. There is a place of rest and repose. Is that typical of the hero's journey that there is a place to find?

Joseph Campbell: But to place in your self of rest, now this I know little bit about from athletics. The athlete who is in championship form has a quiet place with himself. And it's out of that, that his action comes. If he's all in the action field he is not performing properly. There is a center out of which you act. And Jean my wife, a dancer tells me that in dance this is true too. There's the center that has to be known and held. There it's quite physically [01:42:39] recognized by the person. But unless this center has been found you're torn apart tension comes. Now, the Buddhists word is Nirvana. Nirvana is a psychological state of mind. It's not a place like heaven. It's not something that's not here. It is here in the middle of the turmoil is called Samsara, the whirlpool of life conditions. But Nirvana is what? It is the condition that comes when you are not compelled by desire or fear or by social commitments. When you hold your center and act out of there.

Bill Moyers: And like all heroes the Buddha doesn't show you the truth, the illumination he shows you the way...[01:43:39]

Joseph Campbell: The way. But it's got to be your way too. I mean how, should I get rid of fear. The Buddha can't tell me how I'm going to do it. There are exercises that the

different teachers will give you. But they may not work for you. And all a teacher can do is give you a clue of the direction. He's like a lighthouse that says there are rocks over here and stay a clear.

Bill Moyers: You talk a lot about consciousness.

Joseph Campbell: Yes.

Bill Moyers: most people hear that term in, like me have only a veiled understanding of it. What is it?

Joseph Campbell: Jean and I are living in Hawaii and we are living right by the ocean and we have a little lanai, a little porch and there is a coconut tree that grows up through the porch and it goes on up. And there is a kind of vine plant power thing with leaves like this that has grown up [01:44:39] the coconut tree. Now that plant sends forth little feelers to go out and clutch the plant and it knows where the plant is and what to do and where the tree is. And it grows up like this and it opens a leaf and that leaf immediately turns to where the sun is. Now you can't tell me that leaf doesn't know where the Sun is going to be. All of the leaves go just like that. What's called heliotropism turning toward where the Sun is. That's a form of consciousness. There is a plant consciousness. There is an animal consciousness. And we share all of these things. You eat certain foods and the mind knows whether there is something there for it to go to work on. I mean there is whole this is consciousness. I begin to feel more and more that the whole world is conscious. Certainly the vegetable world is conscious. And when you live in the Woods [01:45:39] as I did as a kid you can see all these different consciousnesses relating to themselves. Now it is a part of, its sort of Cartesian mode. To think of consciousness is being something peculiar to the head but this is the organ originating consciousness. It isn't. It's an organ that inflects consciousness to a certain direction, certain set of purposes but there is a whole consciousness here in the body and the whole living world is informed by consciousness. I have a feeling that consciousness and energy are the same things somehow. Where you really see energy there is consciousness.

Bill Moyers: Scientists are beginning to talk quite openly about the Gaia principle.

Joseph Campbell: There you are the whole planet as an organism.

Bill Moyers: Mother Earth.

Joseph Campbell: And you see. If you will think of [01:46:39] ourselves as coming out of the Earth rather than have been thrown in here from somewhere else you know. Thrown out of the Earth, we are the Earth. We are the consciousness of the Earth. These are the eyes of the Earth and this is the voice of the Earth. What else?

Bill Moyers: How do we raise our consciousness?

Joseph Campbell: Well, that's a matter of what you are disposed to think about and that's what meditations are for. And all of life is a meditation. Most of it unintentional. But a lot

of people spend most of it in meditating on where their money is coming from and where it's going to go. But that's a level of meditation or if you have the family to bring up, your concerned for the family. These are all perfectly very important concerns but they have to do it with physical conditions mostly and spiritual conditions to the children of course. [01:47:39] But how are you going to communicate spiritual consciousness to the children if you don't have with yourself. So how do you get that, then you think about the myths what the myths are for, is to bring us into a level of consciousness that is spiritual. Just for example, I walk off the 52nd street in 5th Avenue into St. Patrick's Cathedral. I have left a very busy city and one of the most fiercely economically inspired cities on the planet. I walk into that Cathedral and everything around me speaks of spiritual mystery. The Mystery of the Cross what's that all about there. Those stained glass windows that bring another atmosphere in. My consciousness has been brought up on to another level all together and I am on a different platform [01:48:39] and then I walk out and I'm back in this one again. Now can I hold something from that. Well, certain prayers or meditations that are associated with the whole context there. These are what are called mantras in India. Little meditation themes that hold your consciousness on that level instead letting it drop down here all the way. Then what you can finally do is recognize that this is simply a lower level of that.

Bill Moyers: The Cathedral at Chartres, you love so much, also expresses a relationship of the human to the cosmos doesn't it?

Joseph Campbell: Well, I think everyone who has spent anytime at Chartres has felt something very specific about this Cathedral. I have been there about eight times. When I was a student in Paris I went down there about five times and spent one whole weekend and I identified [01:49:39] and looked at every single figure in that Cathedral. I was there so much that the concierge this little old fellow who took care of the Cathedral, he came to me one noon time and he said, "would you like to go up with me and ring the bells?" I said, "I sure would." So we climbed the, to fleche, the tower up to where the great bell was. The great enormous bronze bell and there was a little like a seesaw and he stood on one end of the seesaw and I stood on the other end of the seesaw and there was a little bar there for us to hold on to. He gave the thing a push and then he was on it and I was on it. We started going up and down, and the wind blowing through our hair up there in the Cathedral and [01:50:39] then it began underneath BUNG, you know the Bung, Bung, I thought it was one of the most thrilling adventures in my life and when it was all over he brought me down he said I want to show you where my room is. Well, in the Cathedral you have the nave and then the transept and then the apse and around the apse is the choir screen. Now the choir screen in Chartres is about that wide and he took me in a little door, into the middle of the choir screen and there was his little bed and a little table with a lamp on it and when I looked out there was the black Madonna, the tree in the window of the black Madonna and that was where he lived. Now there was a man living in a meditation, a constant meditation. I mean, that was a very moving beautiful thing. [01:51:39] Well, I have been there time to time again since.

Bill Moyers: What do you find when you go there? What does it say about all that we have been discussing?

Joseph Campbell: Well, first thing it says is, it takes me back to a time when these principles informed the society. You can tell what informing the society by the size of the what the building is that's the tallest building in the place. When you approach medieval town the Cathedral is the tallest thing in the place. When you approach a 17th century city it's the political palace that's the tallest thing in that place. And when you approach a modern city, it's the office buildings and dwellings that are the tallest things in the place. And if you go to Salt Lake City you will see the whole thing illustrated right in front of your face. For the temple was built. The temple was built right in the center of the city. I mean this was the proper organization that's the spiritual center from which all flows in all directions. [01:52:39] And then the Capital was built right beside the temple, and it's bigger than the temple and now the biggest thing is the office building that takes care of the affairs of both the temple and the political building. That's the history of Western Civilization from the Gothic through the Princely periods of the 16th, 17th, 18th centuries to this economic world that we are in now.

Bill Moyers: In New York now, the debate is over who can build the tallest building not to praise but to build the tallest building.

Joseph Campbell: Yeah. And they are magnificent. I mean there are some of the things that are going up in New York now really are and this is kind of architectural triumph. And what it is, is the statement of the city, we are financial power center and look at what we can do. It's a kind of virtuosic acrobatic stunt.

Bill Moyers: Will new myths come from there.

Joseph Campbell: Well, something might, [01:53:39] you can't predict what a myth is going to be anymore than you can predict what you're going to dream tonight. Myths and dreams come from the same place. They come from realizations of some kind that then have to find expression in symbolic form. And the myth, the only myth that's going to be worth thinking about in, immediate future is one that talking about the planet not this city, not these people but the planet and everybody on it. That's my main thought for what the future myth is going to be. And one we'll have to deal with will be exactly what all myths we have deal with, have dealt with. The maturation of the individual, the gradual, the pedagogical way to follow from dependency through adulthood to maturity and then to the exit and how [01:54:39] to do it and then, how to relate to this society and how to relate this society to the world of nature and the cosmos. That's what the myths have all talked about. That's what, what this ones got to talk about. But the society that is going to talk about is the society – the Planet. And then until that gets going you don't have anything.

Bill Moyers: There is that wonderful photograph you have of the earth, seen from space and it's very small and at the same time it's very grand.

Joseph Campbell: You don't see any divisions there of nations or states or anything of that kind. This might be the symbol really for the new mythology to come. That is the country that we are going to be celebrating. And those are the people that we are one with.

[01:55:33]