

# THE PULSE OF SPIRIT



EMISSARIES  
OF DIVINE LIGHT

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## THAT PLACE OF WONDER AND GLORY

22 DECEMBER 2008

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*(The people gathered in the Dome Chapel sang “Joy to the World” and “O Come, All Ye Faithful.”)*

This is the first time in my life that I’ve sung those two Christmas carols and wept all the way through. I love them and there was something in the words that I want to revisit:

*Yea, Lord, we greet Thee on this happy morning.*

*Jesu, to Thee be all glory given.*

*Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing.*

The song was originally written to acknowledge the birth of Jesus two thousand years ago. Today, as I look upon those who are gathered here this morning, that’s you. I’m so grateful to be surrounded by the revelation of flesh bringing the Lord on earth.

In “Joy to the World” are these words:

*He rules the world with truth and grace.*

How true is that? Truth and grace, not power and might.

*And makes the nations prove the glories of His righteousness and wonders of His love.*

There are wonders abounding; brilliant people and radiant friends.

David Karchere said this recently:

*If you go down deep to the core of what another person is, you will find nothing but goodness there, nothing but gold. If there is something that’s dysfunctional, something uncreative, it has crept in from someplace else. It’s not them. (from “Healing in Sacred Space,” November 16, 2008)*

These are wonderful words, true words. I believe that the wonders of being alive and seeing the glory of God are not my imagination. Can you wake up to that beautiful snow outside and not feel the wonder, even if you have to shovel it, as I did? There is so much that reveals design and glory and wonder.

I was reading an article in the Monday morning *Loveland Reporter Herald* newspaper that was quite humorous, even though it was a scientific report. It spoke to me of the denial of the wonder in the design of the human experience. It was titled “Scientists Back Brain-Boosting Drugs.” Here is a quote from the article:

*We should welcome new methods of improving our brain function, and doing it with pills is no more morally objectionable than eating right or getting a good night’s sleep.*

Hmm... I read it and I wondered, “Could you actually say that out loud, think it’s scientific and then put it in the paper, and still think it sounds right?!” There is a great difference between taking brain-boosting drugs and getting a good night’s sleep and eating a good meal. The article also says, “Much is unknown about the current medications and their side effects, but it’s still worth it.” People want what they want while denying, or actually defiling, true design. While there are times when taking medications is important and better than the alternative, it is not the same as using our bodies as they are designed to be used. There is no glory in a choice that seeks to improve on the wondrous way our flesh is made.

I go back to the words of the song: “And wonders of His love.” The wonder of His love is the glory of living in the pattern of life. Isn’t it a wonder that we heal? Isn’t it a wonder that we have people in our lives who love us? I had an experience this week, doing a check-in with a few people, asking the question: Who is your closest core of friends who know you, warts and all, and still love you? Isn’t *that* a wonder? That people continue to love you, even though you are sometimes irrational and disagreeable? That sometimes you actually hurt others and insult them, maybe accidentally, maybe sometimes in pain, but they still love you because they see you? They see the goodness and the depth of your gold.

I am filled this morning with the joy of being alive, the experience of knowing happiness, as well as being aware of the mess we are in as a country and as the human race. We still get to know what it’s like to be with someone we love, who loves us back. To eat good food—is that not a wonder? We grow our own food and enjoy it. We have the privilege of eating good carrots, of eating good spaghetti, and to know tomorrow we can do it again and enjoy it and use it for the wonders of being alive.

In the Christmas card we sent out from Emissaries of Divine Light, the final line in it was “Emmanuel! Emmanuel! Aum-en.” When I was a little girl my favorite Christmas song was “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.” It has a haunting melody, as if it was calling to me. It was like a chant of openness: “O come, O come. Here am I.”

The word “Emmanuel” means “God with us.” So the song and the prayer is asking “O come, be with us, Emmanuel.” And how is that possible? It’s certainly not possible if you live in the place of self-judgment. “If you only knew who I really am...” I don’t think there’s a human being alive who hasn’t thought “If you knew the thoughts that went on in my mind, if you knew the feelings that were in my heart, you’d see I

was actually not lovable.” That’s what it really comes down to. It’s not just thinking “I’m untrustworthy or unholy.” At the core of those thoughts lies the human conviction that “I’m really not lovable.” There is certainly an internal conflict in knowing the wonder of who you are and knowing some of the negative convictions that are rolling around inside oneself.

I give thanks and praise for the capacity to keep my mouth shut, to actually choose what I say that will offer blessing and goodness, like the words of these Christmas songs; songs that invite us to bring joy to this world and to behold the wonders of love. For me, reveling in the truth behind these songs, there are tears of joy, not grief or sadness. They are the tears that come from the thrill of knowing what is true, and knowing that I’m not waiting. And you don’t need to wait.

I had a conversation with my sister yesterday. She was distraught that there was something that she has a habit of doing that she knows annoys people. She was in this place of believing “That’s really who I am, so nobody really should love me.” But that bad habit is so small compared to the gold and wonder of who she is and the blessings she has bestowed on her world for the fifty years she’s been alive. Like the character Jimmy Stewart portrayed in the movie *It’s a Wonderful Life*, a person can come to believe that their life is disposable. What was revealed in the movie is that he was a great blessing, which would not have been delivered if in fact he hadn’t been around.

So there is, in our hearts and minds, things for which we can repent. They don’t really reflect who we are. But repentance is about not doing it that way anymore. It is not about hating ourselves for what we have done forever after. True repentance leads to self-forgiveness. It leads to letting the wonders of love come on earth.

“Joy to the world, the Lord is come” through you. This is a song of the proclamation of the birth of the Christ child, but on this day the Lord comes through His people. His wonders are revealed, as it says in the song, through living flesh. “He rules the world” through the people who say He will. And the “He” referred to is not somewhere out there. Right here—the divinity that resides in here is revealed as I choose to bring blessing and wonder and peace, and reveal the gold and the goodness, knowing that I have warts and all.

When I was a student in high school, I did an independent study project on socialization. And the research I did was about children who were raised by wild animals. It revealed the effects of the environment on how a person becomes a person.

So when we talk about our warts, sometimes our warts are because we had siblings. Sometimes the warts are because our parents actually didn’t like each other. These things have had an effect. I would like to read a verse from Matthew:

*Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body more than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? (Matthew 6:25,26)*

Later in this chapter Jesus speaks about trusting the design and who you are, and the wonders that will be revealed and the provision that is there:

*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.  
(Matthew 6:33)*

As a young person, I used to interpret that verse as saying that if you're good enough, you'll get into heaven. If you're a good girl, God will love you. But what this says to me on this day is seek ye first that which is right at hand, the spirit that is true of you, the wonders that are right here, and all these things shall be added unto you.

What shall be added on, besides glory and wonder? What more would we need besides glory and wonder? I don't need anything else, except having you in my life. And that is the greatest glory and wonder—being with people I love and who love me, warts and all, because we see the gold, we see the goodness straight on. And we raise each other up when we live in that place of wonder and glory and joy to the world.

So I know it is our custom to have responses at this point in our service, but what seems most appropriate is if we could re-sing, "Joy to the World."

*(All stood and sang, exuberantly, accompanied by Previn Hudetz on piano.)*

Thank you. You are the wonders of His love, and I'm very, very thankful to have had this morning together.

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