

FINDING GRACE AT THE COALFACE OF CREATION

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT
OCTOBER 12, 2015



DAVID KARCHERE is a speaker and workshop leader who assists people to renew their Primal Spirituality—an experience that virtually all human beings know at birth, and that ideally grows as they mature.

The open heart has a profound part to play in how we connect spiritually. I had a friend who told me that he was connecting to God with his mind. I did my best not to laugh in his face. I'm not saying that the mind has no role to play in our spiritual life. It does. But our primal connection relies on an open heart. The Western world has developed a way of living that acts as if we could experience life entirely through our mind. It doesn't work very well.

I just led a *Healing Chant* workshop at the Gate House Spiritual Centre in Cape Town, South Africa. One of the wonders of what we shared was the ease with which people moved into an intuitive experience. There is an intuitive dimension to who we are that has to be engaged—the right side of our brain, according to researchers—if we are to live a fulfilled and happy life, if we're really to connect deeply and profoundly at a spiritual level.

It amazed me, as I led the session, how hungry people are for this experience. And I've had that experience repeatedly around the world. It amazes me that even though most of the people have never chanted and they have never explored the use of healing energy through the hands, they embrace it eagerly as if they had been doing it all their lives. They have an experience of letting their intuitive knowing open up and blossom. It is an imperative for us as human beings, if we are to reclaim our primal spirituality, to connect deeply through an open heart.

To do that, we've got to face the fact that our culture cuts across that primal bond in so many ways. This is not about being against the culture of the day. It's just about the fact that there has been something in the human psyche, particularly in Western civilization, that has so cut across the foundational connection we have with our own power, with our own love, and the source of our own Being. We've got to face what's

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happened and do something about it to have something change for us, if we are to reclaim our primal bond with the creative source within us.

The cycles of a human life are bookended by blessing and grace. That is to say that our life begins and ends with an experience of an openness of the heart.

The creative process begins with blessing. It is a beautiful thought, and a true one, that all of Creation in our lives as human beings starts with blessing. If it doesn't, it's going to a bad place, I can assure you of that. This is the blessing of love and nurturing that a baby receives from its parents. It is the blessing that is rightly given at the beginning of any project. It is the blessing of the wedding ceremony at the beginning of a marriage. A human life is supposed to have an experience of blessing at the beginnings of all things.

The end of all creative processes is grace. And if there is no grace in the human experience, the process isn't creative. Like blessing, grace is an experience that profoundly involves the heart. Grace is like blessing except that the heart has grown wiser in the process. The heart comes to see that love is not just the promise of all good things but it's the presence of goodness through *everything*. That's what we come to know in a human life when we come to grace. We come to know that God is not just a great dispenser of all that is ideally good. The real God is the God of everything in your

life. The real God is the God of the creative process, the God of living and dying, of being born and passing away, of things coming together and things falling apart. The real God can hold all of that in love, knowing that it's *all* good.

Knowing that deep in our heart is knowing grace in our life. We are meant to come to know the truth of what grace is—and not only to know it, but we're meant to be the arms and legs, the hands and the heart of that real God in *our* life, in *our* world, so that we're bringing that profound love in the midst of all things. That love goes from us to the heart of other people, to our own heart so that we can say, "Life is good." I may be sick, but life is good. There are losses in life, and life is good. There are things that come together and there are things that fall apart. We meet people; people leave our lives. We go to places and we leave places. We begin a job and we end a job. And it's *all* good. It's all profoundly wonderful, because it's all an opportunity for that great God of all Creation to come into whatever it is.

I heard this comment from a woman at the Cape Town *Healing Chant* workshop. She said that ever since she opened spiritually, she had more challenge in her life, and she couldn't figure out why that happened. She thought that if you opened up spiritually it would all just get better and better. But that wasn't her experience.

The way the day flowed, I didn't have a

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chance to answer her back. But if I could have, this is what I would have said.

As a person opens up to the reality of the spiritual, it is natural to think that life is now going to be all happy and nice. It is the honeymoon of our spirituality. The honeymoon is the promise of all things wonderful and good. The truth is, it is all good, but it's not all a honeymoon.

When you awaken spiritually, you are there for the challenge that appears in your life. You are there to bring grace to that, whatever that is. And if you run from the challenges, what you are running from is the opportunity to bring grace into the world—to bring grace to your own humanity, to bring grace to other people, to bring grace to that thing that's dressed up as a challenge.

So often we run from the challenges, not realizing that that challenge is the coalface—the interface between the grace of the Divine, the grace of what Love is, and whatever it is that is dressed up as the challenge. The Divine is what is whole, holy and immutable. The challenge is what is in process and mutable. The challenge becomes unholy when we treat it as if it were to be worshipped and treated as something immutable.

Where are we in that challenge—that illness, that financial difficulty, that stress in

somebody else's life or in our own? Are we living the freedom of the Divine and bringing it to the challenge? Grace is not about being free *from* limitation—it's being free *in* limitation.

The unenlightened person takes what is beautiful and in process and treats it like it's our God, like it's immutable, it's never going to change. And so they don't feel free. They feel trapped. They run from the challenge. And perhaps they seek the spiritual as a way to escape it, praying for relief.

The enlightened person doesn't tell God about all their big bad problems; they tell their problems about their big bad God! It's God that's immutable, and we are rightly the heart of God that doesn't change. The challenge *will* change. It's *not* there forever.

We are here on earth in our physical form to bring the immutable to the mutable. But if we end up jumping sides, we're in big trouble. We jump sides when we identify with the problem in ourselves, in other people or in the world, and then call that immutable. One with God, we are immutable, not our problems.

We belong to the Eternal that's in our physical bodies and in *all* of our human experience. We are that spirit of Love that's moving in the heart, not just that old broken-down feeling, or that discouragement which we may feel.

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Whatever it is that we're feeling in our own emotional body, we're the Love that's coming into that, that says, "I'm here for you." We can insert our name: "I'm here for you, David. I am here for this feeling. I am the Love that's here to take this feeling and uplift it."

But if we are running away from the things that are challenging—whether they're feelings in ourselves, thoughts in ourselves, our own experiences, or things seemingly outside of ourselves—we're never going to find the coalface, the confrontation between the Eternal that we are and that thing which is temporal, which is mutable and changing, whether it's a thought or a feeling, a circumstance or a relationship. Whatever it is, it's changing. We're here to embrace those things, not run away from them.

That's the learning of grace in our own growth and development. When we come to grace, we realize, *Oh, I have that to bring to my human experience. And if I have it to bring to my own human experience, I can bring it to another's.*

It is impossible to bring grace without an open heart. So life cracks us open. Haven't you been cracked open by life? All the challenges of life are meant to open us up so that we get the message that we're not the thing that is happening. We're what's happening *to* the thing that is happening.

We are that great spirit of Love, that spirit of the God of Gods that is everywhere and one throughout the universe. That reality is unique and specific in its expression in our own experience. We're here to bring that uniqueness, that focus of All That Is in the unique expression that is ours, and only ours, to face those things in our life that are ours to embrace. That takes courage. The very word *courage* tells us something about what courage is, because it contains that French word *coeur*, "heart."

It is a time of grace on Planet Earth. There is the terror of so much that's happening in our world. In so many ways it is awesome and it is awful. Breaking through the terrible and the awful is the great spirit of Creation and the great spirit of the Creator that's coming into Creation. There are people becoming conscious of *being* that great spirit, knowing that they are not identified with the mutable. They know that what is terrible and awful is mutable, it is changing, even though it may have to become worse before it can get better.

The power of Creation is at work on Planet Earth and the power of the Creator is in all things. It has its own times and seasons, but it's a lot more powerful than anything that we as human beings can come up with. Humanity can't withstand it, but it can withstand us as mere human beings.

And where are we in this mix? We are designed to be the Creator in human

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form—the immutable standing in the midst of the mutable at the coalface of Creation in the human experience, where all the angels and all the devils, the world in which we live, are all brought to us. Here, all that's in process and all that's holy meet. And the almighty power of the God of Gods has the opportunity to let the world come around right.

This is grace. In that grace is forgiveness and transmutation; release, passing away, ascension and celebration. In grace, there is apocalypse. With a yielded and open heart, enter this grace. Bring the holiness of Being into all that is changing in your life.

David Karchere

dkarchere@emnet.org

October 11, 2015



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