

THE UNIVERSAL LOVE WITHIN THE FAMILY OF MAN

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT
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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.

All good things begin with us being fully present where we are, embracing the present moment and accepting it with gratitude. That experience opens our heart and the opportunity to bring care and love into the situation.

When we do that, we are not only touching into the creative resource that's within us individually, we are touching into a resource that we share in common with other people. We don't just have discrete pockets of love within us individually. There is a great pool of Love. If *Love* is the name for the creative power of all Creation, when we tap into our own love we are tapping into that larger reservoir that we hold in common with all people and all things.

We, as human beings, have the remarkable capacity of consciousness, of thought and feeling and self-expression, unlike anything else we know. The world is a wondrous place, full of wondrous things and wondrous creatures. But we, as human beings, have this remarkable and unique gift of consciousness and self-expression at the level we do, so that we not only tap into the creative power of the universe as a living creature but we tap into it as a conscious human being. And yes, it comes out differently through

you than it does through me, but it is one field of Love. When we are opening up spiritually we are opening up to that larger field that is one field of Universal Love.

As human beings, we can be unaccepting of our circumstances and unaccepting of the people in them. We can demonstrate a lack of care and a lack of understanding, and experience ourselves as different and separate from other people and from the world around us. In that state, we enter into a world, not of conscious awareness of this universal field; we enter into a state of judgment. Judgment goes beyond a discerning of differences to a judgment about differences—a rating of other people and of circumstances. And within that, there's a withholding of one's own care and understanding. It's trading in care and understanding for appraisal—a bad bargain.

When we are opening spiritually, we are giving up our awful habit as human beings to judge others and judge circumstances in a way that withholds the spiritual gift we have to bring. It's one thing if I'm discerning differences for the sake of loving and caring and understanding. It's another thing if I'm discerning and then going

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into judgment, and using my judgment as an excuse to hold back the gift I have to bring.

It's said that the craziness of resentment is like drinking poison and hoping somebody else will die. It's like that when we resent and it's like that when we judge. Because what we're sacrificing for ourselves is the opportunity to open up and be in touch with a universal field of Love—one Love, one reality. It's not that that universal field goes anyplace. But we become unconscious of it when we choose to be conscious of something else—judgment.

So it's our loss, and then the loss of the people in the world around us, because we're not bringing our gift. But what do you think is more important to you? That other people around you give their gifts, or that you give yours? That other people around you tap into Universal Love and open up to that and let that come through them, allowing you to touch some of that gift that they're giving to you? Or that you have that experience firsthand for yourself, so that you touch into that reality and have the privilege of letting Universal Love come through you as care, as understanding for other people—ultimately, as grace.

For me, the answer is easy, and it goes like this: *You mean I get to touch into this field? I get to be conscious of how much I love people, how much I love being present? You mean I get to touch into this tremendous creativity that's within me and within all people and all things? And then I get to give it living color in my expression?*

Like anyone, I get to experience Universal Love coming through me. It's nice being loved by other people, but I don't think it holds a candle to allowing the love that's within us to move us and come through us and out through us to the world, through our own presence.

If you're not in that place yourself, if I'm not in that place, it's so easy to feel needy. *I wish somebody would care, somebody would understand, somebody would see past my unique way of being in the world, my personality quirks, and see me for who I am.* But if there is not a flow-through of Universal Love, of the oneness of all Being, then it can actually hurt when somebody else is full of love and life and joy.

All good things begin with being fully present, fully accepting one's own circumstances and all that is happening here and now. And then being grateful for the opportunity you have for being present in the middle of it, and letting flow through you the unique gift you have to bring to the world.

Many years ago, when we lived in Connecticut, we lived near Long Island Sound. One December, a powerful nor'easter blew through. The next day I walked down the beach. It looked different somehow from the last time I'd been there. Sand and pebbles must have shifted. But just looking at it, it looked quite normal. I assumed that all the fish and snails and mussels that made their home there had been affected. But they would simply adjust to whatever had changed and life would go on.

Towards the top of the beach there was a park bench with concrete legs and a wooden seat that told a different story. The sand had piled up around it, washed up by the storm, until it reached the seat. So looking at the bench, you knew something had happened. Something was different. Something was wrong.

It occurred to me that that is how our life is as human beings. We have these concrete forms that we build. They are the concrete forms that we build around us. But worse than that, we have concrete forms in our heads—we have park₂

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benches in our minds that have sand up to the seats. So often we, as human beings, have ideas about how things *should* be, and we are constantly measuring what's *actually* happening according to those ideas. And we're rating how things are happening in our life; we're rating how people are behaving, according to the park benches in our mind. If we were like that beach but without park benches, there would be shifting sands and shifting scenes, and we could be present without judgment, enjoying our life as it is in the miracle of what's happening, and accepting what's going on in our life in a way that embraces the process of it and brings grace to it. Grace leaves us when there are concrete structures of the mind against which we are gauging what is actually happening.

Giving up our judgment to be fully present, entering this present moment, we find we have a conscious spiritual gift to bring. Think of the teachings of Jesus when it comes to these matters. His spiritual teaching invited people to become conscious of the universal field of Love that is within all people and within all things. And what did he teach? If you listen to many who consider themselves Christians today, they might tell you that he taught that we should pray to him, to pray to Jesus. I don't believe there's a single place in the Bible where he taught people to pray to him. Here is what he *really* taught:

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

He said to pray this way. So I don't think there could be much mistaking that it was a spiritual teaching from a spiritual master, but a teaching that has been ignored so widely by many people who consider themselves followers of Jesus.

He taught people to acknowledge the Father. Acknowledge the presence of Universal Being, God, by whatever name. The original word that Jesus likely used for Father, *Abba*, was a familiar name showing intimate connection, not to some austere figure, far removed. What a beautiful way to relate to the reality of God that's within all things, that is at the same time expressing itself uniquely through you and through me and through all of Creation, and which is still one reality.

We have the opportunity to pray that prayer, not just in church. It is the magic of Jesus' teaching and the magic of any true spiritual teaching that it doesn't take you away from the practicality of living a human life. In every moment of our life, in every here and in every now, we could be living that prayer. Living in the spirit of it, not necessarily reciting the words but in the here and in the now, in the spirit of that prayer, asking ourselves, *What is it that is the Father's will now? What care can I bring, what power of creation, what grace can I bring to this person? What can I do to allow the Father's will to be done in this earth?* As I'm making dinner, as I'm going to an event, as I'm at work, staring into my computer screen—whatever it is, how in this moment could the Father's will be done in this earth, in this here and now?

The Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh talks about mindfulness. Mindfulness is an element of our *primal spirituality*. The root of it is not a Buddhist teaching and it is not a Christian teaching. It is how we are made to live. Was Jesus not teaching a mindfulness practice in the teaching of this prayer?

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

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There is a holiness to the pregnant potential of Being that's within us and within all Creation. It becomes holy out here, in the living of our life, when we acknowledge the pregnant holiness of Being, the holiness of the very spirit of life that's within us. The spirit of the Creator that's within us is holy. And when I take the attitude of acknowledging, in this circumstance, *I'm less worried about the sand on the beach that's piling up to the park bench than I am about acknowledging the pregnant holiness in this situation that could come forth*, I open to experience that holiness.

Hallowed be thy name.

Holy is that reality that I have the opportunity to express. The person who is judging their neighbor is losing consciousness of that holiness.

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done.

I take the *kingdom* to be a world to be born, and the beautiful pattern of that world. With that pattern comes the dominion necessary in a human life to let the kingdom be born. Jesus' prayer is so often prayed with the thought of some distant tomorrow, is it not? "Thy kingdom come someday, Lord—someday. Maybe not in my lifetime, but someday." The reality is that the kingdom comes now as we're present here and now and in touch with it.

When you take responsibility for that coming, and I do too, the oneness that's already true inside us, the fact that we are living from the same reality of Being and the same field of Universal Love, becomes clear. That inner reality has a chance to meet up on the outside as we give it expression. We've already met up on the inside. We're already touching and part of one Reality in the Invisible. But we get to know that among ourselves when we express that one Reality among us. Then we touch it, and there it

is in the magical way that Creation works. You are so uniquely you, I am uniquely me, and yet we are one. We are part of one Reality, one Family of Man. So brilliant and so beautiful individually, so distinctive in how we express ourselves, and yet part of one kingdom, one Reality.

This is the opportunity that's present for someone who gives up judgment as a way of life and embraces their potential to be a living expression of the heaven that's within them. The kingdom within guides us and leads us; it prompts us to express from that reality.

The Aringer Institute is a training and consulting practice based on the idea that what goes wrong for people, and what goes wrong for organizations and families, all starts with one little thing. It all starts when a person withholds the gift of care that they have to give. That simple act puts in motion a series of events all built around a person's need to make an excuse for the fact that they didn't do what they innately felt compelled to do—care for another person, or care for something in their world. Those excuses are often dressed up as judgments. Personalities get built around that. Organizations and whole cultures can be built around that.

So the Aringer Institute assists people, and particularly the leaders of an organization, to identify where it was that they stopped caring and stopped giving their gift. They trace everything back to that, and then attempt to help a person start to live their life from their innate generosity—from their natural desire to let the will of the Father be done.

I gave a talk in South Africa, *Seven Simple Steps to a Happy, Fulfilling Life*. The third step was *Doing What You're Told*. My point was that learning to

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do what we are told by elders as a child is only the training for our ability to follow the direction we receive from inside. It is a way of learning to do what the Father is directing us to do from the heaven of our Being.

A true spiritual teaching is a practical spiritual teaching. Doing what you're told from inside *is* practical. It's listening to all the inner wisdom that's speaking to us all the time. But if we're not tuned in, we're not hearing it. If we're not receiving the gift and giving it, we're not doing what we're told. Real wisdom is giving the gift that we have to bring, in the most creative way possible.

When we open up spiritually, we become *God Smart*. Being *God Smart* is the only real intelligence there is, actually. Sometimes I notice people becoming self-satisfied with how smart they are. But if they aren't being *God Smart*, they're probably being stupid, because they're not giving their gift and they're not knowing the joy of that and the effectiveness of it in living.

I hope that through these words you have let more of your love and wisdom flow from within yourself. I hope you are accessing something that is holy, not in a churchy way or a religious way particularly. Holy because life itself is holy, and the real God—not the God of religion, but the real God—is holy. The God in you is holy. The God in me is holy. The God in all people is holy, not just in believers, not just for the Protestants or the Catholics, Muslims or Jews. The *real* God is holy.

When we're open to it, we feel and know and experience the preciousness, the holiness, the sacredness, the gift that is in life itself, inside us to give, inside all people. Here's what happens: If you acknowledge it within yourself, you begin to look around, and you see that it's within everyone, and it's precious. It's to be cherished and shared. And it's meant to have life in *our* life, in our earth, in our communities, in our families, in our nation, in our world, in this great Family of Man.

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