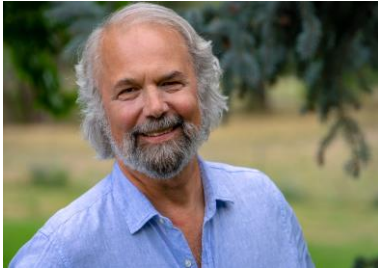


# The Fire and Light of the Shrine

Pulse of Spirit

October 23, 2019



**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.

I'd like to explore what it means to be a keeper of the shrine, and to be a living shrine oneself. The shrine is, in essence, a cup. And it's meaningful as a shrine because the cup is turned upward and receives an inner Reality, and then what is being received fills the cup and overflows into the world. What is the cup filled with?

Some years ago I wrote a choral piece, "Kingdom of Fire and Air." That names what fills the cup, except that the air is not just any old air. The atmosphere around us here on Planet Earth is filled with the light of the sun. When the atmosphere of a human being is filled with the radiation of the sun within them, it is illuminated. So, when the human cup is open and receiving, it is filled with fire and light, and we have fire and light to bring to the world.

That's a remarkable resource, when you think about it—the resource of fire and all that that implies, and the resource of light. The fire is the fire of love. It's the fire of

Creation; the fire within the atom, within the sun and within the human heart. We have that fire to bring to the world as a conscious human being. What a power! We also have light. Light allows us to see, and the kind of light that we are speaking of brings wisdom, which is a knowing of the unfolding pattern of Creation, which we see in Creation but which comes through us when we are filled with light. We are filled with that pattern, and that pattern orders our soul and overflows into the world.

Tuesday of last week was an anniversary for me. Fifty years ago, on October 15, 1969, I led a protest march with friends from my high school in Westport, Connecticut. Twelve hundred students marched from Staples High School to the downtown. And then I had an opportunity to give a talk at the rally, where thousands more joined us. As a sixteen-year-old, I was feeling some fire and light! The fire felt like it was burning me up, and I sure had some fire to bring. I was not happy with what I saw happening in the

world, and I sure didn't want to be part of it. And I wanted to bring some light to the situation.

I believe that each one of us was born into the world with fire and light to bring. You are the light of the world. You were born to bring light to the world. In truth, you have no other reason for coming, other than to bring fire and light into the world. That is true of all people.

What I discovered as a sixteen-year-old was that all that I was railing against in the world at large was in me. That was devastating. It was devastating to see that what I thought was so unjust and so wrong had infected my own soul. And I came to understand that if I was going to do anything about the world, I had to do something about me. This cup had to heal and I had to come to a place of integrity, and I had to find others and share something of the experience of being the cup with them, and come to a place of integrity together so that we, as a cup turned upward, could be filled and could bring something to the world. I didn't see how any political movement of itself was going to correct the problems that the world had, or the problems in me. And believe me, if I thought it would have, I would have been all about that, and whatever it took in that political realm, I would have done it. But I knew it would not.

Within a couple of months of that march, I met a man who was the director of education at Sunrise Ranch, Dr. Bill Bahan. That's how

he was introduced on that night of an evening talk where he lifted me out of my seat with his fire and light—and with the lightness of his humor.

I realized last week, on the fiftieth anniversary of the march, that my life has been about my own healing, my own growth, my own development as a cup, and then my own infilling. And then it was about the people that I had come to know who were on the journey with me. And it was about all the work of being a cup together and allowing the cup to be filled and overflowing. It was also very much about the integrity of that cup and keeping it. So often it seemed like all the steps that had to happen before something of major fire and light could be brought to the world had to be taken. I believe that's rightly how it is for any of us, and for all of us together.

In the deck of Attunement Cards I have created, there are seven cards for each of the seven spirits related to each of the seven major endocrine glands in the human body. The seven cards for each of the seven spirits relate to seven spheres of human experience. That comes out of the understanding that we practice our spirituality when we witness ourself in the spheres of our life in which we are functioning, and we get real about how that is transpiring for us. We get real about the integrity of the cup for us personally and in all the spheres in which we live.

It begins with Source and our relationship to

Source. That is where we are initiated into being the cup. That experience is of looking upward and getting real about how we are relating emotionally and spiritually, in mind and heart, to the very source of our own Being, allowing that relationship to be intact. In that process, we have to consider if there are erroneous beliefs that we are carrying that are not allowing us to open up fully, that are getting in the way of that relationship. The cards go on to speak about other spheres of life. Here is the seven-fold pattern.

- Source
- Ancestors & Leaders
- Friends, Colleagues & Partners
- Followers, Dependents & Staff
- Teaching, Healing, Artistry & Ritual Space
- Family, Community & Organization
- The World

I think that's descriptive of how it is for us as human beings. There are all the layers of our life, and each one is a shrine, rightly. This whole world is rightly a shrine, is it not? This is what the astronauts first saw when they looked back at Planet Earth. I can imagine how they gasped when they saw this jewel in space. I think they saw that it was a shrine. The world *is* rightly a shrine, and all the spheres of human experience are rightly a shrine.

Where that is the truth, experienced by a person, the fire and light that is doing the work of fusing the cup and transforming what

is in the cup, has a chance to come out into the larger world, sphere by sphere. It overflows from the individual, and the integrity of their relationship with the Divine, into how they're relating to the individuals around them so that a relationship becomes a shrine. And then what we share with another person is shared into a larger field. Perhaps a couple becomes a family. Perhaps two people gather others around them to create an organization or a community, or even a movement. Perhaps a person invites others to learn what they have learned and share what they are knowing.

We are here to wield the powers of fire and light in the world. That is no small thing. I suspect, for most people, there is little understanding of what spiritual power is all about. Of course, in nefarious ways, at some low level of things, spiritual power is utilized all the time. It is utilized through fear, and through activating greed and envy and jealousy. It happens all the time through advertising, through the news, through politicians, and these days through social media. There are all kinds of nefarious, low-level spiritual powers being exercised, accessed through the human heart.

There is a fire of destruction in the world that ends up as outright war, and a light that's more like darkness, human darkness, than real light. So, in that sense we have some familiarity with spiritual power but, for the most part, very little familiarity with genuine spiritual power; little familiarity with what it

means to bring fire and light to the world in a way that illuminates and uplifts, that brings truth, that brings the transforming power of love.

It certainly takes integrity as a cup to allow that to overflow on a creative basis. We've probably all had the experience of what it means to be a leaky cup and to let our fire leak out in destructive ways. I think the healthy message from that, for oneself, if you catch yourself doing that, is this:

*More integrity for the cup! Don't be leaking out what is happening in the cup. Let it stay in the cup and do its transformational work. Don't let that fire be leaking out. Don't let lightning be striking the person next to you in accusation and blame. No, be the cup. Hold those forces in the cup and let them transform your own cup, to the point that the cup can overflow, and those powers can move on out, totally in the authority of the One Who Dwells, not lashing out with some kind of emotional, tyrannical, adolescent outrage.*

Just as the fifty years of my life portrays, as long as it takes, the cup needs to have integrity. We can't really bring fire and light to the world on a creative basis without integrity in the cup. I realize I'm still that young man of sixteen who saw a world that needed fire and light. I am still him. I have been him. And I have known through my life that there was a change needed in this world

and that my life was committed to that change. But I had to accept the discipline of the integrity of my own cup and the cup that I share with you, because I saw little hope for bringing something of creative conscious evolution to the world without letting that be a reality for me, and without being a crucible for transformation enough so that I could wield those powers with true authority, and so that we could wield those powers with true authority. What would that mean? We are discovering what it means.

Somebody commented at a recent meeting at Sunrise Ranch that life can become dull or boring. Life becomes dull and boring if the fire and light that is seeking to move through us, and through all the spheres of our life, stops moving through us and somehow caves back in upon us. We're not done until that fire and light moves all the way out and gets out into the world. And if we give up on that process—if we look at the lack of integrity of the cup at any level, in our own capacity or in the people around us, and then just give up—we become bored. We become stagnant. And that boredom and stagnation are signs that we are dying in small increments. We live when we are on the journey of allowing the fire and light to move through us, and through all the spheres of our life, out into the world. And then the passion of that fire is alive in us, and we are doing the work of our incarnational mission.

I've had occasion to say essentially this to others and to myself in the past week:

*It's not about you. It's not about what you think are your failures; it's not about what you think are your successes. And ultimately, even your own life isn't about you, as you've thought yourself to be. It's all about the fire and light that is within you, the fire and light of the One Who Dwells that wants out. That is all that matters, and everything else is a distraction. And whatever you think your failures are, I really don't care. And I don't even care that much about your successes, although I will celebrate them with you.*

What I care about is that we together, all who are awakening, are bringing fire and light to this world. And if you are about that, I am with you, and we are together. We are the cup, and we are the shrine, and we are bringing that fire and that light. We then come to know that we *are* the One Who Dwells. We know ourselves as that. So may it be.

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