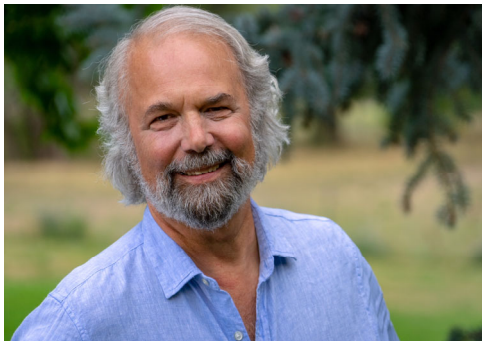


GRACE COMES TO THE COURAGEOUS

PULSE OF SPIRIT
SEPTEMBER 27, 2023



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.

Graces come to the courageous—to people who face life head-on and give it their best.

Sometimes, courage is forced on a person. Their life circumstances demand it of them. Other times, a person's courage comes from an inner urge to live a life of service or to make a difference in the world. It is running toward the facts as they are instead of away from them or wishing they were different.

Courage is accepting the authorship of our lives instead of victimhood.

There are many layers to life and many faces of courage. There is the courage to face circumstances and the courage to walk your life path. There is the courage to confront challenges and overcome difficulties.

Sometimes, it takes courage to meet other people and to bring your best to them, however they are showing up. It is a courageous act to

love another person unconditionally and to sustain that love, even through personal conflict.

There are internal dimensions to courage. It takes courage to think for yourself without simply accepting other people's thoughts or the prevailing beliefs of culture as the truth. It takes courage to think through an issue in life from top to bottom and from beginning to end, and then take action based on your new understanding.

It is a courageous act to face what is arising in your emotions—to recognize it, see it for what it is, and then bring understanding to your own heart. It takes courage to express the pure love that lives deep within your heart of hearts.

The ultimate courage is simply to be yourself—not to pretend to be someone you are not or to try to be someone who meets the approval of others. Being yourself is what overcomes any personal shame over not being enough or being flawed.

Courage is showing up in the world, allowing your natural inner radiance to shine through your physical presence.

When you are courageous, you are taking responsibility for your role as the author of your life story. It can seem like you are doing it alone, without any backup or support. For a spiritual person, it can even feel like you have turned your back on your spirituality. It can seem like you are no longer attempting to be spiritual—like you are getting your hands dirty and your feelings wounded as you face the world.

But something magical happens to the courageous. They find grace. Or, more accurately, grace finds them.

The most dramatic story I know of grace finding a person is the story of John Newton. He was an English slave trader. In 1748, he was sailing his ship, the Greyhound, back to England. He awoke off the coast of Ireland in the middle of a severe storm. The ship was about to sink. The storm swept several sailors overboard. With his hands fastened to the steering wheel, Newton cried out to God.

It took four weeks for the Greyhound to reach an Irish port. By the time he returned to England, Newton had set the course for a new life. He abandoned the slave trade and worked for the abolition of slavery. He became a parish priest for the Church of England.

John Newton is the author of the world's best-known hymn, "*Amazing Grace*."

Grace comes to the courageous, not to the pious, not to the ones who run from the world or from themselves.

As contradictory as it might seem, through courage the Divine Mother shows up in the world. Because our courage is her, acting through us to hold all things, all people, all circumstances, and even our own humanity in her arms. Because she can't do that through us without our willingness to show up fully.

Here is my poem honoring the Divine Mother. It appears in my book *Becoming a Sun*. The poem acknowledges who she is already, even without us, and our role as instruments of her love in the world. I wrote the poem when Princess Diana died tragically in a car wreck. With the out-pouring of grief around the world, and in my own heart, I realized that humankind has a longing to have someone like her as living embodiment of the spirit of the Divine Mother, who I referred to as the Queen of Heaven and Earth.

Praise to the Queen of Heaven and Earth

Praise to the Queen of Heaven and Earth;
 She in whom all things are conceived, born, and
 nourished;
 All the creatures who walk on the ground,
 The fox, the deer, the ants, and all,
 All the birds of the air and the fish of the sea,
 The sparrow, the cockatiel, and the salmon,
 The fierce hawk, the gentle dove, and all;
 She in whom the grass grows,
 And in whom the apple tree, which gives its
 fruit, is nourished;
 She who receives the lily petals, when they fall
 from their stems,
 And who receives the baby's tears,
 Who hears the prayers of the poor and the rich
 alike,
 And who receives all as her own.

Praise to the Queen of heaven and earth.
Our hearts are carried to you on the wings of
our songs,
And in our labors of love,
Sanctified in your rich heart which is our own,
In your work of love which we carry out in our
days,
Carrying your blessing
As a kiss on our forehead,
As violets in our hair,
As a golden locket over our heart
Reminding us of how precious you are.
Praise to the Queen of heaven and earth.
You walk among us in our children,

In our closest friends, and friends unknown;
In our lovers,
And as our mothers,
In those who know you and serve you above all
else,
And in ourselves,
Shining as bright as the noonday sun,
Or hidden like the sliver moon behind a cloud,
You walk among us as we have eyes to see.

Praise to the Queen of heaven and earth.
All is given to you.
All lives in thee.

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September 24, 2023



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