

# Next to Me

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.

In the early years of the Vietnam War, Pete Seeger took words from Ecclesiastes and turned them into the song *Turn, Turn, Turn*, popularized by the folk-rock band The Byrds. Here are the final lyrics of the song:

*To everything turn, turn, turn,  
There is a season turn, turn, turn,  
And a time to every purpose under  
Heaven.  
A time to gain, a time to lose,  
A time to rend, a time to sew,  
A time for love, a time for hate,  
A time for peace, I swear it's not too  
late.*

For years, I disliked the song's final line because it was not from the source text. But I have come to appreciate Pete's great heart and his passionate desire for peace that came through those last words.

We might adopt an attitude of acceptance for what transpires in the human world, as most of the words of the song seem to advise. But still, who doesn't wish for something better for humankind? Who doesn't detest what is transpiring in Gaza and Ukraine today? Or in any of the 108 other armed conflicts around the world? Who doesn't desire peace for the human family? But the desire for peace alone doesn't bring it any closer.

What does?

Years ago, Emissaries of Divine Light played a leading role in a series of events called *Human Unity* conferences that brought people together from many cultures, philosophies, and spiritual traditions, with conferences in Vancouver, Canada; Boston in the United States; and Coventry in the United Kingdom. It was a

visionary initiative. A theme song for the event was *Awaken to Oneness*, even though the people involved were not always that united.

What is it that creates an experience of unity and oneness? Clearly, it is not something physical. You can have infatuation and attraction on a physical basis, but that's different.

At a physical level, we are not one. We are separate. Who I am ends with my skin. There is usually a space, and then another person's physical existence begins where their skin starts. And even if we are touching, we are still physically distinct.

But there are other levels where we interact and blend. Our thoughts can mingle with others until we forget whose thought we are thinking. Science measures how the human energy fields of two people can blend, and we can share one heart with another person or a group of people. The motto of the Burghley family in England, *One Heart, One Way*, expresses the aspiration to know oneness, with a recognition that human emotion is involved.

Still, all the desire and aspiration in the world doesn't achieve unity if people ignore the basis for it.

Here is a way to express the formula for oneness based on our record of a prayer from Jesus of Nazareth:

*Thou in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us.*

Looked at from a physical standpoint, a literal understanding of these words makes no sense. Of course, these words speak of a reality that is not physical. We might call it *spiritual*, though that word says more about what it isn't than what it is. It isn't physical. And what it really is is unknowable until we experience it.

*Thou in me...*

Who is the *Thou* being addressed? The invisible Presence of Being. The Reality at the heart of all people. The source of Supreme Love within us all.

As that Presence enters a person, they are held within that Presence.

*Thou in me, and I in thee...*

Here is oneness established between an individual human being and the Presence within all people. When that oneness is established, the human being has the opportunity to include the people in their world in that experience of oneness.

*...that they may be one in us.*

Some attitudes and practices may assist people to have an experience of oneness: compassion, forgiveness, and understanding among them. But if a person doesn't touch the transcendent level of experience that *makes us one*, these attitudes and practices end up being employed by people who feel essentially separate.

These words are from Emeli Sandé's powerhouse song "Next to Me":

*When the end has come and  
buildings falling down fast  
When we spoilt the land and dried  
up all the sea  
When everyone has lost their heads  
around us  
You will find him, you'll find him  
next to me*

Listeners interpret the song differently. *Is she singing about a man? Or is she singing about God?* Emeli herself says the meaning changes to her, depending on when she is singing the song.

But think of the most profound possible meaning of these lyrics. *You'll find him next to me.*

Pronouns get tricky when it comes to spiritual things. Is Divine Presence male or female?

In Western culture, the Divine is usually thought of as being masculine. I think that's imbalanced and unfair. I have compassion for women who are presented with masculine deity, without any acknowledgment that there is a feminine face of the Divine. And if the Divine Feminine and the Divine Masculine are present, that implies so much more.

*You'll find him next to me.  
You'll find her next to me.  
You'll find Love next to me.*

*You'll find Divine Light next to me.  
You'll find the truth of yourself  
next to me.*

As a person knows oneness with Divine Presence, that Presence is there in the physical space where the person is. If we believe in God, perhaps the belief is that God is omnipresent, eternal, and infinite. God doesn't require me for God to be in the space. But it is different when someone shows up and says, *You'll find him next to me.* There is a basis for oneness to be known by people in that space. Divine Presence is immediately perceptible and available to be experienced. It is next to the person who knows it, behind them, around them, before them. It can be easily found by anyone who is with them.

*You'll find her next to me.*

When Divine Presence enters a person, and that person enters Divine Presence, the people with them can find Divine Presence because of that person. The experience of oneness is immediately available to be known.

*You'll find him next to me.*

When this oneness begins to be experienced by two or more people, the power of Love drops into the awareness and experience of those people. Divine Presence and power are no longer relegated to a remote heaven in the imagination of someone who thinks about

it. They descend into the human experience and are activated in the human world.

The power of eternal Love is now present in a body of people. The gravity of what Love is—and its ability to draw together and create an experience of oneness and creativity—is now moving through those people. And if you've had even a little bit of that experience, don't you want more? The more we embrace this experience, the larger it becomes.

We can hope that people worldwide will all experience oneness, as if by magic.  
*We'll all awaken to oneness in a moment.*

Do you believe that is going to happen? Suddenly, one Tuesday morning, we'll all tune in and awaken? That's not my experience.

My experience is that it happens when someone says, *You will find him next to me.* There is then the revelation of a formula that creates human unity for real:

*Thou in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us.*

Human personalities being what they are, without this transcendent experience, loving one another is hard work and ultimately impossible. All our efforts to be tolerant, compassionate, and understanding ultimately fail.

When oneness is known, Love is the most natural thing in the world. We know and understand each other. And peace on earth follows, as day follows night.

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