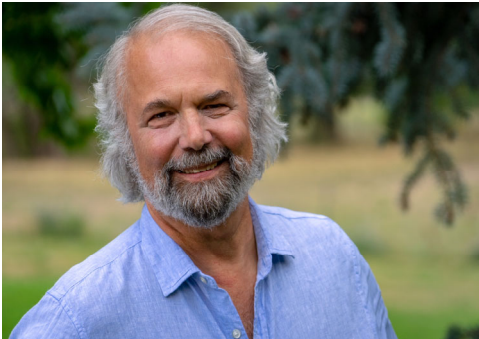


SEEKING AND FINDING

PULSE OF SPIRIT
JANUARY 10, 2024



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.

There is so much that people believe *about* Jesus. Here he was, perhaps the greatest spiritual teacher the world has ever known. But how much are his profound teachings received, understood, and followed? Even by those who call themselves Christians.

Part of the problem is simply that what Jesus taught has often been ignored. And sometimes, it has been presented by people and institutions with political agendas that distorted the original teaching. It has been subject to mistranslation, misunderstanding, and misinterpretation.

I am not writing to disparage anyone's faith, or anyone's earnest efforts to follow Jesus' teaching and example. My interest is to open a deeper awareness, with people

who are interested, of the liberating truth this man offered the world.

Jesus offered this simple teaching:

Seek and you shall find.

Why do we seek? Isn't it because something is missing?

Here, we are not talking about missing a key, pen, or favorite scarf. We are speaking about the essential things of life.

To find what is essential, a person must first acknowledge it is missing. There is a vacant spot where it should be—a hole.

Thinking of the human family, that hole is huge. There is a hole in our collective heart that manifests in all kinds of ways—

as war, famine, disease, ignorance, and more.

One of the ways the hole in the heart of the human family manifests is as loneliness. Social scientists are awakening to a global epidemic. A recent Meta-Gallop survey found that one in four people worldwide experience significant degrees of loneliness. Loneliness impacts people's mental and physical health. It can lead to addiction. It is a burden for people who experience it and for our culture as a whole.

When something is missing spiritually in a person's life, they might have ideas on what has left the vacancy they feel. But they don't know what would fill it. What they know is the emptiness that they feel from its absence.

Just telling a person about what would fill the hole doesn't help. The person has to acknowledge the emptiness and then feel the desire to fill it. And that desire has to be strong enough to make a person truly seek.

How strong does the desire have to be before a person truly seeks? I found from my own experience and witnessing others that it takes a desperation-level desire. *Desperation!*

Do you think casual seeking lets you find it? *I'm feeling a little low today. So, I think I'll try to find a little spiritual upliftment.* That is not how it happens. My guess is that most of the readers of this blog have found what fills the hole in the heart of humanity

because they were desperately seeking it, desperately wanting it. Without that sense of great urgency, the average person goes around with an unresolved ache in their heart. And that's why humanity has that ache in its collective heart.

The word *Islam* means *surrender*. In our seeking, we have to surrender to the reality we find. Perhaps a gesture of surrender, like bowing, might engender an internal surrender. But without that changed internal state, the physical gesture doesn't let us find what fills the emptiness.

Surrender has got to be inside, *for real*, in the heart. Without that, the human family is sunk. Without that, we're sunk as a human being.

I'm not suggesting we should all walk around desperate all the time. But still, there has to be that place in ourselves where we know how much we rely on something outside of our human persona, something larger than what we are as a human being. Truly opening to that, it comes in. And if it comes in, it fills us to overflowing. It flows through us.

There is another crucial factor in filling the emptiness—where a person is looking. Addiction of all kinds manifests when a person attempts to fill the emptiness with something other than what is actually missing. Addiction is addiction because it doesn't work. The addictive substance doesn't fill the emptiness. So, as long as a person seeks in that direction, they need more. Only what is truly missing fills the emptiness.

Jesus' teachings addressed this too. He told the woman at the well that if someone drank the water he gave them to drink, they would never be thirsty again.

At the initiation of Jesus' public ministry, he declared this good news:

...the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

This was another way of pointing to how what is missing in human experience is found.

In most contemporary English versions of the Bible, there is a word that precedes Jesus' declaration. It is a mistranslation of a form of the Greek word *metanoia*, which means "to experience a change of mind." In Aramaic, the language Jesus spoke, the word is *thubu*, which is "to turn around." This meaning is similar to a Hebrew word still used today: *teshuvah*, which means "to return." These words relate to something in consciousness. A physical turning alone won't allow a person to find what fills the hole. If a Muslim turns to the Invisible Source as they face Mecca, they might find what their soul longs for. But without that, they won't find what they are seeking.

If you are going to seek and find, you have to look in the right place. Physical things of themselves can't substitute for spiritual things, even though Spirit can be embodied in physical things. What fills the hole in the heart of humanity comes from a place you can't see—heaven. And here's Jesus' good news:

...the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

And what do you have to do to find it? Seek in the right place. Turn to it. Then your desire takes you to a knowing of the source of what then fills the empty place.

Two years after the Roman Empire declared Christianity the state religion, the Roman Emperor commissioned Jerome to translate the gospels from Greek into Latin. He ended up translating the entire Bible into Latin for the first time. It is known as the Latin Vulgate.

Jerome translated the Greek word *metanoia* into Latin as *paenitentiam agite*, which means "do penance." That was later translated into English as a word with the same origin: *repent*.

The origin of the word *repent* is similar to words like *penitentiary* and *penal colony*. It comes from a word that relates to punishment. So, it implies self-punishment.

Over centuries, that is how many Christians have understood it. There is a long history of Christian self-flagellation that continues to the present day. And the Church has taught Christians to do penance for their sins.

How confusing for someone genuinely seeking! *Don't seek. Don't turn. Don't experience a transformation of your consciousness. Self-punish. For the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*

That's an excellent way to keep the hole in the heart from being filled.

When we take something beautiful and wonderful and mix it with something painful, it confuses the human psyche. This can happen for children. They want the love of their parents. But sometimes, that love is mixed with abuse. The child learns to receive love in a painful way. They come to believe they can't receive love without pain. And they, themselves, learn to love in a hurtful way, at least until they figure out what went wrong and reset the pattern in themselves.

This same pattern has shaped much of the religious world. And if you promise people heaven, but then make them believe they have to self-punish to receive it, the hole in the heart of those people will never be filled.

Of course, the other thing that the Christian religion did was postpone heaven. No longer was it *at hand*, as Jesus proclaimed. It was somewhere else—a place we might go after we die, if we self-punish sufficiently. Or it will appear later, when Jesus comes back.

Taking out the punishment and replacing it with the truth of what allows us to find what we seek, here is Jesus' gospel, his good news, true to the earliest and most authentic translations we have:

Turn. Experience a change in heart and mind: For the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

By its very nature, heaven is invisible. It is our hidden potential as human beings. When we seek the source of our potential and turn to it, we find it, and then we embody and express it. Then, it is hidden and invisible no more.

What is it we find in the invisible heaven of our hidden potential?

We find ourselves. We find the Soul Family, the inner reality of all people.

We find Love—the Love that emanates constantly from who we are to our Soul Family. And the Love of others radiating to us.

We find the beating heart of the Soul Family. We find the Supreme Soul, the One who is within us all and in whom we all dwell. This is the basis for our oneness as a Soul Family; and without that, there is no basis for an experience of unity.

This is what we find when we seek what fills the empty place in the heart of humanity. It fills us like the radiance of the Sun, rising within us, as if on the first morning.

Imagine Jesus proclaiming:

Turn. The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

No doubt, he was shining like the Sun when he did. Heaven was right there, as it always is. And then it became apparent and available—immediate and evident because of him. That is different from

something written on paper or on a bumper sticker. His presence brought heavenly presence because he knew it for himself.

That is a picture of us when we find the invisible realm that is the home for the source of all meaning and significance in life. We declare the presence of heaven—the hidden potential of the human family.

Turn. The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Let it fill the empty places in the heart of the human family.

I hope these words have set this teaching free in your mind and heart. And in so

doing, that we have set Jesus free in the consciousness of humankind.

No one owns Jesus. The Christian church doesn't own him, though he is available to all people and all groups of people. He is not just a figure of Western civilization. As the Christmas angel exclaimed, his joy is for all people.

Nobody owns the Love he showed the world. It is available to all people, and it's free. All a person has to do is genuinely seek and turn to its source, and they will find it.

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