

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT



EMISSARIES
OF DIVINE LIGHT

BLESS THE WORLD BY BEING YOURSELF

SEPTEMBER 22, 2014

These are words written by Carolyn Rhodes, from her powerful hymn *We Have Come*. She articulates the reminder that we have incarnated on earth for a purpose.

*We have come to offer Thy blessing,
Thy holy dwelling place on earth.
Honor and glory we bring to the nations;
Thy spirit surely now has its birth.*

*We have come to bring Thy dominion,
Thy healing word an open door.
We share again our holy communion;
The morning stars together sing forevermore.*

“Thy healing word an open door,” bringing dominion. What an exciting possibility! People sometimes confuse dominion with domination. But this is about healing, something wonderful. *We share again our holy communion*. Not just amongst ourselves but with the One we have come to embody. How magnificent is that!

For us to have the experience named in this hymn it takes courage, because it takes courage to bring yourself *as yourself* into this world. This is from Brené Brown’s column in the recent edition

of *Oprah* magazine. Brené Brown is a speaker, writer and teacher on the issues of shame, vulnerability and courage. This article is entitled “Dare to Get Real.”

These days everything from potato chips to blue jeans is labeled authentic. The word is so overused that we've become numb to it—it's almost lost its meaning.

But it's challenging to be real in a world that wants us to fit in and please everybody.... There are so many messages telling us how to look and behave; to tune them out, we may need to take action.

To be authentic, we must cultivate the courage to be imperfect—and vulnerable. We have to believe that we are fundamentally worthy of love and acceptance, just as we are. I've learned that there is no better way to invite more grace, gratitude, and joy into our lives than by mindfully practicing authenticity.

We need to have the courage to be vulnerable to be truly ourselves. With that kind of courage, we can dare to meet our friends and companions face-to-face. A number of years ago my friend Fiona Gawronsky wrote a note to me about the fact that her grandfather had been honored by the monarch in England as a “Companion of Honor.” She wrote this:

The British monarch confers knighthoods and other honours upon her subjects, including that of “Companion of Honour” or “CH”; my grandfather was such. The CH is of a higher order of ranking than a knighthood, in fact. I think those of us who associate within the agency of God the Possible should consider ourselves as Companions of Honour, too.

A Companion of Honor is acknowledged for being in action, faithful, and in honor, clear. But you don't have to be acknowledged by the Queen of England to be truly faithful and honorable, or to become a genuine Companion of Honor. It just takes the courage to be ourselves. That takes some warrior energy. A warrior is usually described as one who goes to battle. The courage it takes to be a Companion of Honor is the courage to be authentically oneself in a world that has so many messages about how we should behave to please all those around us—how we should be “perfect.” How we need to fit in to be accepted. It takes courage to manifest something and own it as yours. That may be a business, a piece of art, or a garden, but it may also be a friendship. It may be a family. It takes courage to be consistently yourself and honorable in your relationships. Ultimately it comes down to you and me. Are we being ourselves and loving the authenticity of each other? Can we be vulnerable enough to stand face-to-face?

What of our friendship with the Creator? Are we a Companion of Honor with that reality? Perhaps if we learn to be vulnerable with another person and stand face-to-face with them, we could face the holy source of our own Being and be open, vulnerable and authentic in that relationship.

As a child, I had a ritual of kneeling or bowing down before God. There was an element of respect and reverence but there was also an experience of fear. I had to bow down because I could have my life taken, I could be sentenced to burn in hell for eternity. In meeting God face-to-face, He could overpower me and punish me for my humanness. I didn't have the experience of being loved and welcomed. That way of relating to the Divine came out of the religious tradition in which I was raised. I certainly didn't feel like a Companion of Honor to God.

I know now the experience of bowing my head out of respect and love but not out of fear. To have the courage to be myself, I had to face my fear about all the rules about how I'm supposed to be. I had to take the risk to be fully who I am. To be ourselves and take the risk of being different from the rest of the world can be scary. When you think about it clearly, who would welcome that more than the Creator?

As young children, we have no problem being ourselves. We are unabashed in our uniqueness. We are connected with everything and have not yet discovered the social criteria for fitting in. I love that about babies and children. Their free spirits are so enjoyable. They meet everything face-to-face. There is a quote in the Bible about children:

And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

(Matthew 18:2,3)

My initial interpretation was that it was necessary to be innocent and immature. I now believe that this has to do with being willing to face God. Children have not yet been socialized into believing they shouldn't. To come as a child, a person has to be willing to face the power of the Almighty, knowing that they are part of that awesome power. Children haven't learned how *not* to do that yet, so they just *do* it. They're blessing everything all over the place, all the time, just by being present, not caring whether or not you don't like who they are as themselves—until they get to

kindergarten, where they get shamed about who they are and learn to step back and step farther back from expressing themselves, and say, *I guess I need to fit in; I guess I have to stop being myself.*

It takes assurance to stand upright and have the grace and courage of a warrior—someone who will express and embody what is true. It takes assurance to have the grace and courage to be yourself. I have carried the image in my mind of a person who lives in grace as someone who is moving in slow motion—never going to make a mistake, always doing Tai Chi, barely speaking because that would just ruin it. I have learned the most graceful thing I can do is to deliver the goods of who I am, because grace is about welcoming the whole world to me and bringing all of what is within me to the world. That *is* a beautiful thing. You are beautiful when you are yourself. I see children tripping over their feet, full of grace, being beautifully themselves.

In her article, Brené Brown says that she discovered she needs to write herself permission slips to be herself. She puts them in her pocket, and when she is going to a place where she is going to be surrounded with people she doesn't know—people who might intimidate her—she pulls one out:

“Be yourself.”

“Be brave.”

“Enjoy your life.”

This is how I am being with you as I write these words. I am writing words that share the sacred things of my heart and my fresh, visionary thoughts. I welcome you to be that way with me. Be that way in your life. Be as a child, a companion of honor, a warrior, and a friend to the world and to the Creator. Take your place. Bless the world by being yourself.

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