

THE PULSE OF SPIRIT



EMISSARIES
OF DIVINE LIGHT

LET'S NOT MISS THE GLORY

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It is so easy to invoke divine presence. When we give up on trying to find and understand the Divine with the intellect, we can acknowledge the presence of the wonder of being that is with us. We can deliberately open ourselves to an awareness of that presence, so that we give it expression.

Such experiences very naturally bring up a question for a person: How do I sustain this? I've touched peace and serenity, well-being and joy. How do I sustain it?

It is natural that in the living of our life, there are ups and downs in our state of awareness. For most of us, anyway, we can't be in a state of meditation and worship in the usual sense twenty-four hours a day. There is the living of our life, and very naturally there are different ranges of conscious experience. Does that mean, in the middle of a busy day that "I've lost it; I'm not in the ultimate cosmic awareness in this moment; I must have done something wrong"? I don't think so. There are cycles in the pattern of conscious experience.

Lloyd Meeker, who founded Sunrise Ranch in 1945 with a small group of others, used to talk about his experience speaking to people. We still have recordings of some of his talks, and he was a wonderful, inspiring teacher and speaker. He spoke of the energy and awareness rising in him as he spoke to a group of people as "the sun rising." And the energy at the end of the talk as being like "the setting sun," all part of a natural cycle.

If peak spiritual experiences were sustained long-term, they would no longer be peaks. The experience would be flat. The desire for peak experience shows up in many ways. As someone who has produced musical recordings, I was fascinated to listen to Bruce Springsteen's description of

recording his 1978 CD *Darkness on the Edge of Town*. They had been working on the album for months, trying to get every part to stand out, to be a high point in the mix. Finally, the realization dawned upon them that in a mix of parts on a musical recording, everything is relative; and if everything stands out, then nothing stands out. The art of living is to move easily in the rhythm of peaks and valleys that are part of our experience, not to eliminate the valleys.

In a creative, fulfilling life, there is an awareness that persists through all the peaks and valleys. A person doesn't go crashing on the rocks after a high. How does it persist? How can a person sustain the deep joy and fulfillment of the peak experience? The answer is simple and easy in practice. You have to let the spirit you have touched flow through you.

The path of that spiritual flow works like a figure 8, with the person at the crossover point between the circle above and the circle below in the figure 8. The spiritual flow comes down from a higher vibrational level through you and into the world. And then back from the world to you, received to return back through you to the higher vibrational level. This flow allows a person to sustain the spiritual experience. It only takes a willingness on the part of the person to let the flow occur at each point in the process. Here are four crucial points in that flow:

1. Openness—acknowledgment and gratitude for spiritual presence
2. Radiation—outflow of that presence, embodied in personal expression
3. Welcome—receiving what comes back from the world
4. *Puja*—not taking anything personally, allowing the energy of what you receive to ascend to a higher level of vibration

People often put up blocks at one or more of these points, and attention to the flow at each of these sustains the spiritual experience. The Divine lives in our experience of the world when this flow is happening. My words for what grows in our world, which is evidence of the Divine Being that is with us in our world, are *beauty* and *glory*. When spirit is flowing through us, we see the beauty that is around us. We touch the beauty within us. It is nourishing and uplifting from within, and it's beautiful without. We see it and acknowledge it, standing in front of us, needing no improvement. We have to get off any improvement program we may have for the people and circumstances of our life in order to really see it.

When real beauty is present, there is the opportunity to know glory. Glory comes with beauty. Glory relates to the energy radiated through all form, not just the appearance and design of it. So we are here to see beauty and to know glory, and we're also here to foster it. We can see and foster beauty in other people and in all the world around us.

It is a shame that for many people the word *glory* is limited to charismatic Christian use. It is easy for me to picture a Southern preacher speaking about the power and the *glo-ry!* The word

represents more than it does in that context. In Persian, the word for “divine glory” is *farr*. It can be pictured as a halo of light. In ancient times, the Hebrews named the glory that shone round about the Tabernacle as *Shekinah*—divine presence in this world. Though it has these limitations, I haven’t found a better English word for this reality than *glory*.

Is there a higher calling than to see and foster beauty and glory, to let it grow, to create it, to let it be not only inside of us but outside of us, and to deliberately put it out there? I can’t think of one.

We may create beauty when we design and build beautiful things, whether they are buildings, pieces of art, gardens, or something else. But ultimately, there is no real glory unless we let the spiritual presence within us pour out and imbue the forms around us with that quality of energy.

As I walked down a pathway where I live at Sunrise Ranch this morning, I had a moment of looking around and feeling autumn upon us. I saw the familiar shapes of the trees and the building and the lawn, and had a moment of seeing them all for the first time and of perceiving the inner nature of all those forms. I was seeing the inner beauty that is with us always. There is something about the inner nature of being that likes to be adored and that shows itself to us when we are seeing and adoring it, when we are saying somehow to ourselves, “Oh, how beautiful you are. You have created beauty all around me. You are glorious.”

It is Mother God who is beauty and Mother God who allows glory to show up—Mother God who holds all of nature, holds us and all of Being in Her pattern, Her design of beauty. And when the power of the universe comes through that design, there is glory, the majesty of life, the ecstasy of life. We can participate in that, but only as we let go of wanting those things for ourselves, as if they weren’t already present.

That is the sad factor in *American Idol* and other popular television talent shows. They feature people waiting to be told by judges that they are worthy, that they are beautiful and glorious. “What’s wrong with this picture?” I’m glad if it is an opportunity for a person to embrace the wonder of who they are. But the spirit within all of us is beautiful and glorious, and doesn’t need the judgment of other people to give that to us, or deny us that knowing.

All glory belongs to the Great Mystery, from whence it comes. All glory comes through something beautiful, where there is the pattern and design of Mother God. It’s all Hers. And where the power of the universe is coming through that pattern, that beauty gets lit up and it is glorious. That’s true for the trees and the grass out there, but it’s also true for us.

When we realize, as Michael Beckwith once put it, that the world has nothing for us but we have something within us for it, when we give up on the great accumulation mission (whatever we are trying to accumulate) and honor and adore the source of all glory, we find that it is accessible, that

it shows itself. It is available; it is within us. It *is* us. In that state of letting go, we are glorious. As Walt Whitman said, “I celebrate myself and sing myself.” It is torturous when a person tries to celebrate themselves in a way that has not acknowledged Mother God and the universal power of Love. When we acknowledge and adore the source of all glory, we share in it freely and we have it to give. We have the beauty of it to show. And oh, how beautiful the reality of the Mother of all Being is, when She shows up through Her creation and through us.

In traditional Western culture, it seems easy to honor Father God and sometimes not so easy to honor Mother God. It is the union of those two that creates glory. If we have father issues or mother issues, whether they be human, domestic and familial, or whether they are spiritual in nature, we are missing the glory. Let’s not miss the glory.

David Karchere
dkarchere@emnet.org

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100 Sunrise Ranch Road ♦ Loveland, CO 80538
970.679.4200 phone 970.679.4248 fax