23rd February 2026

Awareness

"With the awareness comes transformation and freedom."

Eckhart Tolle, *Stillness Speaks (2003)*

I want to try to articulate something that's been on my mind for a while. It's about awareness, and it arises from more thoughts about prayer.

David, our current church organist, is a remarkable musician. Following the union of our village's congregations, in most of our services we've been utilising a contribution to worship which he's brought with him from his previous congregation. At the conclusion of the prayers of Intercession, we're invited to sit quietly while he plays some reflective music. It's keyboard and not organ music, and it's beautifully played, using the "sound cloud" the keyboard offers. His music picks up themes from the worship, and for me it's become a precious time of prayer.

Recently, however, one of our worshippers took a different view. "The music gets in the way of my prayers," she remarked to me. "It's lovely, don't get me wrong. But it's not prayer-time for me." So, is it prayer, or isn't it? Does the music articulate my prayers, or am I just pretending, such that the music isn't prayerful at all, simply a pleasant interlude before or after prayers can be expressed in my words or our minister's?

But, you see, for me it's about awareness. The Koran says: "Surely God is aware." So, if that is true, is it not enough for me to find a time and space when I can be aware of the awareness of God? Words aren't necessary for that. But whatever takes me to that place – through music, mindfulness or meditation – a deeper awareness of the Divine is enough.

Eckhart Tolle, the German/Canadian spiritual teacher and writer (whom I've already quoted above) says this in his book *The Power of Now:*

> *When you become conscious of Being … don't get attached to the words, and don't make an effort to understand this. There is nothing that you need to understand before you can become present.*

David's music creates an awareness, and a time when I know I can find God. And with that awareness come moments of beauty and transformation. In another of his books, *A New Earth,* Tolle writes: "Awareness is the greatest agent for change." I thank God that I can be taken to a place of prayerful awareness where I am changed for the better.

A prayer for today

Often, loving God, I'm simply lost for words – and your awareness of me is enough.

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