

Flourishing as Friends of Jesus (who really like jazz!)

Feb 22, 2017



My mind often works in weird ways.

Let me give you an example.

Every now and then,
I listen to some of the great jazz love songs
and image that they are talking about God,
about the God that we have come to know best
in the life and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth.

One of the earthiest and most astute woman
who is writing about life from a Christian perspective
is Anne Lamott.

Here's what she wrote in a Facebook post this week:

Love is what you are made of and what you were made for, even though some days are just too long. Your love, and our love for you, cannot help but heal you, the poor, and America. You cannot help but be love, and be loved. You might as well give up on shutting down, staying armored or buttressed, refusing to be a part of this love thing, because it is going to win.

'I Say a Little Prayer for You'

is a song about our appreciation of lasting love.

I don't know about you, but I haven't been very good at that.
The only place I find that kind of steadfast and enduring love
is in my relationship with the God who is revealed in Jesus.

That love is the foundation of all other loves.

That's what I hear celebrated in this kind of love song.

The Brentwood Manifesto of the Christian Faith

How We See God, the World, Humanity, and the Future

*In the beginning, God created the world
and delighted in its diversity and development.
God created humanity, male and female,
and nourished them to flourish in blessing all of creation.*

*But humanity rebelled, rejecting the limits of their power.
Their rebellion against God's vision of justice, peace, and joy
brought tyranny, suffering, and death.*

*God never tired of calling humanity home
to work in common to cultivate the well-being of the world.
Through the law and the prophets,
God's Spirit invited love of God, love of others, and love of self
as the empowering energy for engaging in this mission.*

*In one final act of reconciliation,
God took flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.
In the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus of Nazareth,
God restored the whole of creation to flourishing as divine friends
in a commonwealth enjoyed on earth as in heaven
and continues to work out the completion of that act.*

*Through the church universal, visible and invisible,
the Holy Spirit empowers people
to flourish in their reconciliation with their Creator
through worship, learning, fellowship, and service.*

*By God's grace in Jesus Christ through the work of the Spirit,
we know what it is to be loved and to love
amidst all the problems of the world.
We are equipped and sent to sow seeds of God's vision of SHALOM
in all of our circles of influence.*

*In the end, God's love will transform heaven and earth
and bring justice, peace, and joy to full realization*