

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

Some Notes for the Reflection on April 5, 2017



I have no idea if any of these ideas were in Ron's soul when he composed 'Breathmaker'.

But that's the beauty of music, especially of jazz. It's as much about hearer response as it is about composer intent. So, here's my take on the piece.

There are two basic earthly elements needed to generate the energy we have all enjoyed in the wonderful dance and music tonight – glucose and oxygen. They are the basic building blocks of human flourishing.

From a Christian point of view, however, there is more going on here. All of this is animated and inspired by the breath of God. And the loving intent of that breath Maker, **the** breath Maker, defines reality for us.

In spite of all appearances to the contrary, that loving intent lies at the deepest level of life on this earth. Annie Dillard and Albert Einstein call it 'the unified field.' Dillard speaks of it as "our complex and inexplicable caring for each other and for our life together here."

That's the loving intent that God breaths into everything we do. All of the glucose and oxygen, and everything else we use, is infused with God's loving breath. We can ignore it or reject it. But we cannot make it go away. It will patiently continue to love us all until we recognize our dependence on it for all of our flourishing.

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 human beings
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 a unique and decisive act of reconciliation and revelation,
God overcame our alienation and loneliness.
God took flesh and dwelt among us,
full of grace and truth.
In the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ,
the creation is restored to its original purpose.
God continues to craft the completion of this redemption.*

*Through the church universal, visible and invisible,
the Holy Spirit empowers people
to participate consciously in their reconciliation
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 SHALOM
in all of our circles of influence.*

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