

Jammin' with the Wisdom of Jesus

Some Notes for the Reflection on Aug 16, 2017



**An East Van trombonist, a Russian philosopher,
and a Presbyterian pastor walked into a bar ...**

... and the pastor offered to buy them all a glass of Carlo Rossi red. Remember, the pastor was a Presbyterian, so most frugal in his spending! Over those glasses of wine, they had a conversation about the meaning of life.

At first, the pastor, much to the surprise of everyone, just listened.

The trombonist started the conversation, saying that the meaning of life had to do with connections – real, raw, resilient, restorative connections. He found himself most able to find that in and through his music. The kind of music he played, especially when he got onto New Orleans jazz, arose from deep within his soul. And he found a bunch of guys who understood that, and appreciated it, and contributed to it. They played in a bunch of bands together over the years. They travelled together, especially to New Orleans, where they honed their craft on the streets and in the clubs. And they still have those connections that enable them to play so well together in many configurations and for many audiences. They could feel and see that their vibe nourished their audiences as well, inspiring them to dance in delight. Maybe they couldn't find the words for what all of this meant yet, but it fed them to flourish every day of their lives.

The smile on the philosopher's face broadened as he listened. When the trombonist stopped, and picked up his wine glass, the philosopher set his down, saying that he has spent his entire life trying to make sense of how people communicated in ways that shaped meaning in their lives and that the trombonist had just nailed it. It's all about connection. He called it 'dialogue' in his work and found it happening in every conversation that connected people. He saw it in jazz as well – in the call and response that made up the music. It was the energy that drew everyone into the melody, then invited them to play around with what they felt and thought about those few notes and how they told the story of life and death, of love and hate, of trust and fear in their unique and respected voices.

Then the pastor raised his glass and silently thanked God for the wisdom he had heard in their dialogue. It reminded him of how Jesus worked.

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.*