

All We Need Is Love

Year C

Season of Easter

Pentecost Sunday

Read the Bible passage: [Acts 2:1-21](#), The Message; or [Acts 2:1-21](#), The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).

Click here: [George Hermanson's sermon](#), for an easy to print or email Adobe PDF version of this sermon.

The Rev. Dr. George Hermanson

In our Acts passage we get the marching orders for the church. We may puzzle over the meaning of the coming of the Spirit. They did then. The watchers ask if the disciples were drunk.

It is called ecstatic speech. We have all some experience of this when we are so excited we cannot get out our words or they tumble over one another. Then there are times the moment of awe is so great we say nothing. There is nothing magical about this experience, and the writer of Acts uses colourful and metaphorical language to tell of a moment when the world changed.

We all have a moment or event in which our world changed. We heard or saw things in new ways, heard or saw things that we had never had before. Our world was changed, we were changed.

One of those moments was when I was sixteen. I had gone to the touring group from Jazz at the Philharmonic. Lester Young came on stage and I heard music like had I never heard it before. The very fact I can remember, and actually see the event today, tells you how profound it was. It was like a Pentecost event. I found music that moved my soul.

Music is one of the ways we are transported. It touches our mind and our body, sometimes we cannot stop the rhythm moving our body. Music also illustrates changes in our culture. When something new comes along there is a resistance. When Bach began he was not universally accepted. When the piece Rites of Spring was played in Paris there were riots. When the Jazz age began there were parents who warned their children about the evils of the music. Blues players played in smoky clubs and white children were warned about the evils of the music. Then Elvis, then the Beatles, then Bob Dylan who brought together folk and rock, and then punk and on and on. Each time there was resistance. Yet, look what happened to those kids who snuck into blues clubs, they led to Elvis, the Beatles, the Rolling Stones. The movement of the Spirit.

The event of Acts has been relived in our experience. The first time I worshipped here David played All You Need is Love. The next thing people were swaying, and joining in. It was a Pentecost event.

[All You Need Is Love](#)

George Hermanson

May the Lure be with you

The experience in Acts was a tipping point and a new narrative about history is created. This is caught up in the phrase, go with the flow. This is a common experiential state that comes from deep involvement. From sports to music the experience is described as flow. Flow denotes holistic sensation present when we act with total involvement.

We flow with the wind. Wind is a good metaphor to explain tipping points. For the wind is uncontrollable. Wind blows on and on, changing the contours of physical time and space. After the event we regroup and ask what now?

In Acts they go back to the tradition. Visions will come to all - to all age groups - to all classes of people. It is the vision of God. It is the dream of God. This dream is for a world and for individuals to be healed and restored to right relationships. It is a dream of sustainable creation and inclusive community. The people are invited to join this dream. They are invited to be the hands and feet of the dream. They are invited to make it real.

The wind of fire and Spirit asks us to go beyond our comfort zone. In that moment of experience that which was experienced as broken was now made whole. The story of many languages refers to the problem of Babel. There hubris drove people away from the source of love. Here, in the many languages, is an affirmation that the dream of God is one of pluralism. Many colours. Many voices. Many languages. What is offered is consolation, which is the experience of genuine happiness and spiritual joy. Now one can move forward in doing good. This comes after much disciplined attention and practice.

What is called from us is love. We feel the love of God in a transforming moment. In old language it is called conversion. We feel it in the music. In fact we can sing old gospel tunes, not because of the words, but because of the music, for touches us, calls to us to love and share. This is why I choose some songs from More Voices, for they capture the feeling of the music with words that more reflect our faith. The love of the Spirit within us. The love within begins a healing process, touches and reminds us, God loves me, I am worthy. Then, as a whole person, a loved person we go out to heal the world.

From the personal we move outward. What are the issues of our society? We respond with food banks and grain banks. This is important care and it also demands us to ask why are there such needs? Knowing the needs are created by social structures and values, we then seek in the political realm the healing of the brokenness of society. This is the movement of the spirit in our time. We are lifted as David leads us again in All You Need Is Love.

There's nothing you can do that can't be done. ...

Nothing you can do but you can learn how to be you in time - It's easy.

All you need is love, all you need is love.

George Hermanson

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