

“Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can. God does nothing except in response to believing prayer.”

“John Wesley”

These words from John Wesley led me to connect to another Wesley messenger, Charles Wesley, to solidify my personal beliefs and values. What John’s preaching and travels did for introducing Methodism to the world were put to music by Charles. The brothers understood that many of the people they were preaching to did not read. So, the idea of putting the words in familiar folk tunes helped spread the word. We have benefitted from that decision by singing using our United Methodist Hymnals. Wikipedia tells me that “Charles Wesley published was a prolific hymnwriter who wrote over 6,500 hymns during his lifetime.”

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling,” and I realized his words should certainly fit into this Talk about my own love of the United Methodist Church. *“Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit into every troubled breast! Let us all in Thee inherit, let us find the promised rest. Take away our love for sinning; Alpha and omega be. End of faith as its beginning, set our hearts at liberty.”*

Okay, so the Wesley brothers’ words have set the standard for my thoughts for this TEDDY TALK. However, John Lennon’s lyrics roam about in my brain regularly. I love Lennon’s words from the 1965 *Rubber Soul* album and continued to match my personal philosophy that would come to be characterized by some of his greatest songs in my teen years and beyond. *“All You Need is Love,” “Come Together,”* and *“Imagine”* are examples of Lennon’s messages. But more than this simple assertion, Lennon singing *“Now that I know what I feel must be right, I’m here to show everybody the light”* indicates that love, by which he seems to mean compassion, empathy, and care for others, is the result of a deeply felt understanding, a kind of conversion experience. The Wesley brothers likely felt the same.

That Lennon and the Wesley’s encourage the listener to “say the word and you’ll be free”. The words suggest that love for others is the way to free oneself from the limiting confinement of self-centered fears and insecurities. What both John and Charles Wesley, and John Lennon seem to assert is to give our lives to something greater than individual needs and purpose.

I know there are dozens of more recent songwriters and poets that are just as deeply philosophical and great communicators of truth. In our current national and worldwide chaos, I’m convinced we should be reading and hearing more words that lead us to believe the world can be united with love for every human being on the face of the earth.

There was very minimal, at best, music associated with the New Testament words of Jesus. But when it comes to love, our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ said it in verse with no rhythm attached. You know them, Jesus said: “love each other as I have loved you...” and “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all you mind.” This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” We can believe all the law hangs on these two commandments.

This is just some random and probably rambling words that attempt to tell you why I’m a United Methodist worshipper.

Peace Always

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