

Grace Notes: growing our faith through music by Coni Ferland

We Meet You O Christ words by Fred Kahn/music by Carl F Schalk

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We meet you, O Christ, in many a guise; your image we see in the simple and wise.
You live in a palace, exist in a shack; we see you, the gardener a tree on your back.

In millions alive, away and abroad; involved in our life, you live down the road.
Imprisoned in systems, you long to be free; we see you, Lord Jesus, still bearing your tree.

We hear you, O Man, in agony cry; for freedom you march, in riots you die.
Your face in the papers we read and we see. The tree must be planted by human decree.

You choose to be made at one with the earth; the dark of the grave prepares for your birth.
Your death is your rising, creative your word;
the tree springs to life and our hope is restored.

Lent is often viewed, and experienced, through a personal lens – what am *I* giving up, what am *I* repenting for, what does all this mean for *me*. And as important as it is to connect with Jesus' experiences as He journeys toward Jerusalem and the Cross, it really is much more. When Christ rose from that tomb, that changed everything in that day and every day since. Through this hymn we have the opportunity to consider where Christ is found in *our* world.

Written in 1966, this hymn reflects the early influences on Fred Kahn's life. He was born in the Netherlands and lived through the Nazi occupation, losing 3 grandparents to starvation, and learning from his parents' resistance work. (Info from hymnary.org) But it also reflects the times. In 1966, even though Great Britain was not involved in the Vietnam War, there were still anti-war protests that turned violent; and that year 144 people – mostly school-age children – were killed in Wales when one of seven coal mine slag heaps above the town of Aberfan slid down onto the town after extensive rains. An investigation found that the National Coal Board chose to continue to add to the piles, even though they knew of the risks to the town.

Write down the different places the song lists that Christ can be found. Spend some time over the coming weeks considering your list. For each place, note if you've seen or experienced Christ in this place or way, and how that makes you feel. If you haven't seen or experienced Christ in that way, consider why that is.

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Philippians 2:6-8 *“Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal’s death on a cross.”* New Living Translation¹

Do you feel people have lost sight of Christ in today’s world? Why do you feel that way?
What can you do to help people see Christ in your daily life?

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Luke 22:39-45 *“Then, accompanied by the disciples, Jesus left the upstairs room and went as usual to the Mount of Olives. There he told them, ‘Pray that you will not give in to temptation.’ He walked away, about a stone’s throw, and knelt down and prayed, ‘Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.’ Then an angel from heaven appeared and strengthened him. He prayed more fervently, and he was in such agony of spirit that his sweat fell to the ground like great drops of blood. At last he stood up again and returned to the disciples, only to find them asleep, exhausted from grief.”* New Living Translation¹

What parallels do you see between Jesus’ agony in the garden and Christ in the fight for freedom and justice?
What does Jesus’ choice mean in today’s world?

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What interpretation of the “tree” speaks to you? The tree as the cross? The tree as our unbelief/belief? Something else? Describe your interpretation and why it speaks to you.

Spend some time this season of Lent reflecting on what you’ve found through this hymn as you prepare for the blessing of Easter...

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