

Imagine

Imagine is probably one of the most well known pop songs and peace songs of all time. And I can understand the sentiments behind it that the solution to war and violence is to do away with difference. But to do away with difference not only denies who we are, it also makes for a boring, monochrome, lifeless world. This was written in lament responding to the London bombings, but envisions a very different world than the world John Lennon imagines – this dream is of a world where diversity is celebrated and affirmed yet all live in peace and harmony – a taste of God's shalom.

Imagine,
imagine there are no countries
imagine there are no races
imagine there are no cultures
imagine there are no religions
nothing to kill for
nothing to die for
no world war two
no London bombs.

imagine everyone in identical dress
imagine everyone eating from one menu
imagine everyone living in monochrome cities
imagine everyone believing one creed.
nothing to celebrate
nothing to mourn
nothing to spark debate
nothing to dream.

for there is no heaven while wars rage
there is no heaven while bombs shatter lives
there is no heaven while the earth heats up
there is no heaven while some hoard and others go hungry.
but there is also no heaven when everything is uniform
there is no heaven when life all tastes the same
there is no heaven when there is only one human habitat
there is no heaven when we are not free to hold our own beliefs.

Imagine,
imagine there are catwalks full of exotic clothes
imagine there are menu's of gastronomic delight
imagine there are landscape diverse as fantasy worlds
imagine there are religions to make everyday a festival celebration
nothing to kill for
nothing to die for
where we become friends with those who are different
where we enrich life by sharing food and customs across the divides.

For this is the taste of God's world we want to celebrate this morning
this is the canvas painted by God that is bursting with colour
this is the love of knowledge of God who cannot be confined to one scripture
this is the wisdom of God who invites us to share in Shalom.

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