

A few days ago I was discussing politics with an acquaintance who said to me, "I think the reason so many young people are progressive is that they just haven't grown up. Adults have to live in the REAL world; they have to stop being pie-in-the-sky dreamers. As people get more mature, they should get less progressive, because they have to step up and be responsible for themselves."

So, I guess according to the previous criteria, none of the thousands of us marching together at the women's march in Columbus, or any of the women's marches, are adults. Young or old, rich or poor, black or white, Christian or Muslim, all of us who went out in the streets are dreamers who don't live in the REAL world.

The thing is, maybe we don't really WANT to live in the REAL world right now, because it kind of sucks for a lot of people. It's kind of sucked for a while, for some people more than others, and we progressives have wasted some time arguing about the details of the suckiness. But now we've reached a tipping point, and we're all marching together. We're evolving into something new, something more powerful and creative that will change everything.

There is reason to be disheartened, because so much is at risk. Just look at the signs we had to carry, and all that we carry in our hearts. Equality for women, racial justice, the right to a living wage, refuge for suffering families, marriage equality, basic access to healthcare, native American rights, stemming climate change and protecting the environment, preserving pension plans so that we can live with dignity when we're old, an equitable justice system, affordable education, addressing systemic poverty in the richest country in the world, having basic respect for other human beings... everything seems to be at risk.

But there is MORE reason to be heartened, and I felt this while walking in Columbus. Different and diverse groups converged and walked together, holding beautiful handmade signs, group-made signs, some very witty signs (ask me about my favorite one later—it's not appropriate to share in church!) I could see and feel an evolutionary burst, so to speak, right here in Columbus and am sure others felt the same way around the world.

Maybe we're starting to realize that all the issues we're facing right now have been created by the same system of fear and greed. And maybe we're realizing we don't have to all agree on everything to walk the same streets together.

So, I say to my very grown-up and responsible Christian friend,

--We DO live in the REAL world, and we're working on solving REAL problems.

--We refuse to let anyone steal our REAL imaginations or our REAL souls through any means of economic or social exploitation.

--and, may I add, I believe in the REAL Jesus of the REAL Bible-- not a soft, floaty white Jesus who's just ME being responsible for myself and making sure I get into heaven. I don't need a shiny golden tower in glory, and I don't need an insurance policy on my soul.

My Jesus walks with us down here in the streets, and calls us to be responsible to each other. Our Jesus loves our souls just as they are now AND calls us to something new now, something relevant to this world.

My favorite photograph of a march is a moment captured by both Blake Swift and Zach Dobblear, who went to the DC march with some other young people from church. The photo is of two handsome young men, obviously deeply in love, sharing an intimate embrace and calmly kissing right in front of hateful signs. This simple expression of human love in the midst of hatred brought me to tears. Let's keep expressing our love for others right in the middle of all the fear and hate. It's what Jesus did. Let's stay out in the streets, and let's stay together. Let's show people what's REAL.