

"Dust in the Wind"

Psalm 51:1-12
2 Cor.5: 20b-6:10

FPC, Marshfield, WI
Rev. Dr. Don Houdeshell

ASH WEDNESDAY

"I close my eyes, only for a moment, and the moment's gone
All my dreams, pass before my eyes, a curiosity
Dust in the wind, all they are is dust in the wind

Same old song, just a drop of water in an endless sea
All we do, crumbles to the ground, though we refuse to see
Dust in the wind All we are is dust in the wind.

Don't hang on, nothing lasts forever but the earth and sky
It slips away, all your money won't another minute buy

Dust in the wind, All we are is dust in the wind
Dust in the wind, Everything is dust in the wind"

-Lyrics to "Dust in the Wind", a song by the progressive rock band, Kansas, 1977.

"Dust in the Wind" is a hit single released by the American progressive rock band Kansas in 1977. It peaked at #6 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart the week of April 22, 1978, making it Kansas' only top ten . . . single. Written by Kerry Livgren . . . it's slow melody and melancholy lyrics differ from their other hits, such as "Carry On Wayward Son" and "The Wall".

-from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia on the web, 2/17/09

ASH WEDNESDAY, THIS FIRST DAY OF THE FORTY DAY SPIRITUAL JOURNEY OF LENT, REMINDS ALL OF US THAT WE ARE "DUST IN THE WIND". DUST TO DUST. ASHES TO ASHES. WHEN WE HAVE GOTTEN TOO FULL OF OURSELVES, WE NEED TO BE REMINDED THAT WE HAVE COME FROM THE EARTH AND TO THE EARTH WE SHALL RETURN.

It is said that Kenny Livgren penned the words to the song when he was going through a time when he was searching for the meaning of life. One of the first questions we ask when we are searching our souls is basic: "Who are we?" Both Kansas' song and the God's Word says, "Dust. All we are is dust in the wind."

BUT . . . EVEN DUST, THE SOIL OF THE EARTH THAT DRIES UP AND BLOWS AWAY, HAS VALUE. AS GOD'S PEOPLE AND GOD'S CREATION, WE ARE HERE TO SHARE GOD'S GIFTS. WE ARE HERE TO BE A BLESSING.

In the Lenten journey, when we are searching for meaning, another basic question we ask is, "What is my purpose in life?" If life is fleeting and we are dust, we want to make our time on earth count. We want to make a difference.

God's Chosen People, the Israelites, were chosen not for some special privilege or some special status. They were chosen to be a blessing to the rest of the nations of the world.

That is something we need to hear in the community called the church. Too often the mission of the church to be a blessing gets derailed by our battles over turf and our incessant desire to prove that we are right and everybody else is wrong.

Communal healing needs to take place in the church so that vital and viable ministry can go on. I am convinced that Lucifer or whatever we choose to call evil, knows that the church can be rendered impotent as a force for good in the world. Lucifer says to the other fallen angels, *"Let's see if can keep these Christians fighting among themselves! Let's throw plagues and pestilence at them and see if they will denounce their God!"* Whatever distracts the church and keeps it from fulfilling its vision and its mission successfully denudes the church of its potency.

And so, this season of Lent is not only for personal introspection and repentance, where we regain the perspective of who we are, "dust in the wind", but for the community of faith also to reflect on how it has abandoned its role, abandoned God, and repents. We, as individuals, and we, as a faith community were chosen by God, not for special status or special privilege or for a life of comfort and ease, but to be a blessing to others and to be a blessing to the nations.

Let us repent of the pride and hubris that leads us to act as if we are more than *"dust in the wind"*.

And let us take our rightful place and join the Royal Priesthood of all believers, *"blessed in order to be a blessing."*