

Imagine yourself in a bitter cold winter, outside, alone, and freezing to death. There is no fire near-by, and the wind is so cold as to be literally breathtaking. You would do anything for warmth and a blanket. Maybe you had gone for a hike but gotten yourself lost. Maybe you are out of a home and on the streets. What you now imagine is a physical analogue to the spiritual, emotional, and mental state of the character in Sia's "Breathe Me."

"Breathe Me," by the Australian pop singer Sia expresses an **incarnational need** for whole and healing relationships. The singer's character is intimately aware of a fallen state of being. She is broken, small, needy, and desperately needing to be held. There is a definite sense of isolation and ache in this person's life. Hope seems to be in short supply. How many urban or suburban professionals live a broken life that has never felt a healing touch? There is a deep and trusting vulnerability expressed in "Breathe Me" that almost explicitly invites a Christian into a dialogue that could ultimately bring about healing. But what does the singer need to hear in that dialogue? Are they searching for propositional truth? Dogma? Ritual? Institution? There is a need here for incarnation, for God to dwell and heal, to be with the singer. Christianity has much to offer someone hurting like this, but much sensitivity and relationality is needed to truly connect and offer salvation. For us to express an incarnate God to her, we need to be incarnational ourselves, that is, witness by our witness.

what is incarnation?

The embodiment of God the Son in human flesh as Jesus Christ.

The living embodiment of a quality in human form.

A quality expressed in its most extreme, intimate, or effective form.

In living an incarnational life, we embody the life and character of Jesus Christ in a manner that impacts those people with us.

INCARNATIONAL KEY THEMES

To witness through our witness • God WITH us • Brokenness • Human nature • Meeting a person in their context.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Where is God in this song?

How could you relate to the singer's pain through your own story?

What is this singer asking of God? Us? The Church?

How might the singer's sense of self be redeemed through the idea of Christ entering into the suffering of the human condition?

Is woundedness as expressed in this song more appropriate for a therapy setting rather than a church one?

Is brokenness really our fault? Or is there a deeper condition at the root here?

Is the singer asking for spiritual CPR?

Could you invite someone hurting like this into your church? Would she find healing there? If not, why? What could change to allow healing?

LITURGICAL RESOURCES

Song

What A Friend We Have In Jesus • Sweep Me Away • This is the Air I Breathe

Scripture

"Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus...." *Romans 8:1*

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." *John 14:16*

"I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none." *Psalms 69:20*

"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." *Psalms 147:3*

"The LORD is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit." *Psalms 34:18*