In the book, The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse, Charles Mackesy offers this episode.

The boy and the mole come across a fox caught in a snare.

“I’m not afraid,” said the mole.

“If I wasn’t caught in his snare I’d kill you,” said the fox.

“If you stay in that snare you will die,” said the mole. So the mole chewed through the wire with his tiny teeth.

“One of our greatest freedoms is how we react to things,” said the mole.[[1]](#endnote-1)

One of our greatest freedoms as Christians is how we transcend fear to love. Jesus prayed that love would transcend fear for his disciples and that the love would empower them to glorify God in their lives. He prayed that God would unify them in that love. And He continues to pray for that same love and unity for us today.

We don’t generally face the possibility that if we free someone from a snare that they will kill us. But we do take risks when we love. We risk that our feelings will be hurt if they don’t reciprocate that love. We risk that through our love another person will become more completely themselves. And that might mean we have to change to be with them. Or that they will change us. And we are afraid of change. If we love, we may have to let go of holding someone too tightly and we may lose them.

Yet we are called to love. The Holy Spirit gives us freedom to love. The vision that God has for us as a community of His followers is that we overcome our fears and love one another.

When we love one another we create a united Christian community. We create a community that glorifies God because it brings God’s love and spirit to others. That community can really make positive changes locally and in the world. We create a Christian community that is irresistible to those others around us who see our community. They see the love we have for each other and they want to be a part of us. We never have to worry about finding enough folks to serve on vestry or work at fish fry or in the church store. We don’t have to worry about having enough money just to get by – we have enough to share.

Perhaps this sounds a bit utopian. But it really isn’t. From an initially small group of disciples, the Christian community grew rapidly, despite real persecutions and martyrdom. Christianity grew so fast that, within about six generations, Christian communities were present everywhere in the Roman empire. People saw something so special in the love and unity of this community that they were willing to risk death to be a part of it.

Much has changed about our lives since the 100s and 200s. But people’s desire to be part of a unified community – part of a community in which love abounds – has not changed. To quote Alice Walker, “Everything wants to be loved.”[[2]](#endnote-2) The more broken the world becomes – the more broken we become – the more we yearn to be part of a community united in its love for each other.

The vision of a loving community that is irresistible to others then is realistic. When everyone in the community chooses to put aside their fears of hurt or loss of control to love others, something special happens. That prayer that Jesus prayed for us to be unified so that we are One become reality. Nothing can stop us from bringing Christ to a broken world.

Here’s another image from Mackesy’s fable about the boy, mole, fox and horse.

“Sometimes I feel lost,” said the boy.

“Me, too,” said the mole, “but we love you and love brings you home.”

“Everyone is a bit scared,” said the horse, “but we are less scared together.”

In Jesus, we are free to transform all our fears into love. Let’s love boldly.

1. Charlie Mackesy in *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse* (Ebury Press: 2019) described in Synthesis: A Weekly Resource for Preaching and Worship Following the Revised Common Lectionary. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Alice Walker, *The Color Purple* (Orion: 1982, new edition, 2011.) [↑](#endnote-ref-2)