



PACIFIC
CROSSROADS
CHURCH

March 26, 2017

PRESENCE

Reflections

ANY OBSERVER WOULD HAVE TO say that Christianity is fashionable at present in the United States. This might be a good thing, except that the observer, observing more closely, would have to conclude that, to the extent that Christianity is fashionable, it is loosely fashionable.

It seems to have remarkably little to do with the things that Jesus Christ actually taught

I will begin by dealing with the embarrassing questions that the Gospels impose, I imagine, upon any serious reader. ...If you had been living in Jesus's time and had heard Him teaching, would you have been one of His followers?

To be an honest taker of this test, I think you have to try to forget that you have read the Gospels and that Jesus has been a "big name" for two thousand years. You have to imagine instead that you are walking past the local courthouse and you come upon a crowd listening to a man named Joe Green or Green Joe, depending on judgments whispered among the listeners on the fringe. You too stop to listen, and you soon realize that Joe Green is saying something utterly scandalous, utterly unexpected from the premises of modern society. He is saying: "Don't resist evil. If somebody slaps your right cheek, let him slap your left cheek too. Love your enemies. When people curse you, you must bless them. When people hate you, you must treat them kindly. When people mistrust you, you must pray for them. This is the way you must act if you want to be children of God." Well, you know how happily THAT would be received...among most of your neighbors.

And then suppose this Joe Green looks at you over the heads of the crowd, calls you by name, and says, "I want to come to dinner at your house." I suppose that you, like me, hope very much that you would say, "Come ahead." But I suppose also that you, like me, had better not be too sure.

Wendell Berry, *Blessed Are the Peacemakers: Christ's Teachings About Love, Compassion and Forgiveness*

Scripture

1 Peter 1:13-25

¹³ Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. ¹⁴ As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, ¹⁵ but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.” ¹⁷ And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one’s deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile, ¹⁸ knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. ²⁰ He was foreknown before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you ²¹ who through him are believers in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God.

Sermon

Reclaiming Holiness

Rankin Wilbourne

Lives Transformed by God’s Power
Renewing Los Angeles for Christ
PacificCrossroads.org

Cover Art by Angeline Woo

Events & News

Mastering Your Money 9-Week Workshop, Begins Today

Learn how to create and manage a budget, relieve debt, and tuck away cash for the future - all for the greater purpose of being a good steward of your resources.

New Community Group Leader Training, April 1

If you're interested in taking more ownership of your Community Group, or in learning more about what it means to be a CG Leader, we invite you to the next Community Group New Leader Training.

Center for Faith and Work Conference, April 1

Come have your view of vocation "reframed" and inspired with key note speaker Rev. David Kim, Executive Director of The Center for Faith & Work in New York.

Pre-Marriage Seminar, April 8

For those gearing up for marriage or recently married. Topics include the Biblical institution of marriage, communication, roles, and money, and the seminar incorporates practical exercises.

View all events on our app, at PacificCrossroads.org/Events, or in our events brochure available at the Connect Center.

Ministry Resources

Pastoral Care

Our pastoral care team is here to care for you if you are in a difficult place. Email pastoralcare@pacificcrossroads.org or call our office at 310.551.0081.

Celebrate Recovery

Join together weekly with others to celebrate God's healing power in our lives. Visit PacificCrossroads.org/CelebrateRecovery.