

March 23, 2014

TIME OF REFLECTION

“Though [repentance] be a deep sorrow for sin that God requires as necessary to salvation, yet the very nature of it necessarily implies delight. Repentance of sin is a sorrow arising from the sight of God’s excellency and mercy, but the apprehension of excellency or mercy must necessarily and unavoidably beget pleasure in the mind of the beholder. ‘Tis impossible that anyone should see anything that appears to him excellent and not behold it with pleasure, and it’s impossible to be affected with the mercy and love of God, and his willingness to be merciful to us and love us, and not be affected with pleasure at the thoughts of [it]; but this is the very affection that begets true repentance. How much so ever of a paradox it may seem, it is true that repentance is a sweet sorrow, so that the more of this sorrow, the more pleasure.”

~Jonathan Edwards (1703-1753), “The Pleasantness of Religion”

“Those who believe they have pleased God by the quality of their devotion and moral goodness naturally feel that they and their group deserve deference and power over others. The God of Jesus and the prophets, however, saves completely by grace. He cannot be manipulated by religious and moral performance—he can only be reached through repentance, through the giving up of power. If we are saved by sheer grace we can only become grateful, willing servants of God and of everyone around us.”

~Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*

“Every day my conscience makes confession relying on the hope of Your mercy as more to be trusted than its own innocence.”

~Saint Augustine (354-430), *The Confessions*

“Playing a fools game, hoping to win? Telling those sweet lies and losing again. I was looking for love in all the wrong places.”

~Waylon Jennings (1937-2002), American singer

Worship through the Word

SERMON – “The Precious Promise of Repentance” – *Doug Cooper*

SERMON PASSAGE – *James 4:1-10 (ESV)*

¹What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? ²You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. ³You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. ⁴You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. ⁵Or do you suppose it is to no purpose that the Scripture says, “He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us”? ⁶But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, “God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.” ⁷Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. ⁸Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.