

April 30, 2017

TIME OF REFLECTION

“Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and if true, of infinite importance. The only thing it cannot be is moderately important.”

~C. S. Lewis (1898-1963), British scholar

“Understanding God is not attained by calling into session all arguments for and against Him, in order to debate whether He is a reality or a figment of the mind. God cannot be sensed as a second thought... He is either the first and the last, or just another concept.”

~Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972), famed American rabbi and philosopher

“Persecution is easier to understand when it’s physical: torture, death, imprisonment... American persecution is like an advanced stage of cancer; it eats away at you, yet you cannot feel it. This is the worst kind of persecution.”

~An underground house church leader in the Middle East

“America has lived a long time off its thin Christian veneer... That is all finally being stripped away by the combination of mass consumer capitalism and liberal individualism.”

~Christian Smith, professor of sociology at Notre Dame University

“I don’t want you to be safe, ideologically. I don’t want you to be safe, emotionally. I want you to be strong. That’s different. I’m not going to pave the jungle for you. Put on some boots, and learn how to deal with adversity.”

~Commentator Van Jones at the University of Chicago (February 2017)

“If you get through college with your Christian faith intact, chances are it has been challenged, both intellectually and socially. Therefore, if you come out the other side still believing at all, it’s likely to be a more robust, clarified, and holistic belief...”

~Emma Green, staff writer at “The Atlantic”

“Jesus Christ did not ‘attack existing economic or political institutions... The revolution he sought was a far deeper one, without which reforms could only be superficial and transitory. ...Christ was in this spiritual sense the greatest revolutionist in history.”

~Will Durant, The Story of Civilization: Caesar and Christ (1944)

“In Jesus of Nazareth the kingdom of God makes a personal appearance.”

~Dr. James Edwards, contemporary biblical scholar

Worship through the Word

SERMON – “Thy Kingdom Come” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

SERMON PASSAGE – *Selected Passages from the Gospel of Mark (ESV)*

Mark 1

¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God ¹⁵and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

²¹And they went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath he entered the synagogue and was teaching. ²²And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority...

Mark 3

¹⁴And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach ¹⁵and have authority...

Mark 6

⁷And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority...

Mark 8

³¹And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said,

“Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”

³⁴And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it.”

Mark 10

¹⁴...[And Jesus said] “Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. ¹⁵Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.”

²³And Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How difficult it will be for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!”

²⁴And the disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said to them again, “Children, how difficult it is to enter the kingdom of God!”

Mark 4

²⁶And [Jesus] said, “The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground. ²⁷He sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed sprouts and grows; he knows not how.”