

January 26, 2020

TIME OF REFLECTION

“I’m not a victim. I refuse to be one.”

~Toni Morrison (1931-2019), novelist and professor

“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.”

~1 Corinthians 10:13 (ESV)

“Only those who try to resist temptation know how strong it is. A man who gives in to temptation after five minutes simply does not know what it would have been like an hour later. That is why bad people, in one sense, know very little about badness — they have lived a sheltered life by always giving in. We never find out the strength of the evil impulse inside us until we try to fight it: and Christ, because He was the only man who never yielded to temptation, is also the only man who knows to the full what temptation means — the only complete realist.”

~C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) in *Mere Christianity*

“The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom, and whatever you get, get insight. Prize her highly, and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her. She will place on your head a graceful garland; she will bestow on you a beautiful crown.”

~Proverbs 4:7-9 (ESV)

“For [Hannah] Arendt, it was not that [Adolf] Eichmann did not know what he was doing. It was that he did not think about what he was doing. The thoughtlessness that allows evil to flourish cannot be dispelled with new facts or better information, and the society that has forgotten how to think needs to do more than inform its citizens. Instead, like stretching unused muscles, it must relearn the daily habits of thinking.”

~Hannah LaGrand in “Thoughtlessness, Sloth, and the Call to Think” (Comment)

“Having looked the past in the eye, having asked for forgiveness and having made amends, let us shut the door on the past—not in order to forget it but in order not to allow it to imprison us.”

~Desmond Tutu, South African Anglican Archbishop Emeritus and theologian

Worship through the Word

SERMON – “A Faith that Works...in Temptation” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

SERMON PASSAGE – *James 1:2-18 (ESV)*

²Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. ⁴And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

⁵If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. ⁶But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; ⁸he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

⁹Let the lowly brother boast in his exaltation, ¹⁰and the rich in his humiliation, because like a flower of the grass he will pass away. ¹¹For the sun rises with its scorching heat and withers the grass; its flower falls, and its beauty perishes. So also will the rich man fade

away in the midst of his pursuits.

¹²Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him. ³Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am being tempted by God,” for God cannot be tempted with evil, and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

¹⁶Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. ¹⁷Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. ¹⁸Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.