

April 21, 2024 – Order of Worship

TIME OF REFLECTION

“Love is when the other person’s happiness is more important than your own.”

~H. Jackson Brown, Jr. (1940-2021), inspirational author

“The happiness you feel is in direct proportion with the love you give.”

~Oprah Winfrey, talk show host and media mogul

“Happiness is only real when shared.”

~Jon Krakauer, writer and mountaineer

“We are not those who pay homage to stones, that are without sensation; but of the only God, who is before all and over all, and, moreover, we are worshippers of His Christ, who is truly God the Word existing before all time.”

~Melito, Bishop of Sardis (written c. 169-170) in his “Apology to Marcus Aurelius”

“Jesus is the Word, the Image, the Expression and Exegesis of God.”

~Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905-1988), Swiss theologian

“To receive God’s grace, the main thing you need is need—the main thing you need is nothing. But not many people have it.”

~John Gerstner (1914-1996), theologian and professor of church history

Question 8: Is there more than one God? Answer: There is only one, the living and true God.

Question 9. How many persons are in the one God? Answer: Three persons are in the one God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Although they are differentiated by their own individual, personal qualities, these three are one true, eternal God, the same in substance and equal in power and glory.

~Westminster Larger Catechism (1647)

“In space, astronauts experience the misery of having no reference point, no force that draws them to the center. Where there is no ‘moral gravity’...there is spiritual weightlessness. We float on feelings that will carry us where we were never meant to go; we bubble with emotional experiences that we often take for spiritual ones; and we are puffed up with pride. Instead of seriousness, there is foolishness. Instead of gravity, flippancy. Sentimentality takes the place of theology. Our reference point...is merely ourselves. We cannot possibly tell which end is up.”

~Elisabeth Elliot (1926-2015), missionary and author

SERMON – “The God of Love” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

SERMON PASSAGE – *Galatians 6:1, 6, 13-15, 19-26 (ESV)*

Galatians 5

¹For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery....

⁶For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love....

¹³For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁵But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another....

¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

²⁵If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Ephesians 4

¹I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,

³eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit....

¹¹And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, ¹²to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ¹⁴so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. ¹⁵Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love....

²⁵Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. ²⁶Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷and give no opportunity to the devil. ²⁸Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. ²⁹Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³²Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.