

TIME OF REFLECTION

“For there is always light, if only we’re brave enough to see it,
If only we’re brave enough to be it.”

~Amanda Gorman, first-ever youth poet laureate at the presidential inauguration

“It is not because the truth is too difficult to see that we make mistakes. It may even lie on the surface; but we make mistakes because the easiest and most comfortable course for us is to seek insight where it accords with our emotions — especially selfish ones.”

~Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (1918-2008) in “Peace and Violence” (1973)

“We should challenge the relativism that tells us there is no right or wrong, when every instinct of our mind knows it...is a mere excuse to allow us to indulge in what we believe we can get away with. A world without values quickly becomes a world without value.”

~Jonathan Sacks (1948-2020), Chief Rabbi in the United Kingdom

“Now we see how the astronomical evidence supports the biblical view of the origin of the world.... [T]he essential elements in the astronomical and biblical accounts of Genesis are the same: the... [universe] commenced suddenly and sharply at a definite moment in time, in a flash of light and energy.”

“For the scientist who has lived by his faith in the power of reason, the story ends like a bad dream. He has scaled the mountain of ignorance; he is about to conquer the highest peak; as he pulls himself over the final rock, he is greeted by a band of theologians who have been sitting there for centuries.”

~Robert Jastrow (1925-2008), a leading astronomer, physicist and cosmologist

“This universe is not a tragic expression of meaningless chaos but a marvelous display of orderly cosmos.”

~Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King (1929-1968), slain civil rights leader

“God cannot be Word-less, for the Word is God. Here then is a God who could never be anything but communicative, expansive, outgoing. Since God cannot be without this Word, he simply could not ever be reclusive.”

~Michael Reeves, president of Union School of Theology (Oxford)

“None of the other active world religions says anything remotely similar or comparable.... There is likewise no parallel in the theologies of John’s contemporaries – the dead myths of Greece or Rome, with their demigods and deified bureaucrats. ...John hands us a brand-new thing.”

~Reynolds Price (1933-2011), professor, literary scholar on the Gospel of John

Worship through the Word

SERMON – “An Introduction to Jesus by His Friend John” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

SERMON PASSAGE – *John 1:1-18 (NASB)*

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him not even one thing came into being that has come into being. ⁴In Him was life, and the life was the Light of mankind. ⁵And the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not grasp it.

⁶A man came, one sent from God, and his name was John. ⁷He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light.

⁹This was the true Light that, coming into the world, enlightens every person. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, and yet the world did not know Him. ¹¹He came to His own, and

His own people did not accept Him. ¹²But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name, ¹³who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a man, but of God.

¹⁴And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us; and we saw His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵John *testified about Him and called out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who is coming after me has proved to be my superior, because He existed before me.’” ¹⁶For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. ¹⁷For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has seen God at any time; God the only Son, who is in the arms of the Father, He has explained Him.