

## TIME OF REFLECTION

“The simple step of a courageous individual is not to take part in the lie. ‘One word of truth outweighs the world.’”

~Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (1918-2008), novelist and Soviet dissident

“I freed thousands of slaves, but I would have freed hundreds more had they known they were slaves.”

~Harriet Tubman (1822-1913), key leader of the Underground Railroad

“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)

“Truth is so obscure in these times, and falsehood so established, that, unless we love the truth, we cannot know it.”

~Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), French mathematician and thinker

“We should challenge the relativism that tells us there is no right or wrong, when every instinct of our mind knows it is not so, and 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.”

“The idols of today are unmistakable – self-esteem without achievement, sex without consequences, wealth without responsibility, pleasure without struggle and experience without commitment.”

“Freedom is a moral achievement, and without a constant effort of education it atrophies and must be fought for again.”

~Jonathan Sacks (1948-2020), British Orthodox rabbi and writer

“Our huffing and puffing to impress God, our scrambling for brownie points, our thrashing about trying to fix ourselves while hiding our pettiness and wallowing in guilt are nauseating to God and are a flat-out denial of the gospel of grace.”

~Brennan Manning (1934-2013), Franciscan priest and author

**SERMON** – “How to Seek God in Troubled Times” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

**SERMON PASSAGE** – *selected passages*

*2 Chronicles 16 (NASB)*

<sup>9</sup>For the eyes of the Lord roam throughout the earth, so that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. You have acted foolishly in this. Indeed, from now on you will have wars.

*2 Chronicles 12 (NASB)*

<sup>1</sup>When the kingdom of Rehoboam was established and strong, he and all Israel with him abandoned the Law of the Lord.

<sup>13</sup>So King Rehoboam became powerful in Jerusalem and reigned there....<sup>14</sup>But he did evil because he did not set his heart to seek the Lord.

*2 Chronicles 14 (NASB)*

<sup>2</sup>And Asa did what was good and right in the sight of the Lord his God, <sup>3</sup>for he removed the foreign altars and high places, tore down the memorial stones, cut down the Asherim, <sup>4</sup>and commanded Judah to seek the Lord God of their fathers and to comply with the Law and the commandment.

*2 Chronicles 15 (NASB)*

<sup>1</sup>Now the Spirit of God came on Azariah the son of Oded, <sup>2</sup>and he went out to meet Asa and said to him, “Listen to me, Asa, and all Judah and Benjamin: the Lord is with you when you are with Him. And if you seek Him, He will let you find Him; but if you abandon Him, He will abandon you. <sup>3</sup>For many days Israel was without the true God and without a teaching priest and without the Law. <sup>4</sup>But in their distress they turned to the Lord God of Israel, and they sought Him, and He let them find Him.

*2 Chronicles 17 (ESV)*

<sup>3</sup>The Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the earlier ways of his father David. He did not seek the Baals, <sup>4</sup>but sought the God of his father and walked in his commandments, and not according to

the practices of Israel. <sup>5</sup>Therefore the Lord established the kingdom in his hand.

<sup>7</sup>In the third year of his reign he sent his officials, Ben-hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah, to teach in the cities of Judah.... <sup>9</sup>And they taught in Judah, having the Book of the Law of the Lord with them. They went about through all the cities of Judah and taught among the people.

<sup>10</sup>And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were around Judah, and they made no war against Jehoshaphat.

*2 Chronicles 34 (NASB)*

<sup>14</sup>When they were bringing out the money which had been brought into the house of the Lord, Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law of the Lord given by Moses....

<sup>19</sup>When the king heard the words of the Law, he tore his clothes. <sup>20</sup>Then the king commanded Hilkiah, Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Abdon the son of Micah, Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king’s servant, saying, <sup>21</sup>“Go, inquire of the Lord for me and for those who are left in Israel and Judah, concerning the words of the book which has been found; for the wrath of the Lord which has poured out on us is great, because our fathers have not kept the word of the Lord, to act in accordance with everything that is written in this book.”

<sup>31</sup>Then the king stood in his place and made a covenant before the Lord to walk after the Lord, and to keep His commandments, His testimonies, and His statutes with all his heart and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant that are written in this book. <sup>32</sup>Furthermore, he made all who were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin stand with him. So the inhabitants of Jerusalem acted in accordance with the covenant of God, the God of their fathers.