

June 10, 2018

TIME OF REFLECTION

“According to [Dr. Jean] Twenge [a co-author of *The Narcissism Epidemic* and professor of psychology at San Diego State University], indicators of self-esteem have risen consistently since the 1980s.... But, she says, what starts off as healthy self-esteem can quickly morph into an inflated view of oneself—a self-absorption and sense of entitlement that looks a lot like narcissism....”

“Meanwhile, rates of anxiety and depression have also risen in tandem with self-esteem. Why is this? ... ‘People who feel like they’re unusually special end up alienating those around them,’ Twenge says. ‘They don’t know how to work on teams as well or deal with limits. They get into the workplace and expect to be stimulated all the time.... They don’t like being told by a boss that their work might need improvement, and they feel insecure if they don’t get a constant stream of praise....”

“The irony is that measures of self-esteem are poor predictors of how content a person will be.... According to Jean Twenge, research shows that much better predictors of life fulfillment and success are perseverance, resiliency, and reality-testing—qualities that people need so they can navigate the day-to-day.”

~“How to Land Your Kid in Therapy” by Lori Gottlieb in *The Atlantic Monthly*

“...we are not entitled to such license...of affirming what we please; we make the Holy Scriptures the rule and the measure of every tenet; we necessarily fix our eyes upon that, and approve that alone which may be made to harmonize with the intention of those writings.”

~Gregory of Nyssa, 4th century Christian bishop

“For concerning the divine and sacred Mysteries of the Faith, we ought not to deliver even the most casual remark without the Holy Scriptures: nor be drawn aside by mere probabilities and the artifices of argument. Do not then believe me because I tell you these things, unless you receive from the Holy Scriptures the proof of what is set forth: for this salvation, which is of our faith, is not by ingenious reasonings, but by proof from the Holy Scriptures.”

~Cyril of Alexandria, 5th century Christian bishop

Worship through the Word

SERMON – “How to Contend for the Faith” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

SERMON PASSAGE – *Jude (ESV)*

¹ Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and brother of James,

To those who are called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ:

² May mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you.

³ Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints. ⁴ For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

⁵ Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe. ⁶ And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day— ⁷ just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding cities, which likewise indulged in sexual immorality and pursued unnatural desire, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire.

⁸ Yet in like manner these people also, relying on their dreams, defile the flesh, reject authority, and blaspheme the glorious ones. ⁹ But when the archangel Michael, contending with the devil, was disputing about the body of Moses, he did not presume to pronounce a blasphemous judgment, but said, “The Lord rebuke you.” ¹⁰ But these people blaspheme all that they do not understand, and they are destroyed by all that they, like unreasoning animals, understand instinctively. ¹¹ Woe to them! For they walked in the way of Cain and abandoned themselves for the sake of gain to Balaam’s error and perished in

Korah’s rebellion. ¹² These are hidden reefs at your love feasts, as they feast with you without fear, shepherds feeding themselves; waterless clouds, swept along by winds; fruitless trees in late autumn, twice dead, uprooted; ¹³ wild waves of the sea, casting up the foam of their own shame; wandering stars, for whom the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved forever.

¹⁴ It was also about these that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, ¹⁵ to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” ¹⁶ These are grumblers, malcontents, following their own sinful desires; they are loud-mouthed boasters, showing favoritism to gain advantage.

¹⁷ But you must remember, beloved, the predictions of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ They said to you, “In the last time there will be scoffers, following their own ungodly passions.” ¹⁹ It is these who cause divisions, worldly people, devoid of the Spirit. ²⁰ But you, beloved, building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. ²² And have mercy on those who doubt; ²³ save others by snatching them out of the fire; to others show mercy with fear, hating even the garment stained by the flesh.

²⁴ Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, ²⁵ to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen.