

June 11, 2017

TIME OF REFLECTION

“The deeper we grow in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the poorer we become - the more we realize that everything in life is a gift. The tenor of our lives becomes one of humble and joyful thanksgiving. Awareness of our poverty and ineptitude causes us to rejoice in the gift of being called out of darkness into wondrous light and translated into the kingdom of God’s beloved Son.”

~Brennan Manning (1934-2013) American author, former priest, and public speaker

“The man who wishes to exempt himself from providing for his neighbors should face himself and declare that he no longer wishes to be a man, for as long as we are human creatures we must contemplate as in a mirror our face in those who are poor, despised, exhausted, who groan under their burdens.”

~John Calvin (1509-1564), influential French theologian
and pastor during the Protestant Reformation

“The hard and necessary work of reconciliation, peacemaking, relational perseverance, and loving the unlovely is not something we generally gravitate to on our own or when we are creating a personal, custom-made spiritual experience. We need the inconvenient and costly demands of congregational living to shape that kind of love.”

“Sometimes it takes having differences, not understanding one another, and even being a little bit irritated by and bored with one another, to remind us that the church is a family and not a club. At its best, this family dynamic of the local church functions as God’s fertile soil for growing us beyond mere tolerance toward true expressions of love and unity.”

~Scott Sauls, contemporary author and pastor

“For leaders of the ancient church, hospitality was a significant context for transcending boundaries and working through respect and recognition. Christian hospitality was to be remedial, counteracting the social stratification of the larger society by providing a modest and equal welcome to everyone.”

~Christine D. Pohl, contemporary author and professor of social ethics

Worship through the Word

SERMON – “The Radical Welcome of Jesus” – *Doug Cooper*

SERMON PASSAGE – *Selections from the Gospel of Mark (NIV)*

Mark 2

¹³ Once again Jesus went out beside the lake. A large crowd came to him, and he began to teach them. ¹⁴ As he walked along, he saw Levi son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax collector’s booth. “Follow me,” Jesus told him, and Levi got up and followed him.

¹⁵ While Jesus was having dinner at Levi’s house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. ¹⁶ When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: “Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?”

¹⁷ On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

Mark 7

³¹ Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, down to the Sea of Galilee and into the region of the Decapolis. ³² There some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged Jesus to place his hand on him.

³³ After he took him aside, away from the

crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man’s ears. Then he spit and touched the man’s tongue. ³⁴ He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, “Ephphatha!” (which means “Be opened!”). ³⁵ At this, the man’s ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly.

³⁶ Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone. But the more he did so, the more they kept talking about it. ³⁷ People were overwhelmed with amazement. “He has done everything well,” they said. “He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.”

Mark 12

²⁸ One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”

²⁹ “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ ³¹ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”