

October 13, 2019

TIME OF REFLECTION

“In these past few years, I have slowly been convinced of a type of ‘fate,’ or some higher workings beyond our control. I don’t really know what to call it. There have been a few defining moments, all linked to one another, which only makes me think ‘Huh, maybe. No. I mean—just maybe.’”

~Holden Harris in “The Strangeness of It All” in *The Dartmouth Mirror* (10-9-19)

“A clear conscience is the sure sign of a bad memory.”

~Mark Twain (1835-1910), American writer and humorist

“Conscience is the inner voice that warns us somebody may be looking.”

~H.L. Mencken (1880-1956), journalist and critic

“It is easier to fight the world than to wrestle with your conscience.”

~Matshona Dhliwayo, Zimbabwean-born entrepreneur and author

“A clear and innocent conscience fears nothing.”

~Elizabeth I (1533-1603), Queen of England and Ireland

“A man’s conscience is the Lord’s searchlight exposing his hidden motives.”

~Proverbs 20:27, *The Living Bible*

“The Fall [into sin] is a view of life. It is not only the only enlightening, but the only encouraging view of life. It holds...that we have misused a good world, and not merely been entrapped into a bad one. It refers evil back to the wrong use of the will, and thus declares that it can be righted.... Every other creed except that one is some form of surrender to fate. A man who holds this view of life will find it giving light on a thousand things....”

~G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936), English writer and journalist

Worship through the Word

SERMON – “Karma & Conscience: The Searching and Surprising Grace of God” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

SERMON PASSAGE – *Genesis 42-43 (ESV)*

Genesis 42

¹ When Jacob learned that there was grain for sale in Egypt, he said to his sons, “Why do you look at one another?”
² And he said, “Behold, I have heard that there is grain for sale in Egypt. Go down and buy grain for us there, that we may live and not die.”
³ So ten of Joseph’s brothers went down to buy grain in Egypt.
⁴ But Jacob did not send Benjamin, Joseph’s brother, with his brothers, for he feared that harm might happen to him.
⁵ Thus the sons of Israel came to buy among the others who came, for the famine was in the land of Canaan.

⁶ Now Joseph was governor over the land. He was the one who sold to all the people of the land. And Joseph’s brothers came and bowed themselves before him with their faces to the ground.
⁷ Joseph saw his brothers and recognized them, but he treated them like strangers and spoke roughly to them. “Where do you come from?” he said. They said, “From the land of Canaan, to buy food.”
⁸ And Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him.
⁹ And Joseph remembered the dreams that he had dreamed of them. And he said to them, “You are spies; you have come to see the nakedness of the land.”
¹⁰ They said to him, “No, my lord, your servants have come to buy food.
¹¹ We are all sons of one man. We are honest men. Your servants have never been spies.”

¹² He said to them, “No, it is the nakedness of the land that you have come to see.”
¹³ And they said, “We, your servants, are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan, and behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is no more.”
¹⁴ But Joseph said to them, “It is as I said to you. You are spies.
¹⁵ By this you shall be tested: by the life of Pharaoh, you shall not go from this place unless your youngest brother comes here.
¹⁶ Send one of you, and let him bring your brother, while you remain confined, that your words may be tested, whether there is truth in you. Or else, by the life of Pharaoh, surely you are spies.”
¹⁷ And he put them all together in custody for three days.

¹⁸ On the third day Joseph said to them, “Do this and you will live, for I fear God:
¹⁹ if you are honest men, let one of your brothers remain confined where you are in custody, and let the rest go and carry grain for the famine of your households,
²⁰ and bring your youngest brother to me. So your words will be verified, and you shall not die.” And they did so.
²¹ Then they said to one another, “In truth we are guilty

concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his soul, when he begged us and we did not listen. That is why this distress has come upon us.”
²² And Reuben answered them, “Did I not tell you not to sin against the boy? But you did not listen. So now there comes a reckoning for his blood.”
²³ They did not know that Joseph understood them, for there was an interpreter between them.
²⁴ Then he turned away from them and wept. And he returned to them and spoke to them. And he took Simeon from them and bound him before their eyes.
²⁵ And Joseph gave orders to fill their bags with grain, and to replace every man’s money in his sack, and to give them provisions for the journey. This was done for them.

²⁶ Then they loaded their donkeys with their grain and departed.
²⁷ And as one of them opened his sack to give his donkey fodder at the lodging place, he saw his money in the mouth of his sack.
²⁸ He said to his brothers, “My money has been put back; here it is in the mouth of my sack!” At this their hearts failed them, and they turned trembling to one another, saying, “What is this that God has done to us?”

Genesis 43 – Joseph’s Brothers Return to Egypt

²⁶ When Joseph came home, they brought into the house to him the present that they had with them and bowed down to him to the ground.
²⁷ And he inquired about their welfare and said, “Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?”
²⁸ They said, “Your servant our father is well; he is still alive.” And they bowed their heads and prostrated themselves.
²⁹ And he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother’s son, and said, “Is this your youngest brother, of whom you spoke to me? God be gracious to you, my son!”
³⁰ Then Joseph hurried out, for his compassion grew warm for his brother, and he sought a place to weep. And he entered his chamber and wept there.
³¹ Then he washed his face and came out. And controlling himself he said, “Serve the food.”
³² They served him by himself, and them by themselves, and the Egyptians who ate with him by themselves, because the Egyptians could not eat with the Hebrews, for that is an abomination to the Egyptians.
³³ And they sat before him, the firstborn according to his birthright and the youngest according to his youth. And the men looked at one another in amazement.
³⁴ Portions were taken to them from Joseph’s table, but Benjamin’s portion was five times as much as any of theirs. And they drank and were merry with him.