

June 8, 2014

TIME OF REFLECTION

“Since the love which binds the Trinity together is the same love which binds the church to the Son and the saints to each other, we can rightly conclude that the structure of relationship which constitutes the glory of God or God’s internal fullness is the same structure which constitutes the reality of the church.... The re-presentation of the...relational structure of God’s Trinitarian life in the community of the saints, is, in a manner of speaking, the visibility of the God in the world.”

~Krister Sairsing in a Harvard dissertation, “Jonathan Edwards and the Idea of the Divine Glory: His Foundational Trinitarianism and its Ecclesial Import”

“It is almost taken for granted throughout the New Testament that tribulation is the normal lot of Christians in this age: it is those who suffer for and with Christ now who will share his glory. ‘No cross, no crown.’”

The “...three individuals...singled out by Luke...whose lives were influenced for... by the gospel at Philippi...differ so much one from another that he might be thought to have selected them deliberately in order to show how the saving power of the name of Jesus was shown in the most diverse types of men and women.”

~F.F. Bruce (1910-1990), New Testament scholar on Acts 16

“True conversion always issues in church membership. It is not only that converts must join the Christian community, but that the Christian community must welcome converts, especially those from a different religious, ethnic or social background. There is an urgent need for modern Ananiases and Barnabases who overcome their scruples and hesitations, and take the initiative to befriend newcomers.”

~John Stott (1921-2011), British theologian

“Our pleasure and our duty,
Though opposite before;
Since we have seen his beauty,
Are joined to part no more:
To see the Law by Christ fulfilled,
To hear His pardoning voice,
Transforms a slave into a child
And duty into choice.”

~John Newton (1725-1807)

“A man is what he is on his knees before God, and nothing more.”

“For every look at self, take ten looks at Christ.”

~Robert Murray M’Cheyne (1813-1843)

Worship through the Word

SERMON – “Evidences for Conversion in Acts” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

SERMON PASSAGES – *excerpts from Acts 16 (NASB)*

¹ Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And a disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek, ² and he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium. ³ Paul wanted this man to go with him; and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those parts, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. ⁴ Now while they were passing through the cities, they were delivering the decrees which had been decided upon by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem, for them to observe. ⁵ So the churches were being strengthened in the faith, and were increasing in number daily...

¹² And from there [we came] to Philippi, which is a leading city of the district of Macedonia, a Roman colony; and we were staying in this city for some days. ¹³ And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate to a riverside, where we were supposing that there would be a place of prayer; and we sat down and began speaking to the women who had assembled.

¹⁴ A woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul. ¹⁵ And when she and her household had been baptized, she urged us, saying, “If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay.” And she prevailed upon us.

¹⁶ It happened that as we were going to the place of prayer, a slave-girl having a spirit of divination met us, who was bringing her masters much profit by fortune-telling. ¹⁷ Following after Paul and us, she kept crying out, saying, “These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation.” ¹⁸ She continued doing this for many days. But Paul was greatly annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her!” And it came out at that very moment.

¹⁹ But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged

them into the market place before the authorities...

²² The crowd rose up together against them, and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them and proceeded to order them to be beaten with rods. ²³ When they had struck them with many blows, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to guard them securely; ²⁴ and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks.

²⁵ But about midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns of praise to God, and the prisoners were listening to them; ²⁶ and suddenly there came a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison house were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone’s chains were unfastened. ²⁷ When the jailer awoke and saw the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ But Paul cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here!” ²⁹ And he called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas, ³⁰ and after he brought them out, he said, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

³¹ They said, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.” ³² And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house. ³³ And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household. ³⁴ And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household.

³⁵ Now when day came, the chief magistrates sent their policemen, saying, “Release those men.” ³⁶ And the jailer reported these words to Paul, saying, “The chief magistrates have sent to release you. Therefore come out now and go in peace.”... ⁴⁰ They went out of the prison and entered the house of Lydia, and when they saw the brethren, they encouraged them and departed.