

January 27, 2019

TIME OF REFLECTION

“Life is about connecting, and connecting is about taking on other points of view. Our world is a shared experience, fractured by individual perspectives. Imagine if we could all feel understood.”

~Brian Miller, magician and motivational speaker

The “...three individuals...singled out by Luke...whose lives were influenced for good by the gospel at Philippi...differ so much one from another that he might be thought to have selected them deliberately...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), Scottish-born Biblical Scholar on Acts 16

“Christianity’s success is to be found in its inclusiveness. More than any other of its [ancient] competitors it attracted all races and classes.... No other [religion]...took in so many groups and strata of society.”

~Kenneth Scott Latourette (1884-1986), historian at Yale University

“Many churches treat the individual consumer as supreme and gear all that they do around the personal preferences of the individuals.... [However, it is] the church’s corporate character [that] proclaims the glory of God.... Present day errors in the understanding and the practice of the church will, if they prevail still more, further obscure the Gospel. Christian proclamation might make the Gospel audible, but Christians living together in local congregations make the Gospel visible. The church is the Gospel-made-visible.”

~Mark Dever, pastor in Washington, D.C.

“The church is the earthly center from which the full lordship of Christ becomes visible.”

~Oscar Cullmann (1902-1999), Basel and Paris-based theologian

“...once the heart is opened, the home is opened too.”

~John Stott (1921-2011), British theologian and clergyman

Worship through the Word

SERMON – “The Coming of the Kingdom in Philippi” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

SERMON PASSAGE – *Acts 16:14-34; Romans 14:15-19; Philippians 2:1-2 (NASB)*

Acts 16

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, ²⁰ and when they had brought them to the chief magistrates, they said, “These men are throwing our city into confusion, being Jews, ²¹ and are proclaiming customs which it is not lawful for us to accept or to observe, being Romans.”

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.

Romans 14

¹⁵ For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died. ¹⁶ Therefore do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of as evil; ¹⁷ for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ For he who in this way serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. ¹⁹ So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.

Philippians 2

¹ Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, ² make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.