

*May 11, 2014*

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**TIME OF REFLECTION**

“If our gospel does not inspire thought, and if our theology does not inspire preaching, there is no Christianity in either.”

~James Denney (1856-1917), Scottish theologian and pastor

“Secularism doesn’t produce secularism; it produces pluralism. The problem is not that God is dead, but that there are too many gods.”

~Peter Berger, famed Austrian-born sociologist

“We modern people...believe in no God or no God you can really know because we believe in freedom. If there was a God we could know, who told us how we had to live..., then we wouldn’t be free...”

~Albert Camus (1913-1960), French Nobel Prize winning author

“[C]onscious autonomy is a charade.... We tend to see ourselves as self-determining, self-conscious agents in all that we decide and do, and we cling to that image. But why? Why do we resist the truth? Why do we wish—strain, strive, against the grain of reality—to be autonomous individuals, and see ourselves as such?”

~“Deluded Individualism” by Firmin DeBrabander in *The New York Times* 12/16/2012

“Mental health is an on going process of dedication to reality at all costs.”

~M. Scott Peck (1936-2005), American psychiatrist

“Divine grace does not trample on human personality. Rather the reverse, for it enables human beings to be truly human. It is sin which imprisons; it is grace which liberates.”

~John Stott (1921-2011), British theologian

“The secret to freedom...is worship. You need worship. You need great worship. You need weeping worship. You need glorious worship. You need to sense God’s greatness and to be moved by it—moved to tears and moved to laughter—move by who God is and what He has done for you.”

~Tim Keller, pastor in New York City

“All men should strive to learn before they die, what they are running from, and to, and why.”

~James Thurber (1894-1961), American cartoonist and writer

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## *Worship through the Word*

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**SERMON** – “Idolatry, Identity and Genuine Community” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

**SERMON PASSAGES** – *selections from Acts (NASB)*

*Acts 7* – Stephen in Jerusalem

<sup>48</sup> ...the Most High does not dwell in houses made by human hands; as the prophet says: <sup>49</sup> ‘Heaven is My throne, <sup>50</sup> And earth is the footstool of My feet; <sup>51</sup> What kind of house will you build for Me?’ says the Lord, <sup>52</sup> ‘Or what place is there for My repose?’ <sup>53</sup> ‘Was it not My hand which made all these things?’

*Acts 14* – Paul in Lystra

<sup>12</sup> And they began calling Barnabas, Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. <sup>13</sup> The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds. <sup>14</sup> But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their robes and rushed out into the crowd, crying out <sup>15</sup> and saying, “Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them.

*Acts 17* – Paul in Athens

<sup>16</sup> Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was observing the city full of idols.... <sup>22</sup> So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, “Men of Athens, I observe that you are very religious in all respects. <sup>23</sup> For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, ‘TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.’ Therefore what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you. <sup>24</sup> The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; <sup>25</sup> nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things....

*Acts 19* – Paul in Ephesus

<sup>23</sup> About that time there occurred no small disturbance concerning the Way. <sup>24</sup> For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines of Artemis... <sup>25</sup> ...gathered together with the workmen of similar trades, and said, “Men, you know that our prosperity depends upon this business. <sup>26</sup> You see and hear that not only in Ephesus, but in almost all of Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away a considerable number of people, saying that gods made with hands are no gods at all. <sup>27</sup> Not only is there danger that this trade of ours fall into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis be regarded as worthless and that she whom all of Asia and the world worship will even be dethroned from her magnificence.” <sup>28</sup> When they heard this and were filled with rage, they began crying out, saying, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!”