

March 3, 2024 – Order of Worship

TIME OF REFLECTION

“Love knows no limits to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope; it can outlast anything. It is, in fact, the one thing that stands when all else has fallen.”

~Elizabeth Elliot (1926-2015), Christian missionary, author, and speaker

“[The] kingdom may be inherited [only] by the children of the King; and such are all believers in Christ, for through union with him and by virtue of his redeeming act they have become Abraham’s true offspring and God sons and heirs according to the promise.... But God’s reign or rule is moral in nature; those who consistently behave in ways that are opposed to God’s nature...show thereby that they have not accepted God’s rule through Christ in their lives.”

~R.Y.K. Fung, professor at China Graduate School of Theology (Hong Kong)

“...the Holy Spirit...puts...eagerness of unconstrained love into the heart.... That is why faith alone makes someone just and fulfills the law; faith it is that brings the Holy Spirit through the merits of Christ. The Spirit, in turn, renders the heart glad and free, as the law demands. Then good works proceed from faith itself.”

~Martin Luther (1483-1546) in his Romans Commentary

“There are two kinds of peacemakers in the modern world; and they are both...a nuisance. The first peacemaker is the man who goes about saying that he agrees with everybody. He confuses everybody. The second peacemaker is the man who goes about saying that everybody agrees with him. He enrages everybody. Between the two of them they produce a hundred times more disputes and distractions than we poor pugnacious people would ever have thought of in our lives.”

“Latter-day skepticism is fond of calling itself progressive; but skepticism is really reactionary. Skepticism goes back; it attempts to unsettle what has already been settled. Instead of trying to break up new fields with its plough, it simply tries to break up the plough.”

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

“It has become an unquestioned moral assumption...that people should be *free*. What that means in the popular mind and popular culture is that people should be permitted, if not actually enabled, to do what they want. This is almost always joined with the assumption that what people do want is to enjoy *pleasure*. Sometimes they speak of ‘happiness,’ but that term has little meaning to most folk other than *feeling good*.... From this we get our overall culture of *sensuality*, in which people are almost totally governed by their feelings.”

~Dallas Willard (1935-2013), professor of philosophy at USC

SERMON – “The Fruit of the Spirit is Love” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

SERMON PASSAGE – *Galatians 5:13-25 (ESV)*

Galatians 5

¹For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

²Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. ³I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. ⁴You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. ⁵For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. ⁶For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

⁷You were running well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? ⁸This persuasion is not from him who calls you. ⁹A little leaven leavens the whole lump. ¹⁰I have confidence in the Lord that you will take no other view, and the one who is troubling you will bear the penalty, whoever he is. ¹¹But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed. ¹²I wish those who unsettle you would emasculate themselves!

¹³For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ¹⁴For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁵But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

¹⁶But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will

not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, ²¹envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

²⁵If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Galatians 6

¹Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. ²Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. ³For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. ⁴But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. ⁵For each will have to bear his own load.