



The Kingdom Perspective

The Celtic Way of Evangelism

Hello, this is Pastor Don Willeman of Christ Redeemer Church. Welcome to the Kingdom Perspective.

How should we respond to the cultural chaos we see all around?

We should learn from earlier Christians, such as St. Patrick, and the churches that originated from him.

When European civilization was overwhelmed by barbarian hordes, the recently converted Celtic tribes preserved, and then eventually reestablished, Christianity throughout the continent. In the words of Thomas Cahill, “the Irish...saved civilization” (see *How the Irish Saved Civilization* by Thomas Cahill).

Most basically, they did this by starting and nurturing churches—essentially monastic-type communities that cared for every aspect of life. Jesus’s Lordship redeems all of life, and they put this truth into practice.

These Irish monasteries were different from the Roman ones. As one writer put it: “The...monasteries [in Roman Christianity] were organized to protest against and escape from the materialism of the Roman world and the corruption of the church; the Celtic monasteries organized to penetrate the pagan world and extend the church.” (see *The Celtic Way of Evangelism* by George Hunter). These Celtic Christian communities were not an escape from the “public square”, but a mission to it. Often these monasteries were set up at the gates of ancient cities, in order to minister the gospel to these cities. They were, in effect, a “new city” shining as a light within an existing city.

For us, this means the redemptive community of the church must become all the more essential. How can we live together as a distinctively new society amid our existing society that is so full of fear and division? How can we love and care for one another, practically, in such a way that the watching world sees the truth of the gospel through our shared life in the church? All of these are very good question, and indeed...

...something to think about from The Kingdom Perspective.

“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.”

~ 1 Peter 2:9-12 (ESV)

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