

Principal's Office Newsletter – October 2022

It has been too long since my last newsletter written as it was amid the fog of the covid pandemic. The new semester is nearing the half-way point and so I wanted to write again and encourage all of you to continue in your walk with God, and in your study and proclamation of his word in these days.

As I am sure you are well aware, the last two years have left the evangelical church in a state of disarray with lots of people ready to assign blame but few willing to take responsibility for their contribution in the fray. Times like these provide opportunities for various sorts of troublemakers to blow their own horns and to frighten the timid with dire predictions if we do not lend them an ear and adopt their proposed solutions. As readers of the NT, we should know that wars and rumours of wars, earthquakes and famines, and kingdoms rising and falling will mark the interadvental period until Jesus comes again.

In the midst of it all we must keep our eyes on Jesus and the task he has assigned to us. That task is simple and simultaneously difficult. Simple in the sense that we are clearly commanded to live by faith in Christ and bring our lives under his gracious authority. Simple does not mean easy as every Christian knows from their own personal experience, and this is where the difficulty and its attendant danger lies.

Rather than engage in the struggle for sanctification it is far easier to get involved in noisy protests and political activism in the name of Christ. Denying ourselves, walking in humility, quietly enduring persecution for righteousness' sake rubs us the wrong way and strikes a blow to our inflated notions of self-importance. Activism makes us feel alive and in such an atmosphere it is easy to mistake a restless, anti-authoritarianism spirit for the convicting, humbling, transforming work of the Spirit of God.

Our job as Christians is to testify to the truth in word and deed. The scriptures teach us that the human problem is sin, and the ultimate answer is the gospel which the apostle Paul describes as the power of gospel unto salvation. The political order is established by God to keep some semblance of order while God carries out his plan to save his people from their sins, and we should be thankful for it.

But politics and politicians accomplish very little in the big scheme of things and they will be no more when God makes all things new. This will not be accomplished by some gradual post-millennial "Christianization" of the world, but by the return of King Jesus who will destroy all who are not obedient to him. This includes the billionaire class and their back-scratching enablers in academia, business, government, finance, law, media, etc., and the masses who benefit more or less their beneficence. Ours is not to arrange and re-arrange the deck chairs on the Titanic (so to speak), but to call human beings everywhere to repent because the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

The church is an outpost of heaven, and our unique responsibility is to warn those closest to us, including our children, and anyone else who will listen, to flee the coming wrath. As Christians, we participate in the world around us to the degree that we are able without compromising our priority commitment to Christ, but we should never forget that political solutions are temporary at best, and they are never truly righteous in the way that God demands. What might be accomplished in one generation will be undone by the next because politics cannot change the human heart and salvation does not and cannot come by legislation even though laws based, even loosely, on God's truth can delay the inevitable judgment.

All this to say, we need to keep our eye on the prize in these bewildering days. If Satan can distract us, and even worse, divide us over things that are of little significance in the long run, we are defeated. We

must refuse to listen to every discernment blogger, or frustrated writer with a Substack account, or the self-congratulatory pastoral heroes who makes documentaries hoping to secure their place in history. Time is short and there are better things to do than join their throng. Their popularity is ephemeral and when the dust settles it will be those who hope in the Lord who will truly shepherd God's flock.

You have come to TBS to study God's word and to prepare yourselves for ministry. The weapons that we fight with are not the weapons of the world, they have divine power, and that is what makes them effectual. We believe in the power of prayer and the word of God, not just to restrain evil and to make the world a better place, but to really rescue people from the power of sin, death, and Satan. The current powerlessness of much of the church is not resolved by shifting our priorities or settling our sights on more attainable political objectives and causes, but by humbling ourselves before the Lord and waiting on him to rend the heavens and come down.

Kirk M. Wellum, Principal
Thanksgiving Day, 2022