

THOUGHTS

BY DOUGLAS W. SCHROEDER
SPEAKER ON THE WORD TODAY

EASTER JOY

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What will be your personal circumstances when Easter arrives? I suspect Ukrainians did not think their cities would lie in ruins this Easter, or that thousands of Russians and their own citizens would succumb to warfare. No one knows how the winds of change will blow, soft and easy, or like a hurricane. Just as the weather for Easter may be epically perfect, spring-like, or revisit the blustery days of winter, none of us knows the circumstances surrounding Christian festivals that we approach at a daily pace.

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Day by day the Apostles saw their Lord walking toward Jerusalem and His death. He told them so directly, along with the assurance of His resurrection (an example is in Mark 9:30-32), but it seems to have been too big an idea for them to comprehend. The resurrection infused them with supernatural joy, and they sealed their testimony with their own blood to assure that we can have that supernatural joy as well!

NICE GUY

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Impressions drawn from limited exposure to another person can be skewed toward the positive. After a cordial introduction, there is a tendency to conclude they are a nice person. Maybe not. Perhaps you just caught them at a good time. When spending limited time with others it is easy to get the wrong impression – that they are nice. I remind myself, and occasionally family members, that we have no clue what a person is really like based on one brief encounter. That sounds terribly pessimistic, but it is simply Christian sensibility.

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We are all sinners, and most of the time we try not to let our ugly side show because we care what others think about us. People are shocked when someone who seems nice goes ballistic, commits a felony, or ends up a killer. The more time spent in the Word, the less shocked we are when the ugly side of a person shows up. There are no nice guys, nor nice gals. We are all warped with sin and capable of horrible behaviors.

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We all desperately need Christ. Humans need to be reborn, to be redeemed from their carnal, evil nature (i.e. I Timothy 1:12-17). Christ won the victory over Satan and the grave so that we may live a new life! There are no nice men and women. There are only sinners who are living in the recovery of God's grace, or sinners who are not.

CANCEL WILL SMITH? OF COURSE NOT!

The media giants were silent following Smith's assault of Chris Rock at the Oscar Awards show. So many have been hyper to cancel others for a crass word spoken or a sentiment that is construed as racist. Wouldn't you think that when a man uses violence in full view of a live TV audience he should be canceled? Yes, he should be. But, you see, he makes other people too much money! Their cash cow – I'm reminded of the idolatrous calf god the Israelites made in the wilderness – is far too important to butcher!

The Word
Today
Box 77
Greendale, WI
53129



*The Bible is God's Word...Jesus is God's "Word" made flesh...
His death and resurrection, the message needed Today.*

Christians should never, ever idolize other sinners. The only one worthy of our ultimate esteem and love is God, particularly Jesus. The demonstration of rage by Will Smith shows us that it is precarious to place people on a pedestal, for they tumble.

How interesting that concurrently a news article ran about Mickey Rourke, whose wife was assaulted, and how a priest helped to prevent him from violent retaliation. The article is here: "Mickey Rourke recalls being blacklisted in Hollywood, how a priest 'saved' him: 'You've gotta be tough.'" (<https://www.foxnews.com/entertainment/mickey-rourke-blacklisted-hollywood-catholic-faith>). Rourke said of the spiritual influence of the priest, "Father Pete saved me... from doing some really bad s—t. Something really bad happened to the person I was with, who was raped and beaten up badly. I had very dark plans for the people that did it. But it was his guidance that prevented me from doing something really terrible. Because if someone beats up your wife, you're not going to just give him a punch." We got a lesson in worldliness from Will Smith. If someone insults or as much as makes an offensive joke about our family, then according to the world, we are justified in assaulting them!

Millions of eyeballs will follow the aftermath of Smith's slap of Chris Rock. Very few will be made aware of Rourke's testimony because it's too religious, too Christian. But it is the balm that Will Smith and our world need.

LOVING CHALLENGE

Among Our Shepherd's members and The Word Today's supporters, an unusual one-time gift has been given - \$150K for the expansion into 13 new languages announced recently! The family has asked me to lovingly issue a challenge; can we all match it?

Five years ago, I set a miracle goal of 200 languages for TWT and I was unsure that I would ever see it. God is working a miracle among us! We are at 180 dialects this year – isn't that incredible! Imagine the people being brought to Christ!

How amazing would it be if as a body we meet the challenge and show the world our love for Christ and our zeal for the Gospel! Come on, let's do it! Connie and I will do more to reach the goal. Will you join us in the effort? Even if we do not reach that precise target, we will have done more for God than before. Attempting big things for God pleases Him because it shows our zeal for Him! Let's try to reach that goal!

William Carey, who is known as the father of modern missions, the first missionary to India, and who brought the country its first printing press for the sake of the Gospel, said, "Expect great things from God, attempt great things for God."

Blessings,
Douglas W. Schroeder

THE WORD TODAY reaching the world with GOD'S WORD

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