

When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?"  
And the crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee."  
And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves.  
And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer'; but you are making it a robbers' den."

*Matthew 21:10-13*

# Willful Ignorance

As the year began in the snows of January, passed through the fresh, warming spring and voluptuous summer, it now fades into the dusky dryness of autumn.

As the year draws down to its cold and snowy end, so my year-long reading through God's word now settles into the fullness of Christ's ministry on earth.

The reading began, in January, in the mists of creation, passed through the rich histories of God's people—their triumphs, their humiliation, their prophecies—and now finds its apex in the life of Jesus. Soon it will ripen into the teachings of the apostles, then, as the snows once again fall outside my window, will fade into the mysteries of The Revelation.

And once again I am reminded of how wrong people can be about the ways of God.

## SIGN OF THE TIMES

Right now in the United States we are passing through a sad and terrible time—terrible, that is, for those who love this country and the foundation upon which it has been built. For we are passing through a time of willful ignorance. And this ignorance, if let loose to flower into its ugly end, could spell the demise of most everything patriotic Americans hold dear.

This ignorance is founded on an unwillingness of the individual to do their homework: to discover and read for themselves the truth. From the media willfully believing

Reflections  
by the Pond

No. 418  
October 26, 2009

and passing on a lie instead of digging for the truth about the conservative radio host, Rush Limbaugh; to the public falling for politicians' lies and spin—with the eager complicity of the left-leaning media—about a totalitarian behemoth called “national healthcare”; to taxing us into oblivion over the laughable paranoia about “global warming,” during what is demonstrably a cooling period—all disturbingly effective simply because individuals will not seek out the truth for themselves.

But the willful ignorance is not limited to the perishing things of this world. Men and women of every stripe—even, sadly, some within the body of Christ—have stubbornly, relentlessly remained woefully ignorant about the truth of God. And this is never more apparent than in how they perceive the person of Jesus.

## BIOGRAPHY

Perhaps we should blame Hollywood. Go back even to the silent days of cinema and you will discover a wan, insipid Jesus floating serenely from scene to scene, never expressing more emotion than a cardboard box. Watch Cecil B. De Mille's original 1927 version of *The King of Kings*, and you will see portrayed a Jesus bearing little resemblance to the true Jesus of the Gospels.

Whatever the genesis of this world's ignorance, most people have come to think of Jesus as a milquetoast, a simp, a punching bag. They have superimposed His bland, watery image over the Lennon/McCartney lyrics—

All you need is love, all you need is love,  
All you need is love, love, love is all you need.  
Love, love, love, love, love, love,  
love, love, love...

—to convince those who don't know any better that Jesus is utterly harmless, a flower child, a goody-goody showering warm fuzzies over everyone.

Sorry, but that is not the Jesus of Scripture.

Choose *not* to be ignorant. Sit down and read his biography for yourself. In those pages you will discover someone who did not silently suffer fools:

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. You serpents, you brood of vipers, how will you escape the sentence of hell?”

*Matthew 23:27-28,33*

You will read how He lost patience with His thick-headed disciples, with them and others with a paucity of faith:

And one of the crowd answered Him, “Teacher, I brought You my son, possessed with a spirit which makes him mute; and whenever it seizes him, it slams him to the ground and he foams at the mouth, and grinds his teeth and stiffens out. I told Your disciples to cast it out, and they could not do it.” And He answered them and said, “O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him to Me!”

*Mark 9:17-19*

You will read how shortly after He praised Peter for understanding that He was “the Christ, the Son of the living God,” Jesus sternly upbraided the apostle for being shortsighted, and for his arrogance in suggesting

that he, Peter, knew God's will for the Messiah better than the Messiah Himself:

From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day. Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to You.” But He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's.”

*Matthew 16:21-23*

Was the Lord Jesus a man of love? Of course He was. He loved mankind—His own creation—to the extent that He sacrificed Himself upon a cross to make the way for their salvation. He bore our sins—all of them, every last one of them—on that cross, and suffered the agony of separation from the Father when God could not bear even to look upon His own Son swimming in that putrid miasma of humanity's sin. Did He love? Yes, Jesus loved like no one before or since.

But He was not the one-dimensional caricature described by society and the popular media.

Choose not to be ignorant of who Jesus was and is. Read His biography for yourself.

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. It's all there.

I dare you.

If anything whatever is common to all believers, and even to many unbelievers, it is the sense that in the Gospels they have met a personality... We are not in the least perturbed by the contrasts...in Jesus of peasant shrewdness, intolerable severity, and irresistible tenderness. So strong is the flavour of the personality that, even while He says things which, on any other assumption than that of Divine Incarnation in the fullest sense, would be appallingly arrogant, yet we—and many unbelievers too—accept Him at His own valuation when He says, “I am meek and lowly of heart.”

C. S. Lewis

