



Theological reflection – are you scared?

People seem frightened by opportunity to reflect deeply on their faith so as to inform their choices. Instead, they want faith to conform to choices already made – no reflection or lifestyle modification required.

Why this fear? Apparently we wish not to discover what leaves us sorry or uncomfortable. We want no confrontation with our immorality, responsibility for bad choices, strained relationships, or our shallow lives. We would rather everything be fast, filled-up with activity and sugar-coated.

But consider how culture deteriorates when we live this way:

- Journalism becomes coverage. Why double-check your sources?
- Sexuality equals pleasure, now almost fully separated from intimacy, partnership and parenting.
- Vocational excellence is defined by speed and quantity rather than craftsmanship and service.
- Freedom now means safety, not liberty. Liberty is now defined as substituting a cruel government with an invading force.

This deterioration happens to religious expressions as well:

- Worship becomes singing and preaching without commemoration or silence or mystery. The crucifix is now an image flashed on a screen. It no longer is a mystery one contemplates in reverent awe.
- Charitable giving morphs into venture capital – an investment with an expected return. You never really give it away.
- Denominational support now means getting money one part of the denomination needs, whether congregation, ministry organization, or denominational office. No-one works for the interests of the whole.

Can we dare hope that some are rising up among us who will lead with faith rather than pick it up as an afterthought?

I pray so.

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-mark