

2/22/18

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Christian author Timothy Keller has made a compelling observation about Christianity in our society. He says that many in our culture look at Christianity and think to themselves, “Been there. Done that.” In other words, from their point of view they grew up with Christianity, they know it through and through, they found no satisfaction in it, they’re bored with it, and they’ve long since moved on. “Been there. Done that.”

But according to Timothy Keller, the real problem is that many have become familiar with the trappings of Christianity—but just enough, in Keller’s words, to “inoculate” themselves. As a result, their attitude towards Jesus Christ might come down to something like this: Jesus is nice. Jesus is quaint. Jesus is good for my kids. Jesus makes me feel better when someone dies—and that’s about all.

If Timothy Keller’s observation is a valid one—if it is true that the attitude of “been there, done that” is a big part of the cultural air we breathe, then you and I have an important question to ask ourselves. Have you and I ever fallen into the same trap? Somewhere along the line, has our familiarity with the trappings of Christianity made us think we now have the right to smile that knowing smile, to nod that knowing nod, to sigh and say, “Been there. Done that”?

If we have, it means you and I have dabbled in the same kind of cultural “wisdom” that the apostle Paul describes in 1 Corinthians chapter 1. *For the foolishness of God is wiser than man’s wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man’s strength.* 1 Corinthians 1:25. Such wisdom is no wisdom at all. Instead, it’s just a lie dressed up

like some world-weary truth. Such lies are toxic. Such lies are lethal. For all they do is put cold, uncaring distance between us and our Savior from sin.

Thank God that the Lord Jesus does what he has to do to pull us out of the trap, to shake us up, to call us to repentance. And when that happens, there he is, ready to embrace us in his assurance of forgiveness, ready to cover us in the blanket of his love, ready to bring us back home.

Prayer: *Forgive me, Lord Jesus, when I have used my familiarity with Christianity as a twisted excuse to ignore you. Embrace me. And let's begin again. Amen.*

(WELS E-Devotion, adapted)

...See you in worship.

Keep looking up because the Lord is always looking down – Psalm 121

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