

The Known and the Unknown

In his book ***The World Is Flat: The Globalized World in the Twenty-first Century*** (2006), Thomas L. Friedman begins Chapter One with this quote:

“Your highnesses, as Catholic Christians, and princes who love and promote the holy Christian faith, and are enemies of Mahomet, and of all idolatry and heresy, determined to send me, Christopher Columbus, to the above-mentioned countries of India, to see the said princes, people, and territories, and to learn their disposition and the proper method of converting them to our holy faith; and furthermore directed that I should not proceed by land to the East, as is customary, but by a Westerly route, in which direction we have hitherto no certain evidence that anyone has gone.”

--Entry from the journal of Christopher Columbus on his voyage of 1492

It would be very easy to get bogged down in the history of that era and the clash between two major world religions—Christianity and Islam (Mahomet is another name for Muhammed)—on the Iberian Peninsula (modern day Spain and Portugal). Suffice it to say that Columbus’ endeavor to get to India by a far less conventional way was brought on by necessity as much as economics and religion because all land routes to India passed through Islamic monarchies of Africa, the Middle East, and southern Asia.

Here’s a question that came to mind when I re-read that quote (I have the book in my library). What if Ferdinand and Isabella thought trying to get to India to the west by boat was a bad idea? They could have stuck to the tried and true ways of getting to India in spite of the risk posed by unfriendly forces and generally bad people along the way. I’m only a casual student of history, but I can imagine there were some, perhaps many, in the royal court of Spain in the late 15th century who thought it was an absolutely crazy idea to sail into the unknown in order to get to India. Far fewer, I’m sure, had the courage to voice their disagreement to the king and queen. Nevertheless, they commissioned Columbus to sail into the *unknown* in order to get the *known*.

Likewise, what if Columbus refused to go on this expedition of sailing to the west in order to get to India? That would certainly be understandable, because many still believed that the world was flat during that period of history, and by sailing west, he and his ships were likely to fall into oblivion and never return. The fear of that happening was real, and we very much underestimate the courage of the sailors and soldiers on the initial journey to sail into the *unknown* to get to the *known*.

We are the beneficiaries, albeit after dozens of generations and from various points on the globe, of Ferdinand and Isabella’s vision and the courage of Columbus and the men of his initial voyage to what was later called the New World. We would not be here were it not for vision and courage in the face of uncertainty and doubt—and a willingness to venture into the *unknown* in order to get to the *known*.

Jesus Christ teaches us about our known reality—the kingdom of God (or the kingdom of heaven). Unless we’ve not listened when in Bible studies, book studies, and worship services, we know that our spiritual home is not of this world. It is not some physical kingdom on earth where fear rules. Instead, it is a spiritual kingdom with God through our Savior Jesus Christ. That is our true home as disciples of Christ, on earth as it is in heaven. That is our known spiritual reality.

Getting to that known reality is another matter altogether as modern-day believers. We must have courage, and face criticism, when taking an unknown and unconventional route to first make disciples for Jesus Christ, and then, and only then, think about getting to heaven. Both of those endeavors rely on the unearned and undeserved grace of God through Christ our Lord, and our response of faith/trust in the love of God. The nostalgic “tried and true” programming of the past, and perhaps even in the present, is earthly thinking that takes us into a known but hostile territory. Some argue that is where Christianity is heading; that we’ve become an institution motivated by fear, not the body of Christ motivated by faith. If that is true, then we have lost our ability to bring others into a relationship with Jesus Christ because we do not have a relationship with him in the first place. Instead, we come to worship to be entertained and/or hang out with our friends, and that happens in churches large and small.

The unknown is scary. But when taking the journey toward Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, together as a congregation, it is not so scary. In that journey we deepen our reliance on and relationship with our risen Lord and Savior, move forward in spite of our fear and circumstances around us, and catch a glimpse of the great things God has in store for us when the pandemic ends.

Yours in Christ our Lord,

Pastor Tom



On Going: Les Case, Wade Davis, Roger Grable, Richard Fuerst, Winnie Fuerst, Harvey Geary, Michael Hatfield, Linda Koleiny, Shane Miley, Nancy Rowe, Norma Whiting

Strength and Healing: Gene Crist, Graves family, Mike McMillin, Kirk Morehead and family, DJ Petty, Andrew White

Missions: Kenyan G-Marc Project (Chics for Chicks), Hillcrest Transitional Housing, Harvester’s Food Bank, Lazarus Ministries, Tarsney Lake Families, Congregation de Mellier, Heart and Soul Children’s Learning Center

Please contact the office to update or add prayer requests



We would like to thank everyone who donated money and water for the Mason School Elementary Mission. We were able to buy 92 cases of water which turns out to be 2300 water bottles for the kids to enjoy and stay safe. Thank you Cindy for all your hard work and strong back! Another Mission to be proud of!



OUR WORSHIP TEAM IS EXPANDING!

As we improve our ability to live stream our worship services with better equipment within the next month, we will need one other person in the back to run the equipment for the high-definition camera at our 10:00 Sunday morning service. This is in addition to those who run the slides on Sunday.

If you or someone you know is tech savvy and can help us, let Pastor Tom know (831-333-6893 or pastorllcumc@gmail.com).

November 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Services 8:00 & 10:00	2	3	4 Missions Meeting 7:00	5	6	7
8 Services 8:00 & 10:00	9	10	11	12	13	14
15 Services 8:00 & 10:00	16	17	18	19 PPRC Meeting 7:00	20	21
22 Services 8:00 & 10:00	23	24 Church Council Meeting 7:00	25	26 Happy Thanksgiving	27	28
29 Services 8:00 & 10:00	30					