

# For Such a Time as This

## A Daily Devotional

### Friday, May 3, 2024

**The theo-centric character of Reformed faith sets it over against every ethic of self-realization, against inordinate concern with the salvation of one's own soul, against excessive preoccupation with questions of personal identity.**

The words above come from an introduction to the Reformed tradition by the Presbyterian theologian, John H. Leith. Leith makes a significant point: the focus of the Christian faith as seen through the lens of the Reformed tradition alleviates us from an excessive sense of self-absorption, both in our grounding of our own identity as human beings and in our hope for salvation.

Our hope for salvation and our own personal identity (that is our meaning and purpose in this world as human beings) are both grounded not in ourselves, but in God. Far too many Christians limit their adherence to the faith and their trust in Jesus Christ as merely a means for ultimate salvation and significance. Our focus, as followers of God, should be upon God and the things of God in this world, not just seeking adherence to God's way as some kind of 'golden parachute' to personal safety and continuance in eternal life. Too many of us become fascinated with the faith only as a means to secure a happy eternity.

If we consider seriously the witness of the whole testimony of scripture, then we know that our love for God and our desire to fulfill the promise of human life has more to do with God himself rather than our own personal and individual comfort or enjoyment. According to the witness of the Christian faith, all of us find, at some point or another, that when we have to do with life, we really have to do with God.

H. Richard Niebuhr, another twentieth-century Reformed theologian, put it this way:

**We may call it the nature of things, we call it fate, we may call it reality. But by whatever name we call it, this law of things, this reality, this way things are, is something with which we all must reckon. We may not be able to give a name to it, calling it only the 'void' out of which everything comes and to which everything returns, though that is also a name. But it is there – the last shadowy and vague reality, the secret of existence by virtue of which things come into being, are what they are, and pass away. Against it there is no defense.**

In life and in death, it is not just our selves, our identities and our hopes with which we deal; we deal with God.

**Prayer for the Day: (From *Daily Feast, Year B*)**

**Instead of always thinking about what I need, remind me of what I already have. Amen.**

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