

## Searching for a Truth

Wayne Waibel – 02/15/2026

Jesus was not just sympathetic toward the poor and the marginalized. He was born poor and marginalized. His parents were poor – He grew up poor – He lived among the poor – all of His life. That was no accident.

There is a certain advantage to being poor. Not only do you learn the value of a life forged in the fires of struggle, but you are also enriched by the wisdom gained in learning what you can live without. Alternatively, you can bemoan your station in life with your dismal prospects and doom yourself to a decidedly uninspired journey.

The good news is that God is partial to the poor – the disenfranchised – the lowly and the marginalized. That may be because the poor are more inclined to observe and attend to folks less fortunate than themselves.

Perhaps it's the marvelous way the disenfranchised have of validating and uplifting the down-trodden of society. When you have little, you are sincerely grateful for what you do have, and a grateful heart engenders hope.

Still – it's very easy to ignore or overlook the many opportunities for grace afforded us on a daily basis if we have an abundance of.... anything!

Unless you keep yourself completely shut off from what goes on daily in the world, there is no lack of material to illustrate how far we as a people have strayed from a Godly life. About the only indication we have left that there is hope resides internally.

We can go back and forth on the political woes we face as a nation, but I suspect if we did a careful examination – we’d find that the pettiness and attention to self-indulgent agendas began around the time of the Jefferson administration. Cooperation between parties has been eroding since the system was established. Empires don’t do well in the long haul.

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You’d think that we’d be able to find heroes in the world of sport or entertainment, but all too often those who rise fall hard as well. It’s as though the world is being set up to fail. And to compound the problem, we have both social media and mainstream news outlets to thank for providing not only distorted and sensationalized accounts that pass as newsworthy, but out and out falsehoods masquerading as truth.

What does it take to get an honest answer out of anybody? Where is the upside to a productive dialog when the art of listening is perceived as weakness? Where can one go in searching for a truth?

Despite the tribulations we as members of the human race endure, this community of faith is way ahead of the curve. You have been defying convention for so many years – it's almost considered normal around here to tackle impossible situations.

You openly accept with welcoming arms folks who can't find an open heart anywhere else. This is why you can talk about the wide world here. You are generously preparing Christians for ministry in the world. You've been doing it for a very long time. That's why you're good at it.

You're good at it because you can break things down and get at what matters really. You're good at it because you understand that the powers of the old age were real. It's about God leading his people to the Messiah. Every – last – one of us.

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When Jesus was a child, He was a child. The human experience was at the forefront of everything He was and everything He did. I know that we sometimes struggle mightily with the human condition, and while I don't think it was necessarily easy for Him as a child, the favor of God was upon Him and He grew in strength of Spirit and wisdom.

When I think back on those bright spots in my life where clarity and purpose were supremely evident, they all had one thing in common – a specific lack of anything personal. I had absolutely nothing to do with the sensation. That’s the purpose of worship. Praise is a liturgical action that turns us away from ourselves.

In trying to focus on what God does for us in today’s world – it becomes readily apparent that His work is quite often very subtle. Sometimes you have to really open your heart wide to feel the grace at work.

I’m mindful of the notion that evil cannot be conquered in the world – only resisted in the self. There is just so much leveled at us routinely that it becomes nearly impossible to understand something clearly at last.

It was God at work bending the children of Israel toward the Messiah against the backdrop of a Roman Caesar who thought himself the son of God. When there comes a Messiah – a very particular set of conditions fall into place. Chief among them – the grace and favor of God.

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We are transformed from timid, quivering victims to dynamic beacons of reverence and courage – and not always because of our pursuit – occasionally despite our efforts.

This is the work of the grace of God. If we let the inner light illuminate our lives – we can truly shine. Nowhere is this more evident than in this very church.

If you look at the many ways you extend yourselves to the broader community in which you live, you'll find that your efforts are extraordinary and continual. You'll also find that they are a result of many participants – not just a few generous contributors.

You are indeed blessed with the favor of God. Amen.