

REDEEMER

R E P O R T

MARCH 2011

THE HONORS OF THE KING

BY TIM KELLER

In his unpublished biography of his brother C. S. Lewis, W. H. “Warnie” Lewis related how in late 1951 his brother received a letter from Prime Minister Winston Churchill. In it, Churchill offered to recommend him for a C.B.E. (Commander of the British Empire).

The C.B.E. is one class in the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, a chivalric order established to recognize gallantry and service to the Empire, and Lewis was nominated to appear on the last list of honours of King George VI, in December, 1951. It was an extremely coveted honor, and evidently it was offered to Lewis for his public service for writing and broadcasting during the war.

In a letter to the Prime Minister’s secretary Lewis turned down the offer, which was very unusual. “I feel greatly obliged to the Prime Minister, and so far as my personal feelings are concerned this honour would be highly agreeable,” he wrote. However, he added that many people said or believed that Christianity is basically, “covert anti-Leftist propaganda, and my appearance in the Honours List would of course strengthen their hands. It is therefore better that I should not appear there.” (W. Hooper, ed. *The Collected Letters of C. S. Lewis*, volume III, p. 147.)

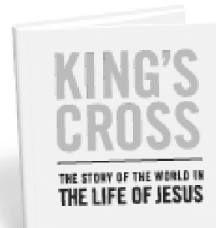
Over the years some other notable figures have turned down membership in the Order of the British Empire, but usually it was

as a political protest against some aspect of British government or policy. In Lewis’ case the reasoning was completely different. He knew that if Churchill, a Conservative politician, recommended him for the order it would only lend credence to what people believed about the Christian faith, namely, that it was not really about truth, but was rather a tool for non-progressive political interests. Lewis refused to let a political entity reward him for Christian service, fearing it would identify Christianity too closely with one political system.

Christianity is filled with many truth claims. Some of those claims and principles may align well with a certain political party. It is
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SHARING LENT WITH YOUR NEIGHBOR

March 9 (Ash Wednesday) marks the beginning of the season of Lent. These 40 days prior to Easter are spent focusing our hearts as we prepare for the celebration of the great gift of life provided by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. We observe Lent through repentance and self-denial, the goal of which is to remember the great gift of redemption and the hope we have in Jesus, as well as our joy in sharing that hope with others.



King's Cross, a new book by Tim Keller, is now available for the Redeemer community as we collectively prepare for Holy Week. The book, which examines the life of Jesus through the Gospel of Mark, is an “extended

meditation on the historical Christian premise that Jesus’s life, death, and resurrection form the central event of cosmic and human history as well as the central organizing principle of our own lives.” Not only would this book benefit someone who already believes the truth of the gospel, but more importantly, it is a great resource for people who are open to exploring Christianity.

(Continued on page 6)



KINGDOM-CENTERED TIME MANAGEMENT

BY JULIET VEDRAL

New Yorkers have a reputation for complaining about a lot of things, but there's one complaint that everyone shares—there are just never enough hours in the day! So to help you keep track of where all the time goes, take our quick time assessment!

The circle represents a typical week, broken up into 8 hour segments.

First, shade in the amount of time that you spend sleeping. For example, if you get 8 hours of sleep each night, that's 56 hours a week and you'd fill in 7 segments.

Second, shade in the amount of time that you spend working (which includes cleaning, walking the dog, and other "work at

home.") For example, if you spend 60 hours a week working, that's about 7 and a half segments.

Third, shade in the amount of time that you spend alone—running errands, working out, reading, etc.

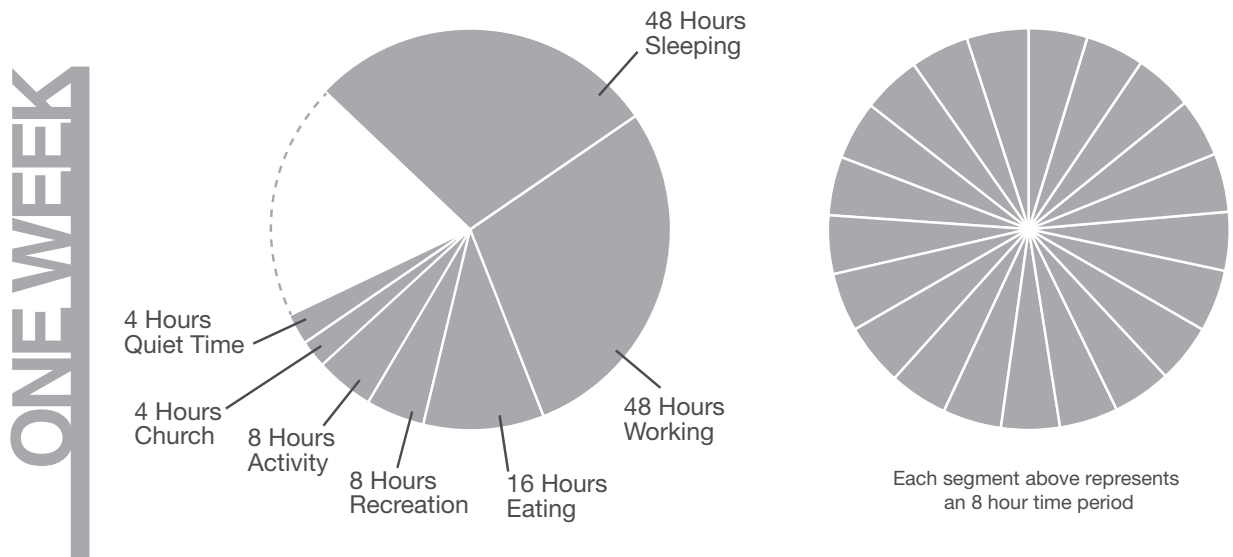
Fourth, shade in the amount of time that you spend with your Christian friends and family—this could be your fellowship group time, Sunday worship, prayer time, socializing, etc. Don't forget childcare!

Finally, leave the amount of time unshaded that you spend socially with those who don't share your faith or aren't part of your Christian community.

What does it look like? For

many, it will reveal an imbalance in the amount of time spent at work. For most, it will reveal how easy it is to overlook one of the most important privileges Christians have—to share our faith with people who don't know Christ.

We've come up with a way to address this challenge—P6x40. Over the forty days of Lent Redeemer will be offering events and activities that will help make more room in your life for non-Christians. View the calendar of events at www.redeemer.com/P6x40 or the listing in the March 6 bulletin. As we approach Lent, let's prayerfully consider how we can share our faith with others.



The circle on the left is an example of a week's worth of time already filled in. The one on the right is the chart for you to record how your time is used each week.

REDEEMER REPORT

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Kathy Keller
Heather Klein

HUNTER COLLEGE AUDITORIUM
East 69TH (Between Park & Lexington)
services at 10:30AM & 6:00PM

ETHICAL CULTURE
West 64TH and CPW
service at 9:15AM

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
Corner of West 79TH and Broadway
service at 5:00PM & 7:15PM

A GRACE & RACE SYMPOSIUM: THE CHURCH & THE EXPERIENCE OF MULTI-ETHNIC AMERICA

BY ABE CHO

The U.S. Census Bureau recently reported that by 2042 racial minorities will constitute a demographic majority in America. This means that “every child born in the United States from here on out will belong to the first post-white generation.” Whether or not we agree with the idea of a “post-white” America, ethnic and cultural diversity will increasingly be experienced as an inescapable given in American society—nowhere more so than in cities. This continued growth in ethnic diversity, along with the accelerating realities of globalization and urbanization, holds both promise and challenge for the church.

The promise is that we have the opportunity, like never before, to embody a human community

of rich diversity made whole under the cosmic rule of Christ. The church has the potential to become that restored, cross-cultural community where we share life together as Christ’s Body knit together in love and serving one another with our different gifts.

The challenge is that as different groups are brought together into the “global village,” those on the margins of power may see these globalizing trends as a threat to their cultural identities and way of life. A diverse society will always be forced to ask itself “On whose terms are we achieving diversity?” The challenge is finding true wholeness in the face of real cultural difference.

The Grace and Race ministry at Redeemer is a modest attempt to help us as a church in a global

city begin to understand these issues in light of the gospel. On Saturday, March 12, we will host an afternoon symposium on “The Church and the Experience of Multi-Ethnic America.” We will explore how the church played an important role in empowering African-, Asian- and Latino-Americans by providing a place for social integration, restored dignity and protest in the face of injustice. We will consider how the church might continue to serve in these ways for our current historical moment.

Dr. Anthony Bradley (King’s College), Dr. Alvin Padilla (Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary) and Dr. Jeffrey Jue (Westminster Theological Seminary) will lead us in exploring these themes, followed by a Q & A.

IN THE LIVING ROOM: A SEVEN-WEEK FAITH & ART STUDY

BY MARIA FEE

Since its inception seven years ago, InterArts Fellowship (IAF) has gathered artists of all disciplines to showcase their work and talk about their faith. While IAF is a dynamic and well-attended quarterly meeting, our artists also felt the need for a more intimate setting to share their faith journeys. This fall we piloted a seven-week art and faith study entitled, *In the Living Room*. *In the Living Room* takes the IAF conversations a bit deeper, chiefly looking at the role of the artist through the prism of the gospel. The gospel

“refracts” the call of artist into as the spectrums of: creator, disciple, theologian, servant, cultivator, and responder to beauty.

In the beautiful living room of a Redeemer artist, the group was able to wrestle with the God’s call to an artists. One highlight of the seven weeks was our salon evening. Fellowship Group director Steve Schaffer began with a meditation on the Incarnation (redeemerarts.blogspot.com.) Four artists’ presentations made gospel truths more apparent. Knowledge of God was deepened

that evening through real people using an artistic medium to communicate what God was doing in their lives. We were all acutely aware that God was at work, not just during the salon evening but throughout the study, as well as through each artist’s faith journey. We felt privileged to learn from one another and pray for each other. We bonded and connected through Christ and our appreciation of art. I think it is safe to say this small group felt they had found a home at Redeemer

GENEROUS SACRIFICE, GENEROUS COMMUNITY

BY HOWARD FREEMAN

A fellow parent at my children's school was telling me about the older Italian woman who was her landlord when she lived in Boston's North End about twenty years ago.

"So she invited me in for lemonade one day and we had a nice chat. And then she said, 'You know, I realize you're just getting started in your career, and so I'm sorry about this but I'm afraid I'm going to have to raise the rent.' Though this wasn't happy news for me, after a moment I thought about the elderly couple below me and my roommate. They were on a fixed income and this would be really tough on them.

"I asked my landlord about them. 'Yes,' she said, 'I've been worried about what will happen when I raise their rent, but I don't know what else I can do.' The man who lived below me was a fixture in our community; everyone knew him. He would even save my parking place by sitting in a chair out front, and nobody ever bothered him. He'd been very kind, you know? So I said to my landlord, 'Why don't you just add the difference in their rent to our new rent. We can cover it. We'll just drink less beer.'" My friend had absorbed the cost.

I had two takeaways from my friend's story. The first was that true generosity is cheerfully paying for something that someone else owes, but cannot afford, especially when it is a hardship to do so. Jesus did this for us, and he did it for those who had not 'been kind' but rather for those who were estranged, like lost sheep. Disobedient. Clueless. He cheerfully gave to us out of love, though it cost him everything.

The second takeaway was how powerful a strong community can be, both positively and negatively! My friend's landlord, she recounted with laughter, would stop her on the street and say, "I didn't see you at church this week!" And her landlord and others from the neighborhood, which was racially quite homogenous, would also look askance at her when she brought overseas friends from a different culture to visit. They'd ask her about it and she'd explain that she was showing them what a great place it was to live.

Within the church, there can be both loving accountability and also sanctimonious judgmentalism. In the community that Jesus has redeemed and which the Spirit is making holy, there is no room for fear of the 'other.'

Rather, there is a generosity of spirit, which has a concern for others before ourselves (Philippians 2:3). And there is a generosity of self, which makes us vulnerable, even as Jesus himself was when he asked his disciples at Gesthemane to 'stay here and keep watch with me' (Matthew 26:38b). This redeemed community generously and boldly carries others' burdens and also fearlessly and humbly lets others help carry our own.

What can we do in the coming days to demonstrate both generosity and community?

- In our Fellowship Groups think creatively about individuals' needs that you hear about. Pool funds or resources to meet them.
- Let your friends know when you need help—be specific.
- Be aware of your neighbors' needs. Surprise an elderly or poor neighbor with a gift that they couldn't get on their own.
- Walk by the West 83rd St. building and learn about the neighborhood. Pray for the residents and business owners, for their peace and prosperity. Stop and talk with people. Greet and thank the firefighters of Engine Company 74.

REDEEMER MOURNS THE LOSS OF TWO CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AT 150 WEST 83RD ST.

Redeemer Presbyterian Church is deeply saddened that on February 8, 2011, Brett McEnroe and Roy Powell lost their lives while working at the construction site of our future worship & community center on 150 West 83rd St. It is with our deepest sympathy that we extend our prayers and condolences to their families and loved ones.

DON'T WALK BY

BY CHERI BACHOFER

I met a special man on Saturday night. His name is Roosevelt Terry. He has dark brown eyes and dark brown skin. He is an amputee that lost both legs from diabetes and is in a wheel chair. Oh yes, and he is homeless.

Our team walked in the rain for an hour before we spotted Roosevelt. He was in his wheel chair, so cold and wet, smelt of alcohol, and seemed very sad.

It was an honor to offer him gloves and then put them on his hands. I stooped low so we could make eye contact. As we talked I learned many things about Roosevelt, including that he was in a lot of pain. He had fallen a few months ago and then fallen again the day before. He was hurting.

I told him a few things: that he could trust us, we cared about him, we would do everything we could to help him.

And he did, he trusted us—a first step.

He let us call the church for help, he let us load him in the van in the rain, he rode back to an

unknown church with four strangers. He held my hand on the ride and with tearful eyes kept asking me, “Why would you care for me? I’m just a drunk.” Again and again I wiped his tears with my hand.

Roosevelt was brave last night! That’s why I am adding him to my growing list of “NY Heroes.”

When we returned to the church later, we discovered that the medical personnel that tended to him later called 911. They took him to a nearby hospital because his condition was critical, but they weren’t sure to which hospital.

After an hour of phone calling on Sunday morning I found him! I later met a Redeemer guy from our team and we went to visit him. What a special visit we had, too. When we walked in his room he was reading scripture. He said we were the only ones who knew where he was and he was so grateful we came.

We learned more about him. He is 58, has a daughter, grandchildren, a brother and an aunt. He’s from Jacksonville, FL, and he

grew up in church.

We paid to get the semi-private room phone turned on so he could call his family. Paid to have the TV turned on so he could watch the Super Bowl, too. He was humble and grateful.

He still wondered why we cared, what made us come to him. We assured him it was not our idea to walk in the rain through Harlem. Rather, God was trying to reach out to him, was pursuing him. He then shared many stories of how God had sent others to him too. Many of their names were written in the small, white pocket New Testament that he keeps in his coat pocket.

He showed me one note from someone he had saved for years. It simply said, “God loves You.” As we both looked closer at this weathered note, we realized it was actually an envelope, so we opened it together and there was a \$20 bill. He said, “God is providing.”

Pray for Roosevelt, please. Pray for me too. I am the one who needs to keep changing.

A REDEEMER IPHONE APP? YEP!

BY CREGAN COOKE

If you were attending Redeemer in 2001, then you’ll know just how far we’ve come technologically in the last decade. And as we move toward becoming four congregations we have begun working on some of the most important communication strategies to date. This might be one of them.

We believe the Redeemer App will help make our worship services, opportunities and resources more accessible to people everywhere. And we are excited to announce that it is now available

for download at the Apple App Store (search Redeemer under free apps).

As people move more towards apps to get relevant information from the internet, we felt it was essential to provide the core aspects of redeemer.com (and affiliate ministries) through an app. Some of the features that will help make connecting with Redeemer more efficient and easier include: worship site times/locations on Google maps, free sermons, theological papers,

monthly newsletters, videos and a NYC area affiliate church map.

As we move forward we plan to update the app as new features are created. We are also planning to release an iPad and Android version later this year, so look for more information on those versions in the coming months. So for those of you who have an iPhone, download the app today and tell your friends. There’s never been an easier way to introduce someone to Redeemer and it’s vision for the city.



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THE HONORS OF THE KING... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

a great temptation for those within the party to identify those themes and aspects of Christianity that are agreeable to its own goals and seek to enhance its own credibility by hinting (or overtly claiming) that voting for their party is God's will. And if the party offers the religious leaders the perks of power and recognition, the offer can be irresistible. Onlookers have the right to be cynical about the religious institutions that strike this bargain. They do *not* have the right to assume that's all there is to Christianity—but that is what they conclude.

C. S. Lewis refused to be a part

of that. He was far-sighted. In our country over the last 60 years, alliances between churches and politics have resulted in many people dismissing Christianity as only “the Conservative (or) Liberal party at prayer.” The results have been destructive (as we discussed in last month's newsletter article on ‘Civility.’)

At Redeemer we believe that the gospel shapes all areas of life. Christians can and should be involved in government, and their Christian faith will be the driving force behind how they engage in politics as well as how they evaluate many policy issues. Also,

Redeemer teaches God's word and often what the Bible says will have public policy implications that are direct and/or indirect. But Christians must not implicitly or explicitly identify their Christianity with political figures and parties. That has always been the balance we have tried to strike in our ministry in the city. It is tempting of course, when the honours of earthly kings are offered to us for doing Christian ministry. C. S. Lewis allowed the honor of the King of Kings to be enough for him.

SHARING LENT WITH YOUR NEIGHBOR... (CONT'D FROM PAGE 1)

In light of our effort during this season to reach out to our friends, co-workers and neighbors who don't share our faith in Jesus (see last month's article about our focus on evangelism during Lent this year), we think *King's Cross*

would be a great resource to share with them. So as you begin to think about how you might personally observe Lent, keep an eye open to how your friends might also benefit from this time to consider Jesus.

King's Cross is available at the book tables after Redeemer services, as well as wherever books are sold. You can learn more at www.timothykeller.com.