

## A Personal Word for You

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### Standing on the rock of renewal

In our long and arduous march through the eons of history with all of the ups and downs of the human race, and all of the bleak washouts of the “what might have beens,” we can take comfort in one extraordinary fact and hope. We have never walked in total darkness. Always among us there have been wise human beings. Henri Bergson, in his classic work of 1946, The Creative Mind, helps us pause in the midst of the whirlwind of discouraging events, and disappointing people, to reflect on the inescapable reality that there are those going before us who can “see” in ways you and I cannot. And in their seeing, they are able to relate to all of us the deeper, the wider, and the higher things of life. And in their seeing and teaching, they lift us to a new level as we continue to climb.

What and where would we be without their depth? So, I would ask you right now to stop, and to rehearse the roll call of those imbued with such wisdom that all of history rises to salute them. I am sure that you can list as least 10 who have made what Keats called “this vale of soul-making” better for all of us. It is so good for us to say to the “tyranny of the urgent” in which we all live, “HALT!” And take a breath, and then just remember the great breakthrough persons that have so wonderfully advanced the climb of humanity—your climb—and my climb. Who are they for you?

I want to share my thoughts on that question with each of you. And as a preface to what I will share, I want to quote the renowned historian-thinker, H.G. Wells. In 1922, Wells published his epoch-making for volume work, The Outline of History. Wells had long before 1922 deserved the moniker, “agnostic.” A mantle, by the way, which he wore with pride. But Wells, in reflecting upon the journey of eons of history, exclaimed, “Jesus of Nazareth is clearly the dominant figure in all of history.”

That assessment, coming as it did from H.G. Wells, is arresting! It reminds me of what Dr. D. Elton Trueblood once said. Trueblood reflected, “Jesus can be accepted. He can be rejected. But he cannot reasonably be ignored.” For me, Jesus is far more than a wise human. He is that for sure! Yet, upon the reflection of a thinker as peerless as H.G. Wells, Jesus is at the very least, the wisest of the wise for human quest to higher living! That distinction bears inspection. He is my choice.

Let me move around my own faith for a moment. I believe that Jesus is the clearest window to the Source of all of Life that has ever been. I believe that we see in this middle-eastern Jewish life, the very essence of the Nature and Personality of God, I believe that we also see, as well, the promise of what each of us can become as human beings! That is my faith, my trust. Some may choose others. But beyond that, besides that, I cannot ignore whoa and what this most “dominant” of all of history has to say.

Even if one cannot accept some of the faith claims about Jesus, it is so important not to dismiss the wisdom he brings to our walk to the light. In his Sermon on the Mount, (Matthew 5, 6, & 7) this peasant Jewish carpenter said that all that matters is how we love God and how we love one another. These relationships are both paramount and inextricably bound together, if we are to live life to its full abundance. At the very end of this “discourse,” Jesus said this, “Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice, is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain

came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.”

What wisdom for the human race! The very foundation of everything we know and hold dear is based on the foundation of loving and caring for each other, which we cannot do without the Transcendent Power of the Source of Love. My friends, that is the rock of true renewal. And upon that rock we build! God bless you all as we put into practice our commitment to love one another!