

Tyndale Thought for the Day

20th July 2020



At the end of your day, have you ever looked back to see where God had been at work?

This is one of those spiritual exercises which have their origins in the early history of Christianity and are rediscovered down the years. This particular exercise is the first step of the “examen” – a daily prayer published in the sixteenth century by the Spanish theologian St. Ignatius of Loyola. The prayer leads you on from reflecting on what happened during the day, to being aware of your current emotions, then praying for something that caught your attention, and finally seeking God’s help for the new day to come.

In the gospel of Matthew (12:38) the religious leaders asked Jesus for a “sign”. It is not at all clear what sort of sign they were looking for. Jesus had restored sight to the blind, enabled the lame to walk, cleansed lepers, driven out demons, raised the dead. The scribes and Pharisees could not have missed the signs of Jesus’ power. So, what sort of “sign” did they want?

In response, Jesus did not give them a sign but reminded them of two Old Testament stories – Jonah in the belly of the whale and the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon. Jesus’ point seems to be that the people of Nineveh *listened* to God’s prophet Jonah and the foreign queen *listened* to the wisdom of God’s servant Solomon, but the religious leaders were *not* listening to God’s son Jesus.

Which brings me back to Ignatius’ prayer. Are we looking for the signs of God’s presence? Are we listening to what Jesus is saying?

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