

LIVING IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

Look at living today and do not look back so often to life 20 to 30 centuries ago

Quotes from Lloyd Geering

“The reign of God will not come by watching out for it to arrive. You will not be able to say ‘Look here it comes!’ Rather the reign of God is already here and you do not see it.” Jesus

“... the modern secular world not only emerged out of Christendom, but is the natural offspring of its Christian matrix... Think back over the twentieth century and recall some of the radical changes that took place.” (Page 198)

“The human species is becoming **more egalitarian**. **Slavery** is universally condemned and, for the most part, it has been eliminated. **Racism**, which less than a century ago was so widespread that it was not even seen for what it was, has come under increasing condemnation. We now deplore the kind of **nationalism** that leads to prejudice and jingoism. Such **former class divisions as royalty, aristocracy, and commoners** have been breaking down and disappearing altogether. **Patriarchal structures in family, church and state** no longer exert the authority they once did. Both laws and customs **show greater respect for human individuality**, and **personal privacy** receives more protection. **Males and females are becoming more equal in status and opportunity**. **Homosexuals** are increasingly free to acknowledge their personal orientation and be themselves. That **whole populations have a greater sense of social concern** has become evident in the **emergence of the welfare state**” (Page 199 emphasis added)

“Of course there is still much more in the world to deplore – **social inequalities, injustice, cruelty, personal violence, wars and waste of the earth’s resources**. That is why the church, along with all people of goodwill, must accept an important role in promoting the vision of a better world. However much the church has been open to criticism in the past and present, it has never wholly forgotten this role.” ... (Page 199)

“The true mission of the church is not to convert people to Christian belief in Jesus Christ as their saviour. Indeed, Jesus is said to have rebuked the Pharisees for scouring land and sea to make a single convert. **The mission of the church is to keep alive the teaching of Jesus and to demonstrate by its own example how life is to be lived**. The mission of the church is to be the leaven of the kingdom of God in society, **its role is to exemplify not a coterie of ‘believers’ but a fellowship of ‘doers’**” (Page 199)

“And what of the coming social and ecological crises of which we are being increasingly warned? If the human race is going to survive its ongoing population explosion, global warming and increasing competition for the earth’s resources, **we must learn how to care for others**. These are the very injunctions by which Jesus outlined his vision of a new kind of world. ... It is instructive to recall that Jesus is said to have remarked, no doubt with a degree of sadness, ‘Why do you call me Master, Master, and do not do what I tell you?’” (Page 201)

“The truth is that wherever we find examples today of ... unconditional love, whether they are performed by Christian, Jew, Muslim, Buddhist or atheist, **there we find what Jesus called the reign of God.**” (Page 197)

“For many of us, the traditional forms of Christian spirituality that we were accustomed to are ceasing to be useful today simply because they were shaped to fit a different kind of world from the one we now find ourselves living in. ... **Spirit ... continues its usage as a frozen metaphor from a now obsolete worldview**, and its only possible meaning is a metaphorical or symbolic one. Conservative Christians continue to speak about the Holy Spirit, the power of the spirit and so on, as if it were an oozy something that operates like the wind. Without being wholly aware of the fact, they live in the medieval world for religious purposes and return to the modern world for the mundane business of daily living.”

Lloyd Geering, **Reimagining God**. Polebridge Press. Salem, Oregon. 2014. Emphases added.