Twitter Thread by Leke Alder



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#Illuminare - ON FAITH PART 10: NINETY-NINE PLUS ONE

Begins now ■

1. In the last few weeks, we've been treating the subject of faith. There are many dimensions to faith. In this article, we're going to be looking at faith for venture and innovation. Happy reading. #Illuminare

2. The Jewish society in the day of Jesus wasn't much different from our society today. The elites were segmented. #Illuminare

3. The first segment was the political class. In the main, this consisted of the two major parties – the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party. #Illuminare

4. The liberals were the Pharisees. The party was populist and largely made up of middleclass businessmen and leaders of the synagogue. #Illuminare

5. Quasi-religious, they gave oral tradition equal authority as the written word of God. This gave room for creative interpretation of scriptures and often resulted in ridiculous interpretation of the law. #Illuminare

6. A faction of the party hated anything Roman, and that includes taxation. Tax collectors were, therefore, persona non grata. #Illuminare

7. The conservative party was the party of the Sadducees. The Sadducees were rationalists. They didn't believe in the afterlife, the coming of the Messiah, the existence of the spiritual world, or angels and demons. #Illuminare

8. They were wealthy aristocrats and they held powerful positions. They controlled the temple and dominated the 70-seat Jewish council known as the Sanhedrin. #Illuminare

9. There were one or two smaller parties. One of them was a fringe party, the party of the Essenes. They didn't believe in immersing themselves in public life. Call them puritanical. #Illuminare

10. Then there was the Herodian Party. They were supporters of the dynasty of Herod. For political expediency, they surrendered to Rome. They were, therefore, opposed to the Pharisees but that didn't stop them from teaming up with the Pharisees to eliminate Jesus. #Illuminare

11. From their standpoint, Jesus had to be assassinated because he was drawing the unwarranted attention of Rome. #Illuminare

12. And then there was the nouveau-riche group – the tax collectors. They were viewed as turncoats who enriched themselves at the expense of their fellow Jews. They were despised all round. Not generally welcomed in Country Club therefore, they formed their own clique.

13. If you recall, Matthew was a tax collector. When he got converted, he threw a party to introduce his clique of friends to Jesus. This didn't go down well with the political class. #Illuminare

14. To the Pharisees, tax collectors were a special breed of sinners. How could Jesus who claimed to be holy be hobnobbing with sinners? "He takes in sinners and eats meals with them, treating them like old friends." Luke 15:2 MSG. #Illuminare

15. But the tax collectors wanted to hear the gospel. This was what led to the famous parable of the lost sheep: "Suppose one of you had a hundred sheep and lost one. Wouldn't you leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the lost one until you found it? - #Illuminare

16. - When found, you can be sure you would put it across your shoulders, rejoicing, and when you got home, call in your friends and neighbors saying: 'Celebrate with me! I've found my lost sheep!' - #Illuminare

17. - There's more joy in heaven over one sinner's rescued life than over ninety-nine good people in no need of rescue." Luke 15:4-7 MSG. #Illuminare

18. Jesus was being sarcastic, of course. The Pharisees were the ninety-nine "good people." But who doesn't need rescue! Implicit in what Jesus was saying was, the man that will be rescued is the man who admits he needs rescue. #Illuminare

19. Unfortunately, religious and moralistic people never imagine they need rescue. And it gets worse. They grade the sins of others. #Illuminare

20. But WHAT do the ninety-nine sheep represent? They represent groupthink, custom and tradition. Their philosophy says the rightness or wrongness of a course of action is determined by the number of subscribers. #Illuminare

21. How did that hundredth sheep get lost? Who knows! It may be due to a number of factors – a sense of adventure, a lack of focus, inattentiveness, the questioning of status quo, the search for personal answers, the independent pursuit of fodder, - #Illuminare

22. - rebellion, inquisitiveness, disagreement with groupthink, determination to buck tradition, independent mindedness, boldness… The list is endless. #Illuminare

23. But what is interesting is that the Lord goes after that lone individual, and then celebrates him when he's found. The parable may be about lost sinners, but there's something to be said about the Lord cherishing the independent-minded adventurer. #Illuminare

24. Society condemns independent-mindedness but the Lord celebrates it. He never condemned the bloke. Note that the Lord recognizes adventure doesn't always turn out okay, that one can be lost in the pursuit of fresh paths, fresh ideas and new explorations of thought. #Illuminare

25. It's not about the outcome, it's about the journey. The ones who find new paths are the ones that are daring. #Illuminare

26. It's how the human race got into space. If the Lord in principle had condemned that lost sheep, humanity was condemned to the status quo. There will be no progress. Everything will remain the same. #Illuminare

27. We got into space because someone dared to dream. Someone challenged convention, refused to buy into the collective resignation of the human race to Planet Earth. Someone thought of possibilities. When last did you think of possibilities? #Illuminare

28. We tend to want to conform. We're afraid of standing out, afraid of bucking the trend. We're afraid of being different, having independent thought. We will rather blend with the sameness of humanity. But then we repudiate our grace and rubbish our potentiation. #Illuminare

29. We were born unique. We were created differently. Why do we strive to spend the rest of our lives trying to be like everyone else? Dare to be yourself. Dare to be different. The Lord celebrates the different. #Illuminare

30. You were that awkward nerd in school, the one everyone called strange. But that's because you saw life in bits and bytes. #Illuminare

31. You're the one who dressed differently, combined the unusual like a fashion magazine editorial. But that's because you saw beauty in the combination of the ordinary. #Illuminare

32. Everyone in your family read Medicine but you just want to be an actor. It's okay. #Illuminare

33. All your brothers married from your tribe but you fell in love with a wonderful soul from another tribe. It's beautiful. #Illuminare

34. While everyone was studying Law textbooks in Law School, you just wanted to draw. You constantly imagined a different approach to advertising. It will turn out okay. These are all dimensions of difference. Difference is a lonely journey. #Illuminare

35. Independence of thought can mean ostracization. Venturing beyond established norm and pattern might induce fear – in you, and in the other sheep. #Illuminare

36. But the worst thing that can happen is to live your life seeking to conform to other people's vision of themselves. One day, you're going to wonder about what could have been, in regret. #Illuminare

37. If you choose to dare, you have to have implicit faith the Lord has got your back, that He will come looking for you if you get lost. He's got a tracker on you. What you deem failure will be celebrated by the Lord. At least, you dared. #Illuminare

38. God has not given us the spirit of timidity. We have a daring spirit. 2 Timothy 1:7 NLT, MSG. Conformists are never celebrated. The ones that are celebrated are those who dare to dare. #Illuminare

39. We're all gifted with different capacities. Our roads in life don't always converge. Many times, they diverge. Our paths are not always the beaten path. Some were born to pioneer. Pioneering is not easy. #Illuminare

40. It's going to get fearful, even perplexing at times. You're going to feel lost. You won't always know if you're on the right path. There are no coordinates for pioneers. They create their own coordinates. It is emotionally lonesome. #Illuminare

41. But history tells us those who dared were the ones who gave us the light bulb, gave us the motor car, gave us the airplane, gave us space travel, gave us internet, gave us Google, gave us iPhone, gave us Tesla, - #Illuminare

42. - gave us afrobeat, gave us Zoom, gave us Amazon…They thought different. They were able to imagine horsepower beyond the horse. They abstracted principles, and then applied them to given scenarios. They imagined the impossible, pursued the unimaginable. #Illuminare

43. If you ever want life to reckon with you, you've got to dare. #Illuminare

44. Two thousand years ago, the God-man underwent a risky experiment. He imagined the problem of sin could be solved through death and resurrection. He imagined death can be conquered, that humanity can be transitioned to eternal life. #Illuminare

45. In pursuit of that goal, he shed the toga of divinity and dwelt among men. He went off the beaten track and found himself at Golgotha. It was lonely on that skull shaped hill. His God forsook him. If God had not resurrected him, he was condemned to mortality. #Illuminare

46. But on the third day, he rose from the dead, just as the prophecies foretold. God came looking for him in the depths of hell. Just as he went looking for that sheep. #Illuminare

47. And now the world celebrates him. He's the good shepherd in that parable. He's been looking for you. Will you accept him today as your lord and saviour? #Illuminare

48. Please, pray this prayer: "Father I come to you in the name of Jesus. I confess with my mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in my heart that God raised him from the dead. I am saved. Amen." #Illuminare

49. To read "On Faith Part 10: Ninety-Nine Plus One", go to https://t.co/zcMRLBu00R #Illuminare

50. To understand the Christian walk from a contemporary perspective, read my book, "Conversations of a 21st Century Saint". Order at https://t.co/AqMO38sntS. #Illuminare

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