

## **Cherished-Chosen-Challenged – January 17, 2010**

### **Hidden Away.....**

**“...I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.” - Genesis 3:10**

God was not on a fact finding tour. He had not “just dropped by the garden” to “see how things were going”. He already knew that His beloved creation had disobeyed His command and had fallen into sin. God was now revealing His presence in the garden for the purpose of confronting them for their disobedience. It is no small wonder that Adam was afraid. God had told him if they disobeyed they would “surely die”. The time for reckoning had come. God is here and surely Adam must have thought He came to meet out the punishment of death upon them. However, Adam was about to learn just how much God cherished His creation and that God’s ultimate purpose was the salvation of His people.

Some people equate love with having a “free pass” to do whatever they wish. Being cherished didn’t mean God would overlook transgression or retract the edict of His punishment. Cherishing someone ultimately leads to holding them accountable for their actions for their own good. God’s confrontation of our first parents was to deal with the sin and death they had brought upon themselves and their posterity. His confrontation was designed to accomplish His first priority: their salvation! It must have been an unpleasant experience.

Admitting sin is never pleasant. But, when God confronts us through His holy Word, like our first parents before us, we are “naked”; there is no place to hide. His confrontation however, is always for our own good. The Law ultimately serves the Gospel. For when we are broken down and see our end is nothing but death and damnation, then, and only then, are we drawn by His grace to focus upon Christ crucified for us and to rejoice that in the Gospel message we are chosen to be God’s people.

There are many people in our world who are trying to hide from God. Perhaps they are greatly ashamed of what they have done and believe all

that is left for them is certain death and damnation. Perhaps they are oblivious to the wrath of God that is coming against all those who don't believe. Into such a world we have been born. Cherished by God we have been chosen not only to receive forgiveness of sins, but also to be God's instruments to bring that message to others. We have been chosen in this time and place to do God's work: to rise to the challenge of "seeking the lost"!

What are some things we can do to be about our Father's business in seeking the lost?

- ❖ First—remember we once were lost. God cherished us enough to send His emissaries of the Gospel to find us. Whether it was our parents who brought us to Baptism or a friend sharing the Good News of Jesus with us, God found us! God dealt with our sin and death. Let us always return thanks by faithful attendance to worship at God's house.
- ❖ Pray that God would expand His kingdom. Be ready! God will open the doors to use us to share the Gospel .
- ❖ Train the next generation. We will not be on this earth forever. God's work must go on even after we are called to glory. Help expand the Day School and Sunday School by enrolling your children.
- ❖ Search for the lost you know. You can't hide. Neither can they. You know their names. The ones who have drifted away. The ones you don't see in church anymore. Show them how much God cares for them by finding them and reminding them of God's great love in Christ Jesus. Invite them back to church.

How blessed we are to be the people of God. He has chosen us to be in this place. He has prepared us for this time. **Don't wait for someone else to do it. If you wait on someone else to do it...it will never get done!** God bless you in the growth of your faith and in service to His people, for your labor in the Lord is never in vain.

Pastor Jacobs

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