

Cherished-Chosen-Challenged – August 15, 2010

The Long Haul

Jesus said to them, “Have you understood all these things?” They said to Him, “Yes, Lord.” Then He said to them, “Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure *things* new and old. Matthew 13:51-53

Where I grew up they called it “cabin fever”—it came from being stuck inside all the time because of the harshness of the weather. The warm glow of snowfall depicted on the Christmas cards had long since faded. Day after day....week after week....month after month of bone-chilling wind and snow and ice... it was always the same. People got tired of the same thing every day and longed for Springtime--a change; some variety in life. We experience the same sort of thing here in Texas with the summer heat. Day after day we are greeted by scorching temperatures, high humidity, and a lack of rain. The unchanging “dog days” of summer mold and define our daily experiences. More than one individual of late can be heard to remark, “I am ready for winter”. It is a long haul and we are looking for a change. Have you ever stopped to ponder though that the change we are looking for is the anticipation of something that never changes! God promised that as long as the earth remains there will be the change of seasons and what a blessing it is to experience this variety. Yet, the change that comes is defined inside boundaries which remain the same as long as He allows time to endure. We know a change of seasons is coming and it gives us hope. With hopeful expectation we can endure.

People have a tendency to experience spiritual “cabin fever” also. The children of Israel moved from place to place wandering in the desert. They got tired of dining on a fare of manna and quail every day. They grumbled against God. They wanted a change and it was change the Lord sent them. The change they got however was not what they had bargained for. Biting snakes in the camp...pain and death; now the manna and quail didn't look so bad after all, maybe God really did have the best plan. This

example in Scripture serves to remind us that departing from the Word and Sacraments because they are the same thing over and over is not a wise decision. Apart from Word and Sacrament there is only the pain and death that is brought by the bite of that old evil Serpent Satan. It is only the unchanging promise of God in Christ Jesus that is our certain hope. Focusing on Him alone brings us the peace and assurance that our sins are forgiven and we have eternal life.

Is your spiritual life growing stale and mundane? The long haul is hard and departure from the rock solid grace of God is always tempting. Jesus talks about things new and old in the kingdom of God. Some want to import all kinds of “new” things, but just like the changing seasons are anchored to the immutable template of God’s design, so also our freedom in the Gospel is governed by God’s Word. Our worship life on Sunday morning is a prime example of certainty and change...old and new. Each week parts of the liturgy are the same. Each week hymns and lessons and prayers are different. Old and new....certainty and change...all within the parameters of God’s Holy Word. There we find the hope and strength to weather those bouts of spiritual” cabin fever” that creep up from time to time. There we find the same old familiar and beloved message that Jesus Christ was lifted up on the cross for our sins and through Him alone we have life everlasting. The message is the same...the application to the lives of God’s people is limitless! God help us to be wise in His kingdom and enduring all things may we rejoice in the hope of His coming.

- Remember: Worship is primarily God serving us. Come to His house to receive, for He loves to give!
- Remember: God’s eternal blessings come only through Word and Sacrament. Apart from the Word there is no hope. Share God’s Word with someone today.

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. He has equipped us for service to Him. **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 Him and His people, for your labor in the Lord is never in vain.

Pastor Jacobs

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