

Cherished-Chosen-Challenged – September 19, 2010

The Resurrection and the Life

Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” She said to Him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

John 11:25-27

The call they knew would come, finally came. The voice on the other end was familiar. In soft and sobbing tones they heard those expected words, “He’s gone.” The battle was over. They thought they were prepared, but it was still a shock to deal with the stark reality of death. What to do now? Their minds were overcome with the shroud of their own mortality. There were so many details to be handled. The funeral service was planned in advance. It was time to get out the envelope that held the service so carefully planned with the pastor. The envelope retrieved from a safe place, it was carefully opened. A surprise accompanied the service details...a letter for family and friends. They eagerly read those final words:

“Dearly Beloved Family and Friends:

If you find occasion to use this information it shall indeed be cause for humble thanksgiving and glory to God. For I have no doubt whatsoever, that my dear Lord Jesus Christ, in whom by God’s grace alone I have trusted solely with all my heart, has fulfilled unto me His promise of life everlasting and glory for His own name’s sake. In His wounds have I found my solace all the days of my life and I have by the certainty of His gracious promises always been confident through all things that nothing could separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus, my Lord. Now He has completed that which he began in the waters of my Baptism where He marked me with the sign of His cross and washed me clean to be His own. Through His holy absolution and by His precious Body and Blood, given

and shed for me, He has justified me, kept me as His own, and delivered me, granting me the victory over sin, death, hell, and the power of the devil.

Beloved ones: Do not grieve as those who have no hope, but instead cling to our dear Lord Jesus Christ who is the Resurrection and the Life. For I am certain that on the Day of His glorious appearing He shall raise from the dust of death my vile body and transform it to be like unto His glorious body, that body and soul united I might ever enjoy the bliss of His eternal glory and sing His praises without end. Let this be your peace and comfort in every grief and tribulation: Jesus Christ came to save sinners of whom I was chief. And furthermore, be assured that our reuniting in glory is certain. For all those who cling to Christ alone and find their salvation in His cross shall also receive the crown of victory which God has most certainly granted unto me and which He delivers unto all those who love His appearing. Turn therefore your eyes and hearts to Jesus, the Author and Finisher of your faith. For He is the faithful One who is able to grant unto you more than you can ever desire and by the blood of His covenant is able to seal you unto Himself in glory forevermore. To Him, our most beloved Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself freely into death that we might live, be all power, dominion, and glory forevermore. Amen!”

What is your hope? Have you confronted your own mortality? What would you say to your loved ones at such a time? Jesus Christ alone is our Savior from sin. He is the Resurrection and the Life. In Him we have life now and even the grave has no power to hold us. Today we rejoice because even though we “walk through the valley of the shadow of death”, Jesus is with us and will bring us to eternal life with Him in heaven.

- Remember: All people are under the condemnation of death and God wants all people to have life in Christ. Our task is to get the Good News of salvation to everyone we can.
- Remember: The Christian wants to leave this world witnessing to their faith and hope in Christ Jesus. Funeral services are most properly a worship service that glorifies God for the grace He has given in granting life everlasting to sinners. Christian funerals are not

about glorifying the dearly departed or giving survivors the opportunity to say or do things they failed to do when their loved one was still with them. Our life is with Christ Jesus now and forever and our desire is for all others to share in that life also. To focus others on Him is the best comfort and assurance we can give.

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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