

Title: The Only Thing Worth Knowing
Text: Various
Date: February 11, 2010
Place: SGBC, New Jersey

I spent my 40th birthday driving through a blizzard between Wheelersburg, Ohio and New Jersey yesterday. I had around 13 hours to think about those 40 years. There were times I could move along at normal speeds and times I drove 5 miles per hour. This life is like that.

Sometimes the weather is good, the pathway clear, and we move along at a fast pace, the music playing, and most of that time we think very little of our God.

Christ Jesus—our true Solomon--says:

Ecclesiastes 12:1: Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; 2 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

There is coming a day when the body will begin to fail—youth is vanity—it will fade very quickly. Do you really want to know the Lord? Do you really want to know more of the Lord? I promise to preach Christ Jesus to you; come to hear Christ speak. The Lord has promised to save through preaching of his Son. Come and be ready to hear. Be ready to pay attention to the message.

The holy scriptures are able to make you wise unto salvation. I give you scripture references both during the message and in the bulletin, write them down, look them up—now and later. It is good to both hear the scripture and to read it at the same time. Each week I provide you with a bulletin—short articles on each point we covered the prior week. Put them in a binder so you can study them all together now and later. I spend much time writing each sentence—take the bulletin and compare what is written with the scriptures. Christ is the Wise Man—his is the true Solomon—he says,

Ecclesiastes 12: 1: Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth,...2: While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

Other times, as we travel along, we are slowed down to a crawl so we have time to consider how fast our lives go by.

I listened to folks calling in to the radio stations with various complaints about the snow. Do we spend our lives murmuring? Well, you won't have to complain for long, as quickly as this snow melts and is no more, this life will be over.

James 4:14:...For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

When the road is almost impassable, we are unable to see the way, we begin to consider our utter frailty and the mortality of this life. Brother Donnie Bell had a birthday the day before mine—60. Brother Bob Coffey's granddaughter, Lucy, was in the congregation at Ohio—she turned 8 the same day. I was 8 years old yesterday. Tomorrow I'll be the same age as Brother Donnie.

Psalm 39:5: Behold, thou hast made my days *as* an handbreadth; and mine age *is* as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state *is* altogether vanity. Selah.

Job 14:1: Man *that is* born of a woman *is* of few days, and full of trouble. 2: He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.

What is your life? I have friends who are sick. I like to talk to them because they know the value of a day. The apostle Paul said,

Philippians 1: 21: For to me to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain. 22: But if I live in the flesh, this *is* the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. 23: For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: 24: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh *is* more needful for you.

One friend recently said he now understands something of what Paul meant. To have a desire to be with the Lord and yet a desire for perishing sinner's to know Christ. To live with Christ as your life is to know the true value of a day—that is the way to live and the way to die. Could you say right now that to die is gain for you? And what if you live, can you say it is for the good of the brethren, for needy sinners—is Christ your life.

All along the way on this pilgrimage the believer is kept in peace by our God.

Isaiah 26:3: Thou wilt keep *him* in perfect peace, *whose* mind *is* stayed *on thee*: because he trusteth in thee.

In all those thoughts yesterday, I found myself thanking God for turning me away from this world and giving me such a blessed hope set before me.

1 John 2:17:...the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Here is my peace: the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God did the will of God on my behalf. The Son of man knows the joy and the sorrow I know. He experienced the joy of at the marriage feast at Cana. And he experienced a more severe trial than any of us has ever faced

2 Corinthians 5:21: For he hath made him *to be* sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

He was in all points tempted like me yet without sin. He was touched with the feelings of my infirmities. He knows that I am but dust. And He knows how to comfort me as I pass through this life of trial. And he does so.

He promises to keep the believer in peace in the heart.

James 1: 12:... He that endureth to the end shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

We know that at the end of this life, there awaits a crown of righteousness, but as we endure every trail we find the Lord making us to see him and to keep us in peace. James says, "The Lord Jesus hath promised this."

Genesis 22: 11: And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here *am* I. 12: And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son,

thine only son from me. 13: And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind *him* a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.

James 1: 12:... He that endureth to the end shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

Genesis 22: 15: And the angel of the LORD [Christ Jesus] called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, 16: And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only *son*: [because you believe me!] 17: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which *is* upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; 18: And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice. 19: So Abraham returned unto his young men, and they rose up and went together to Beersheba; and Abraham dwelt at Beersheba.

Genesis 22: 14: And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said *to* this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.

In the mount where Christ reigns: in Mt. Zion his church, from heavens Jerusalem, in the hearts of those chosen, regenerated believers who endure to the end of all life's little trials, in every hour of need, he makes his presence and power and love for us to be seen—in the mount of the Lord it shall be seen—this is what he shows us continually:

Romans8:32: He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

This is the love of Christ which constrains us. That is the love which creates works of faith and labors of love and patience of hope.

As I see myself stumble, my coldness, my failure to provide as I ought for my brethren, and the horrid sin that is in me, my hope is not in anything I have done, but my hope is that from the beginning he said, "I must be about my Father's business."

Whether it was in the time of his joy (at the marriage feast he manifest the miracle of his grace as he turned the water into wine) Or when tried of Satan or by men, he endured unto the end, teaching his disciples the entire way—having loved them, he loved them unto the end. In all, he was faithful unto the Father and unto his household, even unto the death of the cross. The little faith I have lays hold of his unwavering fidelity and rests in him.

What made him so faithful? We could give a lot of reasons—he is the Faithful One; there was no sin in him; it was his delight to do the will of the Father; but one reason I want you to consider: He did it for the joy that was set before him—not the joy of this life (he said in this life you shall have trouble; my peace I give you, not as the world gives), there was no joy in the suffering, he despised the shame of the cross—but he did it for the joy of declaring the righteousness of God—declaring God just and the justifier of all who believe--- and that his brethren might be made the righteousness of God in him. That he might bring God and his brethren together in perfect, eternal communion in glory. He did the will of God. He bore the offenses of his people—GOD IS THE JUSTIFIER OF YOU BELIEVER AND GOD IS JUST TO DO SO, and you have been made righteous in Christ, believer.

He that did the will of God abideth forever. He was raised again for justification—proof in the heart he has made new that complete satisfaction has been made with God for us. The will of the Father which remains

to be done, is that ALL those given to his Son be brought by the Spirit to believe on his Son. And those who do, those who do the will of God, abide forever.

Do you believe God? Do you believe the Lord Jesus Christ? You might say, “How can I know I am truly a believer?”

I Peter 2: 7: Unto you, therefore, which believe, he is precious....

Precious means to be valued above all else and in honor above all else. It is that which is first, highest, above all. Is Jesus Christ—in his Person—precious to you?

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Illustration: I had college professors who loved the writings of William Shakespeare. They loved to teach about his life. They loved to study the themes of his writing and to discuss them and think upon the wisdom he possessed. But not a one of them knew William Shakespeare and not a one of them loved William Shakespeare.

Unto you, which believe, HE—Jesus Christ—is precious. The Father sent a Person—his Son. Life is in a Person—his Son. The glory of the triune God is seen in a Person. The salvation of chosen sinners is through faith in a Person.

Robert Hawker wrote this in his Morning and Evening Portions yesterday: “Is Jesus precious in his person, precious in his work, precious in his offices, precious in his relations, precious in his whole character? Do you know him, so as to love him, to live to him, to rejoice in him, and to cast your whole soul upon him, for life and salvation? Is he precious as the Father’s gift, the Sent, the Sealed, the Anointed, the Christ of the Father? Is he so precious, that there is nothing in him but what you love—nothing that you would part with? His cross is dear, as well as his crown! Afflictions with Jesus, sweeter than prosperity without him! Pause over those questions.”

Is Jesus Christ your life? How sadly, when we seek for ourselves and our children the very honor and riches that our God says only hinders sinners from knowing Christ, from continuing in Christ, from seeking his face continually. Is there anything outside of Christ that is truly, lastingly, satisfying?

How soon this time called “life” will be over? If Christ is not precious to you—and if he IS precious to you—either way—seek him while he may be found.

Philippians 4:8: Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things *are* honest, whatsoever things *are* just, whatsoever things *are* pure, whatsoever things *are* lovely, whatsoever things *are* of good report; if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.

These things are in Christ Jesus. Make Christ your first thought and your last thought. Make Christ your meditation in the midst of your busiest day and in your most silent hour. Make it your priority to know more of Christ, the Son of God’s love, the Son with whom God is well-pleased, the Son who is satisfaction, holiness, righteousness, peace, love, mercy, joy—to know more of him—is the sum and substance of my prayer to the Father—for me and for you.

Amen!