

**That we may live with Him – Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2015**

***“ For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>10</sup> who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him.” (1.Thes.5:9-10).***

Beloved in The Lord,

God has created us for fellowship. God created man in order that man may enjoy fellowship with Him. The Bible clearly teaches us that God is Love. Love is something that flows, that emanates. God being love, desires to bestow His love upon us. It is the nature of love to reach out to others. I believe that this is the primary reason God created man – in order to bestow His love upon mankind. God created man in His own image, so that man could receive His love. God created man for fellowship.

The first people Adam and Eve lived in fellowship with God up until the day they sinned. Sin was like a sharp knife that cut the strong bond between man and God. Sin had defiled man and because God is Holy, man could no longer be in His presence. Nothing unholy can survive God's presence.

I have used this illustration before, but I think that it is worth repeating, to help you understand this vital truth. If you pour petrol into a dish and then bring it near a naked flame what will happen? The fire will consume the petrol in the dish. Sinful man is like the petrol in the dish and God's Holiness is the fire. If sinful man comes near to Holy God, then God's fire would consume him.

God, being love, still desired to have fellowship with man even though man had defiled himself. God still desired for man to live with Him. The only way this would be possible, would be for man to be sanctified (made holy-made righteous). God achieved this through His Son Jesus Christ. When Jesus died on the cross on Good Friday, He took all of mans sin upon Himself. He took the full punishment for sin upon Himself. With His blood He paid the total sin debt in full. His blood is so powerful that it paid the debt for all sin, for all people beginning with Adam and ending with the last ever person who will be born.

Verse ten of our text says about Jesus: ***“who died for us.”***

Jesus died for us. He died a substitutionary death. That simply means that He died in your and my place. He took our punishment so that we would not have to be punished. Why did He do this? As I said at the outset, because God is love. The Gospel is very simple and very clear:

***“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. <sup>17</sup> For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. <sup>18</sup> He who believes in***

***Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (John 3:16-18).***

I have said it many times before, but will say it again – where we read world we can substitute our own name. For God so loved you, that He gave His only begotten Son, so that believing in Him you would not perish but have eternal life.

The person who does not believe in Jesus is lost. Such a person is lost now and more tragically for all of eternity. A person who does not live in fellowship with Jesus, trusting in Him is living in error. A person who does not live for Jesus, is a slave to the prince of darkness – Satan. This is why the world we live in is so full of evil. The majority of people in the world do not have a personal relationship with The Lord Jesus Christ.

To live in unbelief is both foolish and tragic.

Jesus came into the world in order that we might live with Him. He has paid our sin debt in full with His blood in order that we might be free. He stated: ***“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10).***

When we live in faith and fellowship with Jesus Christ then we have to use His words an abundant life. David put it this way:

***“The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.***

***You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;***

***You have anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows.***

***Surely goodness and lovingkindness will follow me all the days of my life,***

***And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Psalm 23:1;5-6***

When you live in fellowship with God, you have need of nothing, you are not in want, because God provides for you. Paul wrote:

***“And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19).***

How many of our needs will God supply? All of them!

Jesus put it this way in His sermon on the mount:

***“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” (Matthew 6:33).***

When we live in fellowship with God, when we put Him first and foremost in our lives, then we can be absolutely sure that He will supply all of our needs. He will take care of everything perfectly.

So much is promised in God's Word for the one who believes, for the one who trusts in The Lord Jesus Christ. The blessings that come are not only for this life, but they are eternal. If we live by faith here, then after death we will live by sight for we shall see Him face to face. It is that simple.

***Jesus Christ, died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him." (1.Thes.5:10).***

The important question is "are you living with Jesus Christ?" Do you believe in Him? I am not asking if you are a member of a Church, or whether you think you are a good person. The question is are you living together with Christ, believing in Him, fully trusting Him? This is a vital question as where you will spend eternity depends upon the answer. Let's come back to Jesus words in the Gospel message: ***"For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. <sup>18</sup> He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God"*** (John 3:17-18).

Let me emphasise the words ***"He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."***

You see unbelief is a serious matter, because unbelief is an eternal death sentence. Many people say "I do not believe that a loving God would send someone to Hell." I agree. God doesn't send anyone to Hell. Those that go there, send themselves through their unbelief.

If you are drowning at sea and a boat comes alongside, and the captain tosses you a life saver, but you reject it, then the captain is not responsible for you drowning. It is your own fault, for not grabbing hold of the life saver. God comes to each of us and He says "Your salvation is in the blood of my Son Jesus." If we accept that then all is well, but if we reject God's way, then God is not to blame if we are eternally lost. It is our own fault.

God loves us, but He will not force us to be saved. If we reject Him, He is very saddened and hurt, but He will not force us to love Him. On the other hand, if we accept Jesus, then God is gladdened and He comes to live together with us. He comes and abides in our heart. You see Christianity is all about relationship. When we accept Jesus, when we believe in Him, then He comes and abides in our heart and we have fellowship with Him.

Jesus paid a tremendous price so that we may live with Him. He shed His own innocent blood for us.

If you have accepted Jesus as your personal Saviour then may this message today serve both as a reminder and an encouragement to strengthen your relationship with Him. Go deeper and deeper into God and His Word. Walk even closer with Him. Turn your eyes upon Jesus.

Turn your thoughts away from carnal, worldly things and set your mind on God and His Kingdom.

If you have not yet accepted Jesus as your personal Saviour, if your faith is still just intellectual, then today is the day for you to open your heart to Him and let Him in. He loves you with an everlasting love and no one has ever regretted accepting Jesus into their heart.

Listen once more to our text and allow these words to sink deep into your heart:

***“For God has not destined us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>10</sup> who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep, we will live together with Him.”***

Amen.

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All Bible quotations taken from New American Standard Bible.