

Sunday April 5, 2020

A Message from your Pastor - "Things Most Precious"

What things are most precious to you? While we are under these awful circumstances, this is a thought to consider. The most important things that come to my mind are: family, friends, freedom, health, faith and life itself. Time certainly is precious amidst this pandemic we're in. Allow me to share what the Apostle Peter considers to be precious. Something that is considered to be precious, is of the highest value. The word precious occurs 8 times in the epistles of Peter. He wrote of five things which he describes as being precious. Each one points us to the One Who is truly precious, and that is our Lord Jesus Christ. May we be drawn closer to the One Who is precious through the words of Peter.

What is it that makes something precious? Intrinsic value may label something as precious. Yet something may be very precious and have no intrinsic value at all. If there was only one person in the world that could meet your deepest or most urgent need, it would be precious to you.

For example: If in your present state of comfort, I come to you with 2 bags. One contains a million-dollar necklace; the other a loaf of dry bread and a bottle of water. Which one would be precious to you? But if I came to you with the same items while you were wandering hopelessly in the Sahara Desert for many days, then which one would be precious?

All precious things that we receive from God, we receive through the precious person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let us look at what Peter says about our precious Lord. May these five things help us to refocus on what is precious.

**JESUS IS PRECIOUS BECAUSE OF HIS PERSON** – (I PETER 2:7a) – "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious..." He is the Creator and Sustainer of this vast universe. He is the answer to the problems of life. He is Sovereign in the affairs of men. He is the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last! He is both the foundation and the head of the church (I Cor.3:11) – "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (Col. 1:1a) - "And he is the head of the body, the church..." He is the consummation of all his purposes. Don't think for a moment that He does not care as we go through this great trial! When the Father gave us his Son He also imparted to us His wisdom, His power, His love, His grace, His riches, His mercy and His holiness!

**JESUS IS PRECIOUS BECAUSE OF FAITH** – (II Pet.1:1) – "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Jesus is the Author and Finisher of our faith. The most precious gem of faith is that of the salvation of one's soul. God has placed salvation within the confines of faith.

Since salvation is permanently bound and restricted to “by grace are ye saved through faith”, it therefore becomes precious. For with it comes everlasting life (John 3:16) and abundant life (John 10:10b) – “...I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”

**JESUS IS PRECIOUS BECAUSE HE SUSTAINS US IN OUR TRYING HOUR** – (I Pet.1:7) “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”

The faith we claim and cling to must be tried in the fires to prove to us that we actually have this precious commodity. Romans 4 assures us that God needed to validate the faith of Abraham but James 2 declares that Abraham had to justify his claim to faith before his fellowman. This verse in Peter tells us that the trial of our faith is likened unto the firing of gold. What makes gold more precious is the burning off of the dross as it passes through the fire. That is what our faith is like. The fiery trials have their way of burning off the dross of sin by causing us to repent and confess our wrongs and be covered by the blood of the Lord.

The world is not interested in our “profession of faith”. They want to see if it is real and working in our lives. There are times when our faith might land us (figuratively) in a den of lions, but when the lions are transformed into pillows for our heads and footstools for our feet, then the world will take notice! Our faith may land us in the middle of a fiery furnace (again figuratively), but when we emerge unscathed and unblistered, the world can see that our faith is real. (Isaiah 43:2) – “When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.” Hallelujah! Think how we can claim this great verse amidst this trial!

**JESUS IS PRECIOUS BECAUSE OF HIS PROMISES** – (II Pet.1:4a) – “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises...” All the promises of God are supported by four immoveable pillars: 1. God’s holiness will not be and cannot be marred with deception. 2. God’s amazing grace will not permit Him to forget. 3. God’s immutable truth will never suffer Him to change. 4. God’s eternal power will never fail no matter what may be the situation. The promises of God give us the deed to a precious possession. They entitle us to a precious position. And they allow us to be partakers of his precious person. (II Cor.1:20) – “For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”

**JESUS IS PRECIOUS BECAUSE OF CALVARY** – (I Pet.1:18.19) – “For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and

gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot”.

Yes, dear one, it is the blood of Jesus Christ; that precious blood that was poured out on Mount Calvary upon a rugged cross that redeems mankind from all of his sins. It is precious because of its purchasing power. It is precious because of its power to cleanse from all sin. It is precious because of its mediatorial power (I Tim.2:5,6) “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” It is precious because of the peace it provides (Col.1:20) – “And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” Finally, it is precious because of its overcoming power. We will overcome Satan and his devices. We will overcome death and the grave, and rest assured that we will overcome this unwanted and undesirable pandemic.

His blood is a mighty weapon in our spiritual warfare. Sin dies under its power! Death is robbed of its sting! Satan cowers at its proclamation!

Let us rejoice this Palm Sunday. As the Lord rode into Jerusalem upon an unbroken colt, much people scattered branches of palm trees across His pathway. They cried aloud: “Hosana: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.” (John 12:13) A hill called Calvary would be His final destination a short time later. There He would suffer, bleed and die for all of us. He would lay in a borrowed tomb but in 3 days arise victorious over death and the grave! Praise God, this is our hope!

The Book of Revelation Chapter 5 speaks of the end of the age and of how the chosen saints of God will overcome by the precious blood of the Lamb! Build upon your relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ and experience just how precious His person really is. Claim the precious promises He gives to you and live by them. Finally exercise the precious faith made available to you. Keep a positive attitude and keep trusting the Lord and all will be well!

God bless you and looking forward until we can all be together to worship once again.