

Pastor's Blog No. 14 for April 1 , 2024

Reflecting on Easter

I am so glad that Easter went well this year for our church. We got to see some people who we have not seen in church for some time and we also got to meet some new people. Several stayed for the 5th Sunday Fellowship Meal after the service. Others had to go to family events for Easter, but we still enjoyed the fellowship of those stayed and ate with us.

I chose a very challenging message for Easter. It seems I'm doing that more and more. I feel the time is short for us as Christians to rise up and be the church that this country needs us to be. The course of doing so may not bring a national turning to God, but it will deliver souls from darkness and speed the judgment of God on our land. Some see judgment as a bad thing, but I feel even judgment is an act of God's mercy so we don't perish in our sins.

No Cross, No Crown

My message for Sunday came from a book written by William Penn (1644-1718), of Pennsylvania fame. While in prison as a young man in the Tower of London, he wrote a book entitled *No Cross, No Crown* (1668). It focuses deeply on the complacent Christian and the neglect of our salvation. Today's gospel seems to have no sacrifice of self-denial connected to it. As a result many "come to Christ" without repentance, nor a turning from worldliness and worldly pleasures. However Jesus said, *"Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."* (Matthew 16:14 NIV)

Today we rarely see new believers forsaking their old way of life and embracing the things of God. As a result we have a powerless church filled with worldliness and self-gratification. This is seen the most in our lack of prayer and self-discipline in our personal lives.

Stuck In The Muck

Even though I don't intend to re-preach my message here (You can find it on YouTube at this link [No Cross, No Crown.](#)), I do want to emphasize how important it is for us to continue to grow in our faith and rid ourselves of the sins that constantly hinder our usability in Christ. Even though we continue to go through all the outward motions of being a Christian, inwardly little has changed from our former way of life in the world.

"4 In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. 5 And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son?"

Hebrews 12:4, 5 (NIV)

We ought to understand first of all that when we give our lives to Jesus it is for freedom from sin. Yes, we are forgiven, but God will not leave us bound. He will set us free from our sin. Not so we can go and do it again without consequences, but so we can serve him in the freedom that comes through the power of his Spirit working in us.

Showers of Blessings

When a community of believers embrace this ultimate truth, God begins to pour out a powerful anointing upon them and great signs and wonders begin to manifest among them. I am reminded of that old hymn that says:

*Showers of blessing,
Showers of blessing we need:
Mercy-drops round us are falling,
But for the showers we plead.*

There Shall Be Showers Of Blessing by D. W. Whittle (1883)

We are used to seeing so little from God that his “mercy drops” will suffice us for are daily needs. Yes, this is true, God does not neglect his children. He provides and cares for them out of his grace and mercy. However, if we want to walk in the power of the Spirit and fulfill his will, then we must rise up to what he has called us to—to bear our cross daily with him and walk as he walked.

WE WANT but are WE WILLING to do what God has asked to see this life of anointing come to pass in us? May God help us this year to fall on our knees in prayer, seek his face in repentance, and turn our SORRY into SANCTIFICATION from. sin.

As I mentioned in my message Sunday, “We need a continuous cleansing stream flowing in our lives.” Amen.

Until next Monday, may the Lord bless you! Pray for us!

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