

Sunday Evening Message

January 20, 2019

This World Is Not Our Home

Text – Genesis 47:1 - 10

Congregational Reading – Genesis 47:7 – 10

Introduction

Read the Text (Genesis 47:1 – 10)

Read Hebrews 11:8 – 16

Read John 14:1 – 6

"Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints." (Psalm 116:15)

*"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, **concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.** For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)*

"Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil." (James 4:13-16)

"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." (Ephesians 5:15-16)

"And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (Luke 12:16-20)

Illustration – Yesterday, Cindy and I had the wonderful privilege of participating in the homegoing service of a dear friend of ours, Sharon Phalon, the wife of Pastor Bryan Phalon. Sharon was a young woman who six years ago was diagnosed with Alzheimer's and dementia. Bryan and Sharon had both given their lives to the Lord Jesus Christ a little over thirty years ago.

They were not saved as children, but both came to know Christ as adults. Since the time of their salvation, they both gave the Lord everything. They stopped living for what this world had to offer, and they began to serve the Lord, living for the world to come; the eternity world. When they got saved, they ceased living like this earth was all there is. They knew that God promised a “better country, that is an heavenly”; an eternal city, “whose builder and maker is God.”

Brian was called into the ministry, and he obeyed God’s calling, went to Bible college, and eventually ended up pastoring the Faith Baptist Church in Sparta. His wife Sharon followed her husband and served well as the pastor’s wife, ministering primarily to the ladies and children, leading many to a saving knowledge of Christ. She didn’t live for all that this world could give her. She lived for Heaven, and even through her debilitating illness for the past several years, she continued to glorify the Lord and point people to Christ.

Sharon Phalon was a stranger and pilgrim on this earth.

Illustration – the funeral was not strictly a time of grieving; it was also a time of celebration. We celebrated her life, and we celebrated the fact that she is now with the Lord. Pastor Phalon shared with me that the verse that summed up her life was 2 Timothy 4:7:

“For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:” (2 Timothy 4:6-7)

Lost people cannot comprehend a Christian funeral.

Illustrate – Darrel Champlain story of the Grings family, serving in the Congo.

At Sharon’s homegoing celebration yesterday, there were tears, but there was also a lot of rejoicing.

Pastor Phalon is grieving, because now he is left alone on his pilgrimage. His partner of 40 years has been taken to Heaven. But He isn’t mad at God. He knows that God’s grace is sufficient. He knows that it won’t be too long before he will see Sharon again.

Go back to the Text (Genesis 47:1 – 10)

1 We are only sojourners here on the earth. (v. 4)

Lester Roloff once made the statement that the problem with too many Christians is that they get their tent pegs nailed down too tightly to this earth.

“This world is not my home, I’m just a passing through; my treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue.”

Don’t live like this earth is all you have. Live for Heaven. Give your life for that which is eternal. Make sure your time, talent, and treasures are invested in Kingdom of God. Live for the Lord.

Make the best of the journey; enjoy the journey as much as you can; have some fun along the way; but don’t live for the journey; live for the destination, which is Heaven.

2 We are to be separated while we are here on the earth. (v. 4)

Jacob asked Pharaoh if his family could tend their flocks in the land of Goshen. Goshen was out in the country, away from the city. Jacob's family would be separated from the bulk of the population of Egypt in a very fertile valley.

Jesus said that those that belong to him should live "in the world," but we are not to be "of the world."

"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." (John 17:14)

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:1-2)

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." (1 John 2:15-17)

We are to love the people of the world as Jesus does. We need to preach the gospel to them, but we have to be very careful that as we are influencing them for the Lord, that they are not influencing us with their godless and worldly philosophies.

3 We are to be a support (a blessing) to the people of this earth. (v. 7, 10)

The world may not like our biblical position, but they ought not have any beef with our disposition. We are to love people and we are to try to help them wherever possible. We certainly want to give them the Word of God, but we ought also to help them in tangible ways. Feed the hungry, etc. Loving people is tangible; it is expressed in ways that people can see as well as feel. We are not supposed to love the world system, but we are definitely supposed to love the people in the world.

Pray for them.

Preach Christ to them with both our words and our works (actions).

Be profitable to them.

Be productive members of society.

Conclusion

Everything I said this morning applies only to saved people; those who have received the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour. If you are not yet saved, you need to trust Him today. You need to recognize the fact that you are a sinner deserving nothing but judgment in Hell. The good is that Jesus died on the Christ and shed His blood in full atonement for your sins, and He now offers you the gift of forgiveness, a pardon that will allow you to live with Him forever as His child. All you have to do is believe.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

To those of you who are saved:

Someday, very soon, you are going to arrive at the end of your earthly pilgrimage. You may live a very long life, or you may be called home early as Sharon Phalon was. When your time does come, will you be able to say like the Apostle Paul, like Sharon, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

Too many Christians are forsaking the will of God choosing, like Demas, the love of this present world. Friend, let me encourage you to finish your course; to keep the faith. For all of eternity you will be rewarded for what you did here. Live for God. Be filled with His Holy Spirit; be directed by His Word and surrender to His will.

And when you get to Heaven, you will hear the Lord say, *"...Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."* (Matthew 25:23)

This world is not our home. We are only strangers and pilgrims here.