Blog 39

Focus on the most important things.

Last recorded words (epitaph) by some great men of God.

Epitaph:a commemorative inscription on tomb or mortuary monument about the person buried at that site.

Joseph:

Gen 50:25 “And Joseph took an oath of the sons of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here.”

Heb 11:22 “By faith, Joseph dying remembered concerning the Exodus of the sons of Israel and gave orders concerning his bones.”

*The promised land was a promise from God to Abraham who Joseph probably didn’t know.*

Josh 24:32 “And the bones of Joseph, which the sons of Israel brought up out of Egypt, they buried in Shechem, in a piece of ground which Jacob bought from the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for a hundred pieces of silver. And it became the inheritance of the sons of Joseph.”

*This is* *400+ years after Joseph’s death.*

*Joseph believed the promises of God.*

Question: Are you and your family knowledgeable of the promises of God for their life and living your life with the assurance of God fulfilling them?

Moses:

Psalm 90:12 “So teach us to number our days, so that we may bring a heart of wisdom.”

Psalm 90:13 “Return, O Jehovah! How long? And give pity to Your servants.”

Psalm 90:14 “Satisfy us early with Your mercy, so that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.”

Psalm 90:16 “Let Your work appear to Your servants, and Your glory to their sons.”

*Moses wanted spiritual influence on his progeny.*

Question: Are you giving spiritual influence to your family?

Solomon:

Ecc 12:13 “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. Fear God and keep His commandments. For this *is* the whole *duty* of man.”

Ecc 12:14 “For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether *it is* good, or whether evil.”

*This defines a pathway to holiness. It gives you both motivation and action.*

Question: Do you fear God and obey His commandments?

Jesus:

John 17:4 “I have glorified You upon the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.”

John 17:5 “And now Father, glorify Me with Yourself with the glory which I had with You before the world was.”

John 17:15 “I do not pray for You to take them out of the world, but for You to keep them from the evil (one).”

John 17:17 “Sanctify them through Your truth. Your Word is truth.”

*Our path to Holiness is through being transformed in/by or  
 sanctified by the Word*.

Question: What is your epitaph to your family?

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Joshua last address to the people:

Josh 23:1 “And it happened many days after Jehovah had given rest to Israel from all their enemies all around, Joshua became old, far along in days.”

Josh 23:6 “And be very courageous to keep and to do all that is written in the book of the Law of Moses, so that you do not turn aside from it *to* the right or to the left;”

Josh 23:7 “so that you do not come among these nations, these that remain among you; neither make mention of the name of their gods, nor cause to swear *by them*, neither serve them, nor bow yourselves to them.”

Josh 23:8 “But cleave to Jehovah your God, as you have done to this day.”

Josh 23:11 “And take good heed to yourselves that you love Jehovah your God.”

This is the last recorded talk by Joshua.

I relate because I am Gayle and I “became old, far along in days.”

Here are some of my thoughts for your consideration.

1. Joshua’s advice to the nation at his parting was “to keep and to do all that is written in the book”, cleave to and love God.

Since this is such a serious and important piece of advice, how would you grade yourself?

Am I:

1. Familiar with the Word but as a novice?
2. A good listener and depend on my pastor or teachers for my biblical knowledge and spiritual health?
3. In Bible studies where the leader is telling me of his insights from the Word?
4. Spiritually growing and learning about God and applying the Word into my life from my own discipline and commitment?

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1. Joshua admonishes us to cleave to God. The Greek word means:

abide, follow close (hard, after), be joined (together), keep, overtake, pursue hard, stick.

The meaning of his call for the people is to stay the course and keep God and His thinking premier in their thinking and decisions.

How do you grade yourself in making business decisions, family decisions, dealing with your wife, etc. from the Word?

And do I bet all my life on God (cleave) and do I love (obey God) throughout my life?

1. “And take good heed to yourselves that you love Jehovah your God.” (Joshua 23:11)
2. Take heed, i.e. be alert and watching what I am doing or thinking.

1Peter\_5:8 “Be sensible *and* vigilant, because your adversary *the* Devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking someone he may devour;”

OR:

Eph\_6:12 “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the world's rulers, of the darkness of this age, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.”

Love is not just an emotion, but it is a performance. The Bible indicates (John 14:21) I can only be sure I love Jesus if I obey Him. So, you know you love God when you know the Word and think with the Word and obey the Word. You may have moments of contact with God like a sunrise or the stars and heavens or a child laughing, but the Bible says your sure-fire way of pleasing and knowing God is to obey Him.

\*\*Before I get some harsh notes, I didn’t say you were saved by works or performance. Of course, salvation is by grace. But your performance during your turn on earth is the sure way of knowing you love God and will have rewards in Heaven.

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Observation:

If God is the creator of this universe and the creator of us and creator of Jesus, and

If God sent Jesus to rescue some of us by His sacrificial life, and

If Jesus was killed and resurrected from the dead (a feat no one else has done to date), and

If the Bible is the only letter from God to us and is true and infallible, what is our only conclusion?

1. Get to the point of understanding His message/the Bible and thinking for us.
2. Obey His Word
3. Help others do the same.
4. Prepare for my time in Heaven, i.e. store up treasures in Heaven.
5. Teach my children to be people of God.

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Application:

Decide where you stand on the observations above and move forward. We will all end up at the Bema seat, be prepared.

At least every week, store up some treasure in Heaven.

If you don’t believe the above, then eat, drink and be merry for tomorrow you die. Or as the man watching a man jump from a plane without a parachute said, “Good Luck”