

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – April 14, 2020

The Lord be with you.

All through Holy Week and Good Friday and Easter, I was thinking a lot about a preacher from my parents' generation, Dr. RG Lee as he was visiting the holy land and he asked a guide to take him to what is called Gordon's Calvary.

I've been there, it's a rocky skull-shaped hill, where some believe Jesus was crucified, but actually gets there, and he tells his guy that he wants to climb to the top of Mount Calvary. And the guide says, No, they can't do that. It's not permitted, but Dr. Lee persists, and they climb to the top of the skull-shaped hill.

Dr. Lee takes off his hat and becomes strangely silent and begins to cry and his guide asks him.

Sir, have you been here before, and Dr. Lee answers,

Oh yeah, I was here 2000 years ago, but Dr. Lee knew this Bible and he knew that, in fact, God had included him in what happened on Mount Calvary, and what's more God included you and me in the life, the death and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So, the Good Friday and Easter are not just about something that happened once upon a time, but your life, in my life, are wrapped up. And what happened 2000 years ago and that is the gospel that is the good news that Christ story is made our story. I love the old spiritual, that ask and song.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?

Were you there, were you there when they laid him in the tomb?

Were you there when God raised Him up from the tomb were you there? Well the biblical answer is, that we were there and that's what the Apostle Paul is getting at in a couple of verses of scripture that I'd like to share with you for the next few moments as they are verses that have totally changed the way I think about life.

In Galatians chapter 2, verses 19 through 20, Paul begins.

I have been crucified with Christ, Paul is saying that he was there on Mount Calvary, with Jesus and that's not just true for Paul, it's true for you and me as we died with Christ, we died to our own live to the sins of failures, the regrets, they're gone their history as God sees you and me as we deem and set free from all our guilt and shame, I have been crucified with Christ.

The Paul says, there is more...

I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me, and the life I now live, that's present tense, and the life I now live in the flesh, I live by

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faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me, God has so joined us to Jesus, he has so identified us with Jesus, not only in his death, but with Jesus in the power and glory of His resurrection, good fright in Easter are not only about what happened to Jesus but they are about what happened to you and me as our lives are wrapped up with Jesus.

So, when I say that I'm a Christian, I'm not so much saying that I behave in a certain way as I am saying that God has joined me to Christ in His life, His death, and resurrection that we get to share life with Jesus.

That's what Paul is getting in Philippians 1:21. For me, to live is Christ, or Paul in Colossians 3, verse 4, "Christ is our life, that's what Jesus is talking about in John 15. "I am the vine, you are the branches. We share life together so that the Christian life contrary to oftentimes it is thought the Christian life is not imitating Jesus but participating in Jesus, in his life, the Christian life is not a formula, it's not a method, it's not behavior modification. In fact, the only person who can live the Christian life, is Christ alive in us and I find that takes away all the pressure, the strain of trying to be a Christian.

Now I, I've looked for ways to try to illustrate this oneness, and I find that Jesus actually illustrate it for us, is Jesus says that our oneness with Him, is like his one that's with the father.

Two distinct persons father and son get there one the Father doing his work. So Father speaking His words through Jesus, Jesus and the Father are one, and so, you and Jesus, two distinct persons, two distinct identities, but one, so that the resurrection means Jesus is ready to live His life through you and the life I now live Paul says "I live by faith in the Son of God.

I don't know the problems you're facing, this week. The challenge is a heartache, but we come alive by faith in the Son of God. Now, I love the last part of that verse. I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me me and gave himself for me, not just for the world, but He loved me and gave himself for me.

So we see Dr. Lee was right, he was there, we were there with Jesus on that Good Friday and we were there with him on that bright Dawn of the Easter morning as we get to live in newness of life with him and so the Lord bless you and keep you the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord lift up the light of His countenance upon you and give you peace.

I'm Tim Smith, a fellow traveler on the pilgrim way.

Thank you for listening. Happy Easter.

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