

Selah: Stop, Look, Listen – May 23, 2020

That the Lord be with you. And a thumbs up!

A thumbs up from God to all Jesus followers, a thumbs up that all is well, and the thumbs up to keep you looking up, looking up to Jesus seated at the right hand of God. This week we observe the 40-day mark after Jesus' resurrection. The day when Jesus ascended to Heaven and what's more scripture tells us that Jesus ascended with you, that Jesus ascended to take his place with you at the right hand of God. And what a view it is from the right-hand of God. We will see that seated with Christ there today. The world looks different. Life looks different, and I'm hoping that today Selah that it... Well, well, that it might be a new pair of glasses, for you and for me to give us new vision that we might see life seated at the right hand of God.

I'm looking at Colossians chapter three written by the Apostle Paul, from a dark roman prison but how the world lights up for Paul as he looks at the world from the right hand of God. In Colossians 3 verses 1-4, Paul writes since you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God, set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God, when Christ who is your life is revealed and you also will be revealed with him in glory.

You hear a Paul's repetition of the word with. Three times, three times Paul seeks to highlight to emphasize our oneness or union with Christ, he says, raised with Christ, your life is hidden with Christ, you will also be revealed with Christ in glory.

Now, this is a huge passage, this is the wonder of being a Christian. This is how God made you this is how God sees you, this is your true identity with Christ as you were raised with Christ, your life is hidden with Christ you also will be revealed with Christ. This is what it means to be a new creation where old things pass away, everything is new and who you are in Christ, never changes. Sin will never change the truth of who you are with Christ.

This means that your identity is not based on your performance, your identity is not based on other people's opinion of you, your identity is not based on how well you're keeping the rules, your identity is all wrapped up with who you are with Christ Jesus. We see a believer's oneness with Jesus wonderfully set forth in Galatians 2:20, where Paul rejoices I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live but it is Christ who lives in me. This is the meaning of the Christian life, Christ living in us, the Christian life is not you and me trying hard to be like Jesus, but it is Christ powerfully alive in us.

Did you hear what Paul said to today's passage? He says when Christ who is your life is revealed. Christ is your life.

This gives us a whole new perspective on being a Christian. It takes away the pressure it takes away the burden and this means that I don't wake up every morning taking my spiritual temperature, but I wake up seeking to focus on Jesus alive in me. And this puts

the focus of the Christian life, right where it belongs on Jesus powerfully alive in us so that the source of your identity, who you really are, it's with Jesus who is perfect. I sat on a discernment committee for our church as we're meeting with a young man who's seeking ordination and a member of the committee as the young man, what I thought was a really great question, he said, tell us who are you, where do you look for your identity? And I thought that a great question for a young man seeking to go into Christian ministry, and I love how the young man answered as he talked about who he is in Christ, Jesus, his identity found in Jesus Christ.

That's what the apostle Paul was talking about here, in our passage today is He says, Seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God, set your minds on things that are above. Paul isn't saying that we should go around thinking about Heaven all day, rather he is saying that we need to focus our minds on our identity with Christ, who we are in Christ where Christ is seated at the right hand of God where we are seated with him. Check out what Paul says in Ephesians 2:6, "God raised us up with Christ, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

Everything starts to look very, very different when looked at from the right hand of God.

Listen one more time to the width of this passage. The truth about who you really are raised with Christ, your life is hidden with Christ and God, you also will be revealed with Christ in glory. Easter is celebrating Christ raised from the dead, and our being raised, spiritually with Christ and one day being raised physically with him.

The ascension is about our life hidden with Christ in God, at the right hand of the Father, our life is hidden with Christ. It means that the world can't see who you really are, but you were at the right hand of God in power and authority as a believer in Christ Jesus.

And then as we look ahead, as we look ahead to the grand wrapping up of history, Paul says you also will be revealed with Christ in glory. The last book of the Bible, what's it called? It's The Revelation of Jesus Christ, it's when Jesus Christ and all his glory will be revealed to the world, and Paul adds here he says you also will be revealed with Christ in glory.

We've got a lot to look forward to.

It's what the Apostle John is talking about in 1 John 3:2, beloved, we are God's children. Now, what we will be has not yet been revealed, but we do know, as this when He is revealed, we will be like Him for we will see Him as He is. Paul says, you also will be revealed with Christ in glory.

That's why I begin today with thumbs up. God is saying to you all is well and God is saying to you keep looking up, abide in Jesus as Jesus abides in you. An old hymn rejoices, Jesus, I am resting, resting in the joy of what Thou art. I am finding out the greatness of thy loving heart. Thou has bid me gaze upon Thee as Thy beauty fills my soul, for by Thy transforming power Thou has made me whole.

A thumbs up to you.

Water from Rock

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

Thanks for listening, until next time...

Water from Rock

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