

The Shape of Many Things

Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned. For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory. It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; If we endure, we will also reign with Him; If we deny Him, He also will deny us; If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

8 Remember Jesus Christ... : **THANKSGIVING SUNDAY!**

He is the One to be thankful to / for!

→ If “being thankful” this weekend seems a little (or a lot) out of reach: here is some good news: **The Good News:**

“The gospel” → help with WHATEVER bad news you are gripped by.

Without exception! On this one condition: that you **remember Jesus Christ!**

8 Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David...

1. The life of Christ on earth was shaped like a wave.

- “risen from the dead” He rose to the highest position from the dead [the lowest position]

Ephesians 1:20-22 ... He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

John 17:4,5 "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was."

- “descendant of David” Historically, He descended from King David to the shameful death of a disgraced criminal ~~ and then rose to the right hand of God.

C.S.Lewis... the work of Christ was like a diver, diving down into the darkness of the ocean ...

John 12:24 "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

NOW: getting back to the apostle Paul in prison, and the letter he wrote to Timothy...

REVIEW: PAY THE PRICE OF THE PRIVILEGE!

1. THE BATTLEFIELD PRICE: *the hardship of serving only one master*

2. The work of the gospel can be shaped like a wave.

9 ["my gospel"] for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned.

10 For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain **the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.**

Like Christ before us, [the deep sea diver --- the seed that falls into the ground] to get the gospel out to people, we are sometimes led **down** from our comfortable circumstances, to bring people **up**. (“out” == “in”)

Philippians 1:12-14 Now I want you to know, brethren, that **my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel**, so that my imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, and that most of the brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my imprisonment, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.

John 12:24 "...unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."

John 15:20 "Remember the word that I said to you, 'A slave is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

And now, back to the people who find a weekend like this one a challenge: hard to be thankful when you are worried sick, or broken-hearted, or scared to death!

(Did you know that you can scare a sheep to death? ...)

3. The life of a Christian is shaped like a wave. The life of everyone who "remembers Jesus Christ"...

11 It is a trustworthy statement: For **if we died** with Him, **we will also live** with Him;

12 **If we endure, we will also reign** with Him...

Hebrews 12:1-11 ...let us **run with endurance** the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ... "MY SON, **DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD**... All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, **afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.**"

John 12:24,25 ... unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal."

4. Not every life is shaped like a wave.

12 ... If we deny Him, He also will deny us;

13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.

- It is a deadly thing to stop **remembering Jesus Christ**: to forget Jesus Christ!
- **To quit on Christ is to quit on life.**
- **But if you don't quit**: if you remember Jesus Christ: i.e. remember to trust Him, and you trust Him enough to obey Him, and you live like that, you can have the assurance that every bad thing that ever comes into your life is being used by the Lord to accomplish His purposes in your life: to "bear fruit" in you ---- and through you in the lives of others!
- And that's why: "Rejoice in our difficulties." As Timothy saw Paul doing years before when he first met him.

And as Paul was doing here at the end of his adventures...

So there may well be some things in your life that keep you from having a simple **Happy Thanksgiving**.

So then: **Have a complicated Happy Thanksgiving!**

Be happy in your difficulties and your challenges and your disappointments.

You can do this.

Remember Jesus Christ!