

The Servant



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Living without regret.

There is a big difference between regret and repentance. They are not the same. Repentance is something God requires. It changes things. Regret changes nothing. Repentance is a turning of the heart and a changing of the mind. Regret is cutting one's self with sharp stones like the prophets of Baal. Regret is painful. Worse, regret is making sure some pain of the past is kept alive just enough to hurt forever. Regret is like the needle getting stuck in a scratch of an old phonograph record. It painfully replays the past, again, and again, and again. Regret has no place in the life of faith. Those who live with regret dig up the graves of old memories, weep over decomposing corpses, promising them we will be back to dig them up again tomorrow. Living with regret is going to Hell when we don't have to. It is living among the tombs.

Remembering holds a ministry, not regret. Remembering only becomes painful when we become stuck in some moment of time and refuse to receive God's forgiveness. There were three dark hours on Calvary. They were the worst. We need not live in that darkness. Easter morning calls us to the light.

Satan would have us live with regret. God calls us to repent. Hell will be filled with regret, heaven with repentant sinners saved by grace.

We are often reminded that heaven is for "perfect" people. I am also reminded that those who will be in heaven are those saved by grace. Only God is perfect. We, at best, are forgiven, which is close enough to perfect as possible. We can repent and receive God's forgiveness. *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* (1Jn. 1:9)

Satan, the accuser, wants us to live in the graveyard with the demoniacs. He wants us to live with regret. He knows where all the bodies are buried and he has brought a shovel. Send him your regrets. Tell him you have repented instead, you have faith in Christ, and that you are forgiven.

What I Found at the Cross.

I see seven of the greatest things at the cross in the last seven words of Christ. (see 5-6 on back)

1. **The Greatest Forgiveness** (Lk. 23:34)
2. **The Greatest Faith** (Lk. 23:43)
3. **The Greatest Family** (Jn.19:27)
4. **The Greatest Fear** (Mt. 27:46)
5. **The Greatest Fountain** (Jn. 19:28)
6. **The Greatest Finish** (Jn. 19:30)
7. **The Greatest Future** (Lk. 23:46)

My Father's Day

Sunday is my Father's Day.
Six have we for work and play.
One is set apart in seven
So to turn our hearts to heaven

God created all in six
We have one with which to fix
Our heart on God who is our source
And seek to keep our souls on course

At the first of every week
Is a date our souls must keep
As if the lungs, air must breathe in
Before some great hard work begin

To fill our selves as His creation
And worship Him in great elation.
After Adam the Lord God rested
On the seventh faith is tested

Remember it, "remember Me"
Worship shall be good for thee.
Take the bread and take the cup
Put down thy work and just look up

-id

What I saw at Calvary The Greatest Fountain- "I Thirst."

He thirsted, that we would never have to. Jesus is the fountain. He is the rock in the wilderness. He is the word and the water of life. In arid lands blighted by famine we have seen skeletal figures dressed in rags standing in line with containers of every shape and description waiting for water. We need water to live. Few people understand the importance of water like those who live in the desert. We take water for granted. Without water we die. We need it to drink, to bath, to swallow and even to blink. We are made mostly of water. Ever cell is a little sea. Our blood is a river of life.

We do not think about water very much. We are surrounded by water coolers. Should we want a drink, (when was the last time you used a public water fountain?) we usually just "take a sip." People take water for granted, like ... well, like they take God for granted. We "sip" Him here and there. A sip on Sunday is enough for most of us. We might not feel like another until Wednesday.

The Psalmist cried out in a "thirst for God" which he likened to the "hart, thirsting after the water brook." When was the last time we thirsted for God like that? The fact of the matter is, we were designed to "thirst after God." Somehow,

like the woman of Sychar we are found at too many worldly wells that do not satisfy.

Jerusalem had no river. All the great cities and civilizations of the world have their great waterways. Jerusalem had cisterns. They would catch the rain that fell from heaven. Jerusalem was completely dependant on what fell from above. Jesus speaking of the Spiritual presence of God as a "water springing up out of our innermost being." We need water. We need God more than water. Not in little sips, but in His gushing, rushing fullness to cleanse us and wash all ill away, but also in His gentle quietness as found in Psalm One.

Jesus thirsted on the cross. In those words He spoke of His identification with us. We might not understand how He could forgive. We might be amazed by how He thought of others in the midst of His own agony. All that He spoke on the cross is so much higher that we are. But in the words "I thirst" He comes right down with us, where we are. He suffered in the flesh and in His humanity. We were designed to thirst. Thirst is a warning system that life is in jeopardy. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled.

The Greatest Finish- There have been great finishes, but none like this. Jesus said "*It is finished.*" Starting is easy. We have all started. Finishing is another

matter. We have all started things that were too much for us. We quit. We joined the health club, but we just didn't have time. We quit. Some started piano lessons but never got around to leaning to play the piano. Then there are the guitars standing in the back of the closet. We had good intentions, but we never finished what we started. Not so with Jesus, He is the Alpha and the Omega. He finished the work the Father gave Him to do.

There have been great finishes before. Noah finished the ark. Nehemiah finished the wall, and Solomon the Temple. Paul said "I have kept the faith, and finished the course." Good for Paul. We are not there yet. Jesus finished the work of redemption and salvation on Calvary. There He paid for my sins "in full." His work was not "down payment," or "lay-a-way." I do not have to pay compound interest and there is no mortgage due. What He did is finished, done, complete.

Some are fascinated by the "it" of the "It is finished." They are off arguing about if that means the law, or the sacrifices, or the Old Testament, or the Sabbath. While it is true that Jesus is our Sabbath, what is finished is all that is necessary for our Salvation. The ark is completed, come in before it rains. The temple is finished, come and worship. The wall is up, enter in and be secure.

There is still much to do in this thing called life. There are still many to love, much to learn, and much to live, but we are to do these all in His grace, because His work is done. ☺

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