

"That God In All Things Might Be Glorified"

I Peter 4:7-11, Sunday after Ascension

May 12, 2013

Beloved of the Lord.....The title for our sermon this morning comes straight from the words of the Holy Spirit in verse eleven, "That God in all things might be glorified". When we know the love of God for us through the merits of Christ, we "put off the old man with his deeds" by repenting of our sins and we "put on the new *man*, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." By faith we clothe ourselves with the righteousness of Christ, and now we want to live and do all things to His glory. Believers want to keep the law and not break the law. Today especially we remember the fourth commandment, "Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother, that I may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." "We should fear and love God that we may not despise our parents and masters, nor provoke them to anger, but give them honor, serve and obey them, and hold them in love and esteem."

Considering the day let us ask this question, "As Christians, how do we honor our mother?" We honor our mother first by understanding God has given her a very high office far above us and we ought to obey her. Eve was named Eve, because she was the mother of all the living. Beside our father, by virtue of her God-given office, our mother is one of God's representatives with authority over us. To disobey her is to disobey God and bring a curse upon ourselves. To obey her is to obey God and God for Christ's sake will bless, "that it may be well with thee." This honor and obedience we owe our mother is lifelong, and Proverbs 23 reminds us, "Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old." Your strength as an adult ought to be used to support, help, and aide your mother when she is frail and weak.

Without a doubt, it is very hard to be a Christian mother in this world. Their greatest fear is that one or more of their children will despise Christ and go astray. They also become fearful when they look around at the world and see how wicked it is. This is especially when children and father should support and lift up mother with the Word of God to support her faith. It is written, "Comfort the feebleminded, support the weak." If our mother is having a hard day, we ought to tell her, "Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God *is* with thee whithersoever thou goest." We remind her that before Jesus ascended up into heaven, Jesus promised, "Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world". When she is discouraged by her sins we remind her Jesus conquered the power of sin over her by the cross, and now she is washed, she is sanctified, she is "justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Jesus came to give our mother life, true spiritual and everlasting life, and "we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us."

Finally regarding our mothers let us remember, "the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." Don't forget to pray for your mother. Ask your gracious Father above to bless, uphold, and strengthen your mother with His grace. Pray that she will not be fearful, but fearless, for Jesus is with her always. Pray that God will help her to seek those things which are above, where our ascended Christ reigns and rules over all things here below.

As we begin today let us thus first remember, 40 days after Jesus rose from the dead, He visible ascended up into heaven. When the Bible says that Jesus sits at the right hand of God, this simple means as a Man Jesus has all power in heaven, and from heaven He rules all things here on earth below. He will come again to judge the quick and the dead, and on the Last Day His angels will divide the wicked from His children. Only those who believe in Jesus will be saved. Since the end of all things is at hand, let us pray God will grant repentance to those legislators who approved same sex marriage this week. They gave their blessing to what God calls an abomination. In very clear words God condemns homosexuality in Leviticus 18:22-25 saying, "Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it *is* abomination. Neither shalt thou lie with any beast to defile thyself therewith: neither shall any woman stand before a beast to lie down thereto: it *is* confusion. Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomiteth out her inhabitants." Let no Christian then be deceived and overthrown by homosexuals today who preach acceptance, tolerance, and equality. Same-sex marriage is not marriage and has nothing to do with equality, but it is about the destruction of marriage and the corruption of children who will be taught such behavior is good and not evil. First Corinthians six however says, Don't you know, "that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,shall inherit the kingdom of God." Abusers of themselves with mankind are homosexuals.

Marriage then is a divine and blessed institution of God, not to be reinvented or redefined by men, but cherished in the heart of God's children. "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Thus in these last days God warns us, "be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." Our calling is to warn the world of the Judgment Day to come, and we ourselves must think soberly. To be SOBER means not only that we should never be drunk, but more importantly as the children of the light, we are to live and think in a sober and godly way. We are to discern between evil and good, mortify our sinful flesh. We are to put off "anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another", but speak the truth in love.

The Bible thus teaches that since all this world will soon perish in the fire, "*Seeing then that* all these things shall be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought ye to be in *all* holy conversation and godliness?" Conversation here means our entire manner and behavior in life. It should be, it ought to be (this life we live) a holy and upright life in full agreement with God's Word and commandments. We should therefore ALWAYS honor our father and mother, we should not despise preaching and God's Word, we should fear, love, and trust in God above all things, for the Father sent and gave the Son for our salvation, and "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" and "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." I Jn. 3:1

Therefore "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation" and "be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." Be in a constant state of readiness, praying that God will help you not to yield to temptation, ever trusting in God's grace for strength. In prayer consider also the sixth petition, "Lead us not into temptation". We there ask God to guard and keep us, so that He will keep evil temptations far away from us. Yet we also pray that when God allows temptations to come, we do not yield or give ourselves over to evil, but He helps us so that we overcome and obtain the victory. In the end, that is what death is, overcoming all temptation. We by faith overcome all temptations when we faithfully confess the saving name of Christ to the end, for "by grace are ye saved". Death is our final deliverance from evil. Jesus therefore said, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." Therefore dear believer, do not allow your soul to fall in love with this world for she is dying. "Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." Instead of loving this world, remember your first love. Think of Jesus. Even now though He has ascended to heaven above, His love for you still passes all understanding, for "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him."

"Charity [then] shall cover the multitude of sins." As God through Christ has covered all our sins through His blood, so we charitably cover or overlook the sins of our neighbor or those in our congregation. This is especially true in marriage. If each spouse admonishes every sin of the other, soon there will be war and bloodshed. Just imagine if God uncovered and told us about our every sin, throughout our life there would be only Law and no Gospel. Charity then has the wisdom to cover and overlook many sins. My spouse for example, loves me so much she does not daily point out all my faults and I love her all the more for it. The same is true in reverse. We strengthen each other by absolving and forgiving one another with God's grace given us. We pass by most sins, as God through Christ passes over all. So the Bible says, "Ne ye kind one to

another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

This grace from above also is what causes us to "use hospitality one to another without grudging." If we have visitors, we give them all our love and attention, true care. The Bible says, "Let brotherly love continue [and] be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." We also then use our gifts in an unselfish manner, all to God's glory. "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." While God's gifts include preaching, teaching, praying, exhorting, organizing, and many others""Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." For example, though David was a king, David said, "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

Finally beloved of the Lord, the Bible says "if any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God, if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ." That is really what the whole and entire Christian live is about. It is not about US, or ME, or I, but it is about HIM WHO CAME TO SAVE US and ME and I. When you know His love, you cannot but help to praise Him for His love night and day, and faith alone can praise Him who loved us first. Jesus is our pride and glory. Jesus is our first love, the one thing needful. And though the Spirit of Christ has given us all different gifts and talents so we are much like an orchestra made up of different instruments, when we play together in the unity of faith, God can make beautiful music, even from such poor instruments as us. "If you cannot speak like angels, If you cannot preach like Paul, You can tell the love of Jesus, You can say He died for all. If you cannot rouse the wicked, With the Judgments dread alarms, you can lead the little children to the Savior's waiting arms." "In all things may [God] be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."