

The Bridge is out - May 12, 2022

We all want what's best for our children and will do all within our power to keep them from danger, suffering, and pain. As followers of Jesus, you may have dedicated your child as we did before the Lord. His Grandpa Jerry, a small Baptist church pastor in rural SC, held Jesse up to God. Prayers for wisdom, love, grace, and guidance were offered. There was also a stern admonishment to us, his parents, family, friends, and the local congregation to be a support and godly example for this baby.

But we humans are imperfect in everything, parenting included. The time comes, all too quickly, and you watch your child step into adulthood. It is heartwrenching to watch your child step away from actively following Jesus to embrace the broad and fast-moving flow of our modern culture. "What did we do wrong?" becomes the question, tearfully crying out to Father God for forgiveness. Father God hears our prayers, catches our tears, and strengthens us.

Beware. There is a false "light" that is actually darkness actively engulfing humanity today, including our children. It is the fog of deception. We need the light and hope of God's Word to give us direction.

In Pastor Doug's sermon, "The Bridge is Out", we learned about the tragedy of the collapse of the Sunshine Skyway Bridge in St. Petersburg, Florida, on May 9th, 1980. Thirty-five people were plunged into the bay as that huge bridge section fell into the ocean. Dense fog, torrential rain, and wind gusts made visibility impossible on that morning commute.

Eternity is a breath away. James 4:14 (AMP):

14 [a]Yet you do not know [the least thing] [b]about what may happen in your life tomorrow. [What is secure in your life?] You are merely a vapor [like a puff of smoke or a wisp of steam from a cooking pot] that is visible for a little while and then vanishes [into thin air].

There is only one life that is given to us. Hebrews 9:27(AMP):

27 And just as it is appointed and destined for all men to die once and after this [comes certain] judgment,

One day we will close our eyes here on earth and they will reopen either heaven or hell.

Those of us who put our faith and trust in Jesus, receive His forgiveness, and follow Him will find our home in heaven. But what about our family? Co-workers?

Neighbors? What about those we interact with every day? Where will they spend eternity?

Tragedies that end the lives of countless souls sweep over the earth every day. Shootings, war, sickness, drug abuse leading to overdose, hopelessness ending in suicide, the list goes on and on. We have become hard-hearted, desensitized, and emotionally detached from the reality that each individual will stand before God and receive judgment. Every family bears the scars of tragedy. It is part of living in a fallen world. Right?

The scripture that Pastor Doug shared was Luke 16:19-31. Jesus is sharing about the beggar Lazarus and the rich man. If we go back to the beginning of chapter 16, we see that Jesus is sharing with his disciples about money. The Pharisees are heckling Jesus. Look at verses 14 & 15 (AMP):

(14) Now the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, were listening to all these things and were sneering and ridiculing Him. (15) So He said to them, "You are the ones who declare yourselves just and upright in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts [your thoughts, your desires, your secrets]; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God."

Right after this statement, Luke writes of Jesus sharing the parable of the rich man and the beggar Lazarus. Jesus was proclaiming that their hearts were focused on physical wealth, success, and power. Before we jump on the bandwagon and say, "Yeah, you Pharisees got what's coming to you!", let's examine our own hearts.

How can we effectively share the love, light, and hope that we have in Jesus? What are we to do? How can we stand in the storm and proclaim that the bridge is out and the commuters must stop and turn around? How can we stop our family, friends, and coworkers from plunging headlong into the Abyss?

By loving God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. By loving our neighbor as ourselves. Genuine, godly, sacrificial love in actions for others. Our lives must be a DOT sign pointing to our Savior who has become the Holy Bridge to the Father.

Have we fallen short? Here is Psalm 51:17(AMP):

My [only] sacrifice [acceptable] to God is a broken spirit;
A broken and contrite heart [broken with sorrow for sin, thoroughly penitent],
such, O God, You will not despise.

Father God, thank You for Your Holy Spirit. Help us to shine bright for you from
here on out!

Use us, Lord to rescue the perishing.

In Jesus' Name,
Amen