

Pastor's Ponderings

November 2008

Heaven and earth will disappear, but my words will remain forever. ³⁴Watch out! Don't let me find you living in careless ease and drunkenness, and filled with the worries of this life. Don't let that day catch you unaware, ³⁵as in a trap. For that day will come upon everyone living on the earth. ³⁶Keep a constant watch. And pray that, if possible, you may escape these horrors and stand before the Son of Man."

Luke 21:33-36 (NLT)

God is good – all the time! God pursued me until I was caught and set free. God never gave up on me, even at a time in my life when I had given up on myself and, quite frankly, had given up on God. But, praise be to God! God pursued me. God caught me. God set me free!

I hope you can make the same claim about your life. If not yet, then I pray soon. As a matter of fact, I pray today will be the day God catches you and sets you free! The Apostle Paul expressed it this way in his second letter to the Corinthians, ***"For God says, "At just the right time, I heard you. On the day of salvation, I helped you." Indeed, God is ready to help you right now. Today is the day of salvation."*** 2 Cor. 6:2 NLT. God is ever ready to hear (pursue), help (catch), and save (set free). Paul says God hears us, helps us, and saves us! God doesn't give up! God pursues until you're caught and set free.

However, as you may have noticed, in the scripture I included above from the Gospel of Luke, there will come a day when it will be too late. Jesus tells us to watch-out! He tells us to not be "caught unaware!" And Jesus tells us to "...pray that we may escape the horrors and stand before the Son of Man." Yes, there will be a day when Jesus Christ comes again, and if on that day you have not been "caught and set free," you will not be able to escape the horrors or stand before

Him. If you have though, then you have been set free indeed.

The freedom we have in Jesus Christ is not a freedom to do as we please, especially in regard to sin. It is a freedom to live for and in Jesus Christ. Jesus commands His disciples to love one another. The way we show that love is by serving one another. I am so glad we have been set free to serve a wonderful Savior and Lord. Jesus said in Mark 10:45, ***"For even I, the Son of Man, came here not to be served but to serve others, and to give my life as a ransom for many."*** Jesus set the example for us to serve. His serving was a sacrificial kind of service. He gave His life – the ultimate sacrifice.

In what ways are you serving Jesus Christ? Are you serving sacrificially? How is that sacrifice expressed in your service? What ministry (service) is God calling you to? If you say none – you would be wrong! God does call, commission, and challenge us to serve. If you really think or feel like God can't or won't use you, then maybe you are ***"...filled with the worries of this life..."*** as stated above. It may be time for you to let God catch you and set you free.

I really can't tell you how many times I resisted the Holy Spirit's will for my life. But, I can tell you it was too many, too often, and too long! When I surrendered my life to Jesus Christ, when I quit running, when I allowed the Pursuer (God) to finally catch me and set me free, I knew I was free forever. I knew in that moment Jesus Christ gave His life for me and God raised Him from the dead. I knew in that very moment, to this very moment, and I'll know through all of eternity, Jesus Christ loved me enough to die for me.

The gospel truth is, He died and was raised for you too. Not only did Jesus Christ die that you may be saved, but also that you would serve Him. Praise God for the pursuit, the catch, and the freedom. Believe, serve, and live!