

RESTORATION THROUGH GOOD LEADERSHIP

EZEKIEL 33:30-33

INTRODUCTION:

1. Those who are saved can lose their salvation and be eternally lost. (Gal. 5.4; 2 Pet. 2.20; Heb. 10.27)
2. God not only offers forgiveness but pleads with us to accept His forgiveness and be reconciled with Him. (2 Cor. 5.20)
3. It is this heart of compassion and forgiveness that is displayed toward Israel as God pleads for them to repent. (Ezek. 33.11)
4. Restoration to God is encouraged because of the efforts of good leadership in the church.

I. THE IDENTITY OF THE LEADERSHIP

- A. Ezekiel 34 directs our attention the shepherds of Israel.
 1. **EZEKIEL 34.1,2:** *“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel...”*
 2. Not a reference to the religious leaders but to the rulers of Israel. (2 Sam. 5.1,2; cf. 2 Kings 24.9)
- B. Who are the leaders in our time?
 1. The leaders in the church are the elders who *“rule over you.”* (Acts 20.28; 1 Pet. 5.2; Heb. 13.17)
 2. There are others who are also responsible to being spiritual leaders. (Eph. 5.28; 6.4; 2 Tim. 3.10)

II. THE INDIFFERENCE OF THE LEADERSHIP

- A. The shepherds did not care for the flock.
 1. **EZEKIEL 34.2,3:** *“Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves”*
 2. Do you care about those you lead? (John 10.12,13)
- B. The shepherds did not feed the flock.
 1. **EZEKIEL 34.2,3:** *“Should not the shepherds feed the flock...but you do not feed the flock.”*
 2. Do you provide the spiritual nutrients of the word of God to those under your care? (1 Pet. 5.2; John 21.15-17)
- C. The shepherds did not protect the flock.
 1. **EZEKIEL 34.4,5:** *“The weak you have not strengthened ...so they were scattered...and they became food”*
 2. Who is responsible for protecting the flock? (Heb. 13.17; Acts 20.28,29; Ezek. 34.4-6)

CONCLUSION: Ultimately, restoration is your choice.

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“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature”
-Mark 16.15

August 22, 2021

MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS : 9:00 AM

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP: 9:50 AM

SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP: 6:00 PM

WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS 7:30 PM

THE BLESSING OF ASSEMBLING

For a time, the pandemic has forced us to live in isolation. The pandemic is still a threat, but because of vaccinations, facemasks, and practicing common sense (like washing your hands), we have been able to emerge from our homes and interact with the public again. That includes our ability to assemble once again with the saints to worship God and study His inspired message.

Having now been able to come together as the church, it has really emphasized to me what a blessing it is to meet together. In that well known passage of Hebrews 10, the writer shares several benefits of our meeting together. These benefits include our ability to *“consider one another,”* the influence we have to *“stir up one another to love and good works,”* and the encouragement we receive from *“exhorting one another”* (Heb. 10.23-25).

I understand why some have chosen to be cautious and still not attend services. But others have not returned only because they no longer see it as necessary. Still others only consider it important to attend one service. If that is you, we urge you to think about the tremendous blessings of attending and make the effort to be here as often as you can both for your sake and the sake of your brethren.

Being a Christian comes with the responsibility of supporting your brethren. That support is given in part when we assemble together. But worship is more than a command. It is a blessing.

DEATH WITH JESUS

MARK 5:35,36

INTRODUCTION:

1. Most of us have experienced death very personally, and it can be hard to wrap your mind around it.
2. In Mark 5, Jesus was approached by a man desperate for Him to come and heal his daughter.
3. Mark 5:35-43: Death can leave us feeling defeated. But with Jesus, death itself is defeated.

I. TWO VIEWS OF DEATH

- A. Death without Jesus.
 1. It is callused. (Mark 5.35)
 2. It is to be feared. (1 Thess. 4.13; Mark 5.36; Heb. 2.15)
 3. It is traumatic. (Mark 5.38,39)
 4. It is real. (Mark 5.40)
- B. Death with Jesus.
 1. Jesus is involved. (Mark 5.41)
 2. Jesus has authority over death. (Mark 5.41)
 3. Jesus brings the girl back to life. (Mark 5.42)
 4. Jesus does something that is amazing. (Mark 5.42)

II. TWO FACTS ABOUT DEATH

- A. Death is a reality.
 1. For the parents of this little girl, death was not a theory or a philosophical puzzle. It was a reality. (Mark 5.40)
 2. **JOB 5.26:** “*You shall come to the grave at a full age.*”
 3. **HEBREWS 9.27:** “*And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment*”
- B. Death is not the end.
 1. For this little daughter, death was not final. She was raised again by the authority of Jesus. (Rev. 1.18)
 2. Death is also not the end for us. (John 5.25)
 3. As the spirit of the daughter was returned, our spirits will be returned to our bodies, but what body? (1 Cor. 15.44)
 3. Paul described death as to “*depart and be with Christ which is far better*” (Phil. 1.21).
 4. Referring to his death, Peter said that “*shortly I must put off this tent*” (2 Pet. 1.14)

CONCLUSION: What is your eternal destiny after death?

HOW ARE YOU WALKING?

If you are feeling overly confident, you might walk with a swagger and strut. If you are feeling overly caution, you might walk on eggshells on your tiptoes. If you are feeling unsteady, you might hobble, stagger, or limp. If you are feeling casual, you might stroll, saunter, wander, roam, or meander. If you are walking with purpose, you might stride or march. But how do you walk spiritually?

What does the Bible mean when it refers to your walk? Colossians 3 refers to a host of worldly behaviors, “*in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them.*” (Col. 3.5-7). The Bible uses the word “walk” and “live” synonymously. To walk is to live. The word “walk” appears in the New Testament 107 times. 63 of those times, it refers to the way you live.

The first time that the word “walk” appears in reference to lifestyle appears in Mark 7.5. It is there that the Pharisees and scribes criticized the disciples asking Jesus, “*Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with unwashed hands.*” Over the next several week, we will be giving attention to the different ways that we walk. For now, let’s think about the idea of walking according to traditions.

Washing hands before you ate was not a matter of hygiene. If you back up to the previous verses, Mark 7.3 tells us that the religious leaders and the people “*did not eat unless they wash their hands in a special way, holding to the tradition of the elders.*” It goes on to say that “*there are many other things which they have received and hold*” (Mark 7.4). These were individuals who lived their lives by following these traditions.

Living according to these traditions was not by itself wrong. It was how they viewed these traditions that were wrong. First, they took these traditions and viewed them as commandments which were binding to everyone (Mark 7.8). Second, they held them up as being more important than God’s commandments (Mark 7.9-13).

Are there traditions so important to you that you are willing to break the commandments of God to keep them? Do you insist that everyone follow them? Traditions can be a wonderful and useful things to pass down through the generations. But they can never take the place nor usurp the commandments of God. Instead of walking according to traditions, we are to “*walk according to His commandments*” (2 John 6). CLP