



Compassion

Sharing hope...

2018 - Second Quarter



God Could Never Love Me!



Rejoicing in Heaven



Special Gifts & Memorials

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"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'



"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me' (Matthew 25:34-40).

Over the past few weeks, we have marked the triumphant passing of two of God's Saints, who have been an integral part of our ministry for many years: former board member and jail ministry volunteer, Larry Clark, and former board chairman and chaplain, David Tetzlaff (affectionately known as Digger). Their desire to share Jesus with the institutionalized, especially those in jails and prisons, reminded me of the words above from Matthew's Gospel. These words of Jesus, the King of kings "Come, you who are blessed by my Father," are words that every Christian longs to hear when their earthly pilgrimage comes to an end. By the grace of God, they are the words that Larry and David have already heard, and they are the words that we, too, will hear one day, when we find ourselves numbered among the Saints Triumphant in glory.

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NEWS

Blessed by the Father

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You see, we truly are “blessed by the Father” for we are blessed through His Son, Jesus Christ. Because of Jesus’ substitutionary life and death, we are “the righteous” having been washed in the blood of the Lamb and clothed with His perfect obedience. Even now, as we bask in the afterglow of Jesus’ Easter victory, this righteousness that is ours through faith kindles within our hearts a desire to continue reaching out to those who spend their days and nights within the institutions – all those who are, or will become, “these brothers and sisters of mine.” And with your continued partnership in this ministry, that is exactly what we will do.



Chaplain Joseph Radsek

May these two parting stories from Larry Clark and David Tetzlaff be reminders to all of us of the ongoing need to share Jesus with “the least of these” wherever they may be. And, may the love of Jesus, inspire us to never stop looking for them within the institutions that are all around us.

God Could Never Love Me!

Worship was over and the female inmates were being escorted back to their cells. I turned to pick up my worship materials and saw her sitting in the back of the room with her head down. I sat by her and she was crying. “Can I help?” I asked. After a long pause she replied, “God could NEVER love me!” When I inquired, I learned that she was a drug addict and was doing time for a misdemeanor possession conviction and that this was not her first.

We reviewed the worship service which had focused on the Parable of the Wedding Banquet (Mt 22:1-14). She was convinced that she would never be invited. I learned that whenever she was in jail, she would get “clean” from her dependency on drugs, but a short time after her release she would start “using” again. “God will never forgive me for my sins,” she said. I looked at her and told her that He already had. Her puzzled look invited me to continue. I explained that Jesus took all her sins and mine to the cross. He paid for them on that first Good Friday. I continued with the victorious proof of Easter Sunday. The tomb was empty. Proof positive that her sins, my sins, all the world’s sin had been forgiven. Not just up to that time in history, but all the sins we will commit during our lifetime – forgiven!

There was a look of disbelief. I continued explaining that there was nothing we are required to do for this wonderful gift. I encouraged her to get reconnected to her church so she can spend time in worship and praise for this wonderful gift. I urged her to seek counseling and to stay away from the drug crowd with which she associated.



Our conversation was cut short by the jailer as she had to be returned to her cell, but I asked her to attend the worship next week and we could talk again. Next week came and she was not there. I asked the deputy to let me talk to her and she would not come out, saying only, “God could never love me!” Sadly, I had to walk away, but I encouraged her to contact me.

A few weeks later I conducted worship in the jail. She had been released, and I have still not been contacted. I’m saddened that she is in such despair over her condition. I pray that she will eventually find the love of Jesus that she needs to rid herself of such hopelessness. In the meantime, I will continue sharing the hope of Jesus Christ with those who need it most.



*by Staff Minister Larry Clark
Jail Ministry Volunteer, Board Member,
Saints Triumphant – March 14, 2018*

Rejoicing in Heaven

The last words of our Savior are recorded by the Apostle John in Revelation, chapter 22. His words are, "He who testifies to these things says, 'Yes, I am coming soon.'" Then John writes the last prayer recorded in Scripture, "Amen. Come Lord Jesus."

None of us know when the Lord Jesus will come again, either at the end of this world or to call us from life in this world to our heavenly home. The Lord wants us to be prepared always for His return. It makes no difference whether we are young or old.

The difference lies in whether or not we are prepared for His coming. The only way to be prepared is given to us in Scripture where Jesus says: "For My Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:40).

Jesus encourages and comforts all His believers when He promises: "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in Me. In My Father's house are many rooms, if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am" (John 14:1-3).

Melinda was a member of one of my prison Bible study groups for almost four years. She was serving a life sentence for her involvement in a murder, and at the time of her sentencing, she was not a Christian.

During the course of our Bible studies and instruction, the Holy Spirit worked in her heart through the Word. It was the Holy Spirit who brought her to sincere repentance and to cling to Jesus as her Savior.

After a year of instruction, Melinda was baptized. The Lord's assurance of forgiveness was a gift that she cherished and for which she said she was always thankful. She was prepared through faith in our Savior (as are you), for the Lord's coming whenever that would be.

The Lord Jesus chose on a day in May to call her soul to Himself. The cause of her death at age thirty-one is still uncertain. But the whereabouts of her soul are known to us, because her faith rested in Jesus and she trusted His promises of forgiveness and eternal life.

Melinda's rather short life was not exemplary. Her passing away was announced in newspapers with the headline: "Notorious murderer found dead in prison." But the news article did not tell the rest of her story.

People sometimes ask me, "Do you think your prison ministry is worthwhile?" My answer is always the same: "There is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10).



by Pastor David Tetzlaff
Board Chairman, Chaplain,
Saints Triumphant – March 31, 2018



*“Do not
let your
hearts be
troubled.
Trust in
God...”*



Sharing hope...
with those who need it most!

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