

Sometimes we like to review our lives and at other times not. Memories run from wonderful and exciting to sad and overwhelming. We each have our high points and low points; special happy times and very sad times. Sometimes thinking back brings smile and at other times tears. = And, looking forward it is about the same way. We expect to have some very positive moments and we also some challenging scenarios. We expect to laugh and to cry.

In our devotional reading from PSALMS NOW by Leslie Brandt there were some lines that prompted this letter, lines about life and living, time and eternity, and especially about God's unfailing love and compassion. From Psalm 71 we reflect.

*Good Lord, You have kept me within the secure embrace of Your love these
many years,*

My life is one long list of divine deliverances.

*I have come running to You again and again when the forces of evil set
themselves against me.*

From the moment of my birth, I was dedicated to Your will, given life by You.

*You have guided me through my precarious youth,
now I need Your grace for my senior years.*

*Fill my heart with purpose and my mouth with praises
so I may continue to proclaim Your salvation to all who will listen.*

*You have kept me safe throughout life's conflicts,
led me through its crucible of experiences,
drawn me back from pitfall and precipices, healed my wounds,
and comforted me in my afflictions.*

*THUS I KNOW THAT YOU WILL CONTINUE TO LOVE AND CARE FOR
ME.*

So it is with confidence and courage we can face each new day and lay down at night with comfort and peace in our hearts and minds. The Lord Jesus, our Savior Shepherd, love us, died for us, conquered death for us and day and night watches over us

Hopefully there will come a time when we can return to our normal procedures. I will see some of you as permissions are granted and schedules can be arranged. Remember to pray for all the school children and their obstacles and learning scenarios.

Blessings and love to you, PASTOR LEMKE

Kids like to ask a lot of questions. I remember a city cousin of mine coming out to the farm and he was just full of questions. - For most of us we have liked to ask questions, and like it better when we get answers.

The disciples of Jesus liked to ask questions as well, some of them not always on the mark, like when they asked and argued among themselves as to "Who is the greatest?" Jesus answered: "The least of all, the servant of all..." Another question they asked began: "When will you.....?" And that becomes a contemporary and frequently begun question for any and all of us. "Lord, when will you.....bring this virus to an end.....relieve this pain.....calm the city streets.....stop the crime and violence.....restore family relationships.....recreate opportunities to visit with family and friends?"

These are big questions for us.

When the disciples asked that question of Jesus, He said that even He did not know, but that it was all in the Father's hands. And for Him that was all that was necessary. In the Garden he prayed: "Father, not my will, but Thine be done." On the cross He prayed: "Father, into Your hands I commend my spirit."

So often there seems to be so very little we can do when changes, challenges and crises come our way in dramatic form. We wonder when it will all be over. We wonder if things will ever be "normal" again.

Although we don't know many answers to our many questions, we do know the everlasting mercy and grace of God surrounds us. We do know a loving Father in heaven has claimed us as His own in time for eternity. We do know that we have forgiveness and eternal life in heaven. We do know that He knows and calls each of us by name. We do know that Jesus is not only our Savior but our Good Shepherd who reaches out to rescue and restore, who comforts and protects. We might not know any of the answers to our questions, but we can trust the One who created us and gives us life, the One who has promised to be with us always to the close of the age. Although we don't have the answers to our questions we have all we need to know about our God and His caring relationship with us. So we can move on through changes, challenges and crises. We can find comfort, joy and peace in our believing.

We can take comfort in the hymn verse:

"I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus, Trusting only Thee;
Trusting Thee for full salvation, Great and free."

May we all comfort one another with this assurance.

Pastor Lemke

There are many memorable verses from the Bible. One of them speaks to us in a special way: "Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow in His steps." (1 Peter 2:21)

Some people have a special way with words. Max Lucado is one of them. In a daily devotion based on this text He writes: "Jesus died...on purpose. No surprise. No hesitation. No faltering.....The way Jesus marched to His death leaves no doubt: He had come to earth for this moment. - - The journey to the cross didn't begin in Jericho. It didn't begin in Galilee. It didn't begin in Nazareth. It didn't even begin in Bethlehem. The journey to the cross began long before. As the echo of the crunching fruit was still sounding in the garden, Jesus was leaving for Jerusalem."

From eternity God created time, and in time his created the world, light and life and all things. With personal care He created Adam and Eve. And so life began. When the life He created was interrupted and corrupted God still loved His creation, and was there immediately to rescue and begin the restoration process. On Calvary Jesus announced: "It is finished." With His life, living, suffering, dying and resurrection all was accomplished. Then He ascended into heaven to prepare a place for all who love Him.

Now, in the meanwhile, we live and deal with life as it is, as it comes to us. We handle it knowing that He has had His eye on us in His plan for us from eternity. So we know He will take us through time with all its joys and sorrows, its victories and losses, its pleasures and its pains, somehow making all things work together for the good of those who love Him.

With the facts for our faith from time behind us we can look forward to what lies ahead for us in time and for eternity. Consequently, we can always be people with hope and peace in our hearts.

I am sure you remember the hymn "Jesus Lives! The Victory's Won."

*Jesus lives! The victory's won! Death no longer can appall me.
Jesus lives! Death's reign is done! From the grave Christ will recall me.
Brighter scenes will then commence; **This shall be my confidence.***

As days of confusion and uncertainty lie ahead, may we keep our focus, "keep our eyes on Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith."

I am expanding my personal visitation schedule. Hopefully one day it will include all of you.

Peace and Blessings, Pastor Lemke