

SERMON

Grace Street Fellowship, Dr. Jim Burgin, pastor

Sunday, September 9th, 2018

Sermon Series: "Heartbeat"

Sermon # 2 – **The Love of Our Life** – Matthew 17: 1-8

TEXT

17 After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ² There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. ³ Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus. ⁴ Peter said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." ⁵ While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!" ⁶ When the disciples heard this, they fell face down to the ground, terrified. ⁷ But Jesus came and touched them. Get up he said, "Don't be afraid." ⁸ When they looked up, they saw no one but Jesus.

THEME INTERPRETATION

1. Where there is no heartbeat, there is no life;
2. Having a heartbeat is essential to life. I understand that you can have brainwave activity without a heartbeat, but you aren't getting off the bed until your heart starts beating again.
3. Starting last week, through October 7th, for five more weeks, we are examining and illustrating the "Spiritual Life of the Church." What is it that we must have – by we, I mean each one of us – to have life in Christ.
4. During the Sunday school hour, for Five Straight weeks, we are taking the time to illustrate the role of the Holy Spirit in your life and mine. We are calling it "The Breathe of Life." We believe it is so important for you to know this that we are providing you with a full and free breakfast for the whole family, starting at 9:00. You don't have to do anything except to come.
5. During the worship hour, we are looking at Six Essential Ingredients to a healthy Life. Do you want vibrancy, spiritual health.? Are you sick and tired of being sick and tired. Do you want peace and freedom? Do you want not just to be healthy, but to be strong and vibrant, not a victim any more, but a victor, then discover these essentials for yourself. Appropriate them into your life, and watch what happens.
6. In John 10:10, Jesus said, "I came that they might have life and have it abundantly."
 - a. The hope of these messages is not just that we are alive spiritually,
 - b. But that we have no clogged spiritual arteries, so that we can have the abundant life Jesus talked about;
 - c. My prayer is that our church will be a "spiritual gas station," that helps people find and appropriate what Jesus provides.

7. Last week, we heard the Lord's invitation to the "Rest of our Life." The Key to that Rest is in Worship. "When we lift Him up, we are filled up."

OPENING – OUR TOPIC THIS WEEK IS JESUS, THE "LOVE OF OUR LIFE."

1.] Perhaps you know the story of Lauryn Hill. In 1998, Lauryn recorded "The Miseducation of Lauryn Hill," a landmark recording, then and now. Miseducation topped the national Billboard charts the week it came out 20 years ago last month. It sold five-million copies in barely a year and won 5 of 10 Grammy Award nominations, including "Album of the Year," "Best R&B Album," "Best New Artist," Best R&B Song, and Best Female R&B Vocal Performance." Hill was just 23 at the time. In hindsight, her success was too much, much too soon, and her long descent began soon after her Grammy sweep.
2. Aretha Franklin, "the Queen of Soul," won 18 Grammy Awards, including the first eight awards given for Best Female R&B Vocal performance from 1968 through to 1975, and is one of the best-selling musical artists of all times.
 - a. Franklin is listed in two all-time lists by Rolling Stone magazine, including the 100 Greatest Artists of All Time and the 100 Greatest Singers of all time. In 2008, she was ranked by Rolling Stone as the No. 1 greatest singer of all time.
 - b. She passed away last month, on August 16th at the age of 76 after a battle with pancreatic cancer.
 - c. Pastor Emeritus at Salem Bible Church, Atlanta, Georgia. His 50 minute Eulogy at Aretha Franklin's "Celebration of Life" was considered "distasteful and offensive" by the family of the award winning singer.
3. Here is the question.
 - a. How is it possible for Lauryn Hill to be so big in our culture, and yet I had never heard of her before last week?
 - b. "How is it possible for a pastor to misunderstand so badly someone he should have known.
4. Transition:
 - a. Is it possible that, as big as Jesus is and has been, that there are some of us who haven't heard, who don't know?
 - b. Is it possible, that, for many of us who have known about Jesus for a long time – but that we truly don't know or understand him?
 - c. I want to introduce you today to Jesus, "the Love of our life."

MANY IN OUR WORLD DO NOT KNOW JESUS

1. Matthew 16 – at Caesarea Philippi, Jesus asks his disciples "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"
2. Some say "John the Baptist." Others say Elijah, and still others say Jeremiah, one of the prophets.
3. People still have various interpretations about him today. I know you hear it. Steve Gaines is the pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee, one of the largest Baptist churches in the country. He picked up a magazine recently. The cover had a picture of typical picture of Jesus with the title "Who was He?"
 - a. It's a bad question to begin with, isn't it? The question should be "Who is He?"
 - b. Harvard Professor - A Philosopher – like Socrates, or a political leader – like Mao Zedong, or Joseph Stalin;

- c. Dartmouth Professor – Jesus was a failure. He tried to teach people to turn the other cheek. He made no difference, because the world is still a violent place, and there are still evil institutions in the world. Gaines said that this professor used a lot of big words to describe Jesus, so that the professor was really more muddy than deep;
- d. Former Nun turned Religious Critic says Jesus tried to bring God and man closer, but the point wasn't his crucifixion, so much, but that he is dignified, like the image of Buddha sitting under the tree, an example of deified humanity which we shall all become someday.
- e. One other critic – who claims that the disciples conspired with Jesus to fake his death, and that he woke up, married Mary Magdalene, lived until he was 70, had 4 children, and was the shaping force behind Paul.
- f. Out of 28 authors in this magazine, only 1 wrote about the biblical Jesus.

DISCIPLES GREW IN THEIR UNDERSTANDING TOO

1. Then Jesus asked them a second question, “Who do you say that I am?”
2. Matthew 16: Peter answered for the group when He said “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.”
3. In Mark 4 – Jesus was asleep in the boat. The disciples were afraid of the storm and called for his help. Jesus rebukes the wind and the waves. “Quiet! Be Still.” They were terrified, and ask the question “Who is this?” Even the winds and the waves obey him.”
4. John 20:8 – Peter and John run to the empty tomb. John arrives first, but doesn't go in. Peter goes in first, then goes away. John goes in. He sees and believes.
5. Matthew 17: 1-7
 - a. Peter, James & John go with Jesus up to the mountain. They see Jesus transfigured right before their eyes;
 - b. Jesus face shines like the sun (couldn't look at it);
 - c. His clothes turn white like light. Luke says like a “flash of lightning.” Mark says “whiter than any bleach could make them;”
 - d. Dead people appear – to walk and talk with Jesus; Luke tells us that they appeared in “glorious splendor.” As they turn to go, Peter offers to build them tents.
 - e. The disciples are terrified again.
 - i. Perhaps they were pulled into heaven itself, off of the earth (Luke says they were afraid as they entered the cloud.)
 - ii. They heard the heavenly Father say “This is my beloved Son. I love Him. Listen to Him.” They had been taught all their life that to be in God's presence would kill them; They weren't even allowed to say the name of Yahweh. They fell to their faces.

JESUS IS FULLY GOD

1. Notice the Testimony in Today's Passage:
 - a. His face shines like the sun – Charles Spurgeon said he wouldn't be surprised to discover that Jesus' face was always like this when he was alone with His Father. Here he took off the veil, or lifted a corner of it. John wrote “We beheld his glory.” Peter wrote, “We were eyewitnesses of his majesty.” Matthew said Jesus face radiated like the son.

- b. Moses and Elijah appear. They were the figureheads for the Law and the Prophets. Jesus was the one to whom they pointed.
 - c. God the Father Confirms it – this is my beloved son.
 - d. Jesus controls his destiny – Predicted his death in the last chapter, and walks down the mountain to his death now.
2. So many scriptures testify to the deity of Christ.
- a. John 1:1-3 – “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made. without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life and that life was the light of men;
 - b. Col. 1:16 - For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him.
 - c. Hebrews 1:3 – The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.
 - d. Revelation 19: 11-13 - I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one know but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.
 - e. REVELATION 19: 14-16. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written:
 - f. **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**

JESUS IS FULLY MAN

- 1. Notice what Matthew 17 says
 - a. Jesus touched them;
 - b. Jesus calmed their fears;
 - c. Jesus walked back down the mountain with them.
- 2. So many scriptures testify to the humanity of Christ;
 - a. Hebrews 4:15 – Jesus was tempted in every way, like we are, yet was without sin;
 - b. John 11:35 – Jesus wept;
 - c. He had a human body – He grew (Luke 2:52); He got tired (Joh 4:6), thirsty (John 19:28) and hungry (Matthew 4:2).
- 3. He had a human will – Matthew 26:39 – Not as I will, but as you will.

JESUS IS THE SAVIOR

- 1. Notice this truth in Luke 9 – What was Jesus talking about with Elijah and Moses? This was the last stage of his ministry. They were talking about a turning point. When Jesus walked down this mountain, he would be walking to his death.

2. Notice this truth from other Scriptures

- a. *Timothy 1:15* –Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.
- b. *Hebrews 9:26* – Jesus “has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”
- c. *Hebrews 2:14* “Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death, that is the devil, and free those who all their lives were held in slavery . . .”
- d. *Mark 10:45* – For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
- e. *Luke 19:10* – “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which is lost.”
- f. *John 3: 16-17* – For God so loved the world that he sent his one and only son that whosoever believes in him will have everlasting life. For God sent not His son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

JESUS LOVES YOU

1. Jesus created you. He knows the number of hairs on your head;
2. He understands what you are going through, because he has experienced every temptation;
3. He went to the cross to pay the debt for our sins.
4. He sent us the comforter
5. He sits at the right hand of the Heavenly Father today, and He prays for us;
6. He is coming back to take us Home.

INVITATION

1. Tony Evans, the pastor of the Oak Cliff Bible Church tells about a facility where people struggled some with mental health. He called it a Sanatorium, and they developed a simple test to see if people were getting better with their mental acuity. They would give the patient a mop and take them to the janitor’s closet where they had already plugged up the sink and let it overflow onto the floor. They would leave the patient there for 10 minutes and then come back. If the patient had turned off the water to clean up the floor, then they knew that the patient could leave the facility. If the patient was mopping away, but the water was still flowing over the sink to the floor, then those patients needed to stay a little longer.
2. Some of us are that way about the Lord. We continue to live out the definition of insanity by doing the same things over and over, but without ever doing anything differently. You can’t be good enough. You can’t save yourself. You can’t pay for your own sin. Will you keep mopping up the floor without turning off the water, or will you accept Christ today.
3. Others don’t appropriate the Lord’s strength like they should. Paul says I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. 1) Some keep on sinning, as if God were only a man or a myth. 2) Others try to do everything in their own strength as if Christ weren’t strong enough to help. He is both God and man, and He loves you.
4. Others of us need to remember who he is and how much people need him, so that we will share him wherever he goes.