

## **What will remain?**

Meno— 1 Cor 3:14 1 Cor 13:13 John 3:36

Sunday Morning, March 14, 2010

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**Introduction:** We are studying the word meno again this morning. You will remember that this is a Greek Word that means to remain, to abide. It is used some 12 times in John 15. God wants us to remain, to continue in Him. The strength of the Christian life is found in the prolonged unlimited continual presence of Christ in our life. Too many visit Him once in a while and then leave and go on with their own things, and they do their own things. But fruit requires a constant flow of nutrients from the vine. If we visit Him, we will not have the power to change our own live and we won't have the power to see change in others. We will not have the Word of God or answers to prayer.

Now, this morning, I want to take this to its end. What will remain after this life is over. What abides? We know to begin with that nothing on this earth will remain. We read,

*2 Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.*

*11 ¶ Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,*

First, there is a certainty. The Lord will come. Our hope is in His soon return. When He comes, the heavens will pass away with a great noise and the elements will melt with a fervent heat. And then he says that the earth all the works that are therein shall be burned up. The first time that the earth was destroyed, God used a flood. Everything that man made was gone except for the ark. When it happens the second time, God will use a fire, and it will be of such a degree that not only the materials but the elements will melt. There will be a breakdown of atomic structure.

You will notice that the works of the earth are destroyed. The works are our works. Everything that has been produced on this earth will be gone. The World Trade center was a good illustration of this. Man was proud of those twin towers. They represented the best of America and American technology. But the fire on the top of that structure caused a chain reaction that collapsed the entire building. The floors collapsed which caused the floor beneath to collapse and they building pancaked down to a complete annihilation of the structure. We didn't expect it, and no one really felt that a plane could cause the buildings to collapse. We stared in disbelief at how a few men could cause so many deaths.

What this means though is that all that you have produced in your time on this earth will be done. There will be nothing to show for it. If you were the inventor of the plasma TV, it will be all gone. If you invented a new super computer, it will be gone. If you designed a great building, there will not be a trace of any of that work. All of the works will be done.

It means again, that if you have determined that your life would amount to what you own, YOU WILL HAVE NOTHING. YOU WILL BE NOTHING. What does remain?

### **I. If you have lived for the Lord.... A Reward.**

*1 Corinthians 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a*

reward.

*15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.*

When God deals with a Christian, he deals in much the same way. He puts a match to the works that He has wrought in His life. We know that all the works of the world perish, but that is not true of a Christian. Much of the work that He has done will remain. There are things that last for eternity. And those things are gold, silver, and precious stones. When fire hits these, they do not burn up. The elements do not melt. It is not the same fire that he places on the earth. The works of a Christian do not burn, and if they remain, he will have a reward for his labor. But...

If he builds with the worlds materials, those materials will burn up and there will be nothing left. Wood, hay and straw can be in a Christians' life and they will burn, and they will perish in the same manner that they do in the world. If you have spent your life working for the things of the world, you will suffer loss. It may not be easy for you to see everything that you thought was good, but it will be gone.

## **II. If You have lived for the Lord - Love.**

*1 Corinthians 13:13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.*

There are actually three things that are important and are listed in this verse, faith, hope, and love. Of the three, only love remains. They all abide at the present time, but only love will continue through eternity.

### **A. Hope -**

*Ro 8:24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?*

Place that with the thought in chapter 13,

*1 Corinthians 13:12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*

First, let me say that hope in the Bible is not uncertainty. Some believe that they are saved, but they are not sure, and they say, "I hope I am saved." That is not the hope that the Bible describes.

*Heb 6:18 That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us:*

*Heb 6:19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;*

The hope that the Bible talks about involves a God who cannot lie. It is an anchor, steadfast and sure. We know that we are saved, and our hope is in the coming of Christ. The definition of hope in the Bible is joyful anticipation. At least that is the definition that we were given in Bible college. But hope is never for something that has already taken place. "I hope I

am going to get a bike for Christmas.” “But Christmas was two months ago.” “I know, but I still can hope can’t I?” The time to hope is before the day comes. Once the day comes, if the expectation is not realized, then hope is shattered. There comes a time when hope will no longer be needed. You hope for things in the future, not things in the past.

We live in the time of hope. The Bible says, “And **now** abides faith, hope, and love.” They are abiding with us now. They will not continue to abide. The Bible says, “If you see it, why do you still hope for it?” Our great hope is in the coming of the Savior. We anticipate His return and His second coming. We read,

*Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;*

He is the greatest hope that has ever existed. It has been the anticipation of every generation of believers.

Heinz ketchup had a commercial a few years back when the Ketchup bottle was turned over and the ketchup was about to come out of the bottle. Of course, it was the thing I couldn’t understand as a kid. Why make it so hard to get it out of that bottle. I remember using a knife to try to get it out because it was stuck in there. But if you love ketchup, you just set back and wait, with patience, because the wait is worth it.

But, the anticipation does not continue forever. If it did, then it would not be anticipation. It would not be hope. Hope that cannot happen is not hope. A family member waits with hope that his brother or sister will get better, and he has great patience. If that person dies, hope dies with it. Because hope in what cannot happen is not hope.

## **B. Faith -**

Now, faith is similar. Faith is the substance of things hoped for. Without hope, you have no faith. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. The definition of faith given to us in the Bible is,

*Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

Now I know that there is a type of faith that we will have throughout eternity. We will always trust God to keep His Word. We will trust Him to care for us throughout eternity. Our needs will be met and all of His promises will endure. That can be a continual trust. But in this life, we have placed our faith in something we can’t see. But in heaven, we will see. There will be no need to exercise the type of faith that we use every day in trusting in God for promises that we have not and do not see.

*Heb 11:13 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.*

The great heroes of the faith received promises, and they held on to them and believed them. Salvation is about believing God, and accepting the promise that God has given. Once we receive the promise, it is no longer faith, it is reality. In heaven, everything is reality. It is as real as our existence.

The Bible says, “and now abideth.” That is present tense. But the thrust of the passage is that not all things will abide forever. He says the knowledge will cease and prophesy will fail. There will be no prophesy in heaven. You will not need anyone to tell you what the future holds. There is no time and there is no reason to anticipate anything. It is real and it is now. Eternity will no longer be something to look forward to. It will be our life and it will center around our relationship with the Lord and with His children.

### **C. Love**

The passage says that the greatest of these is love. It appears that this is the one part out of the three that will continue forever. We read, Love endures all things. We read concerning love that it...

*1 Corinthians 13:7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*

*8 Charity never faileth:*

There is no end to love. So the one factor that we have in eternity is love. Faith and hope are abiding now, but love abides forever. The reason is that we will be with the one who loves us. Now we see through a glass darkly, but we read,

*1 Corinthians 13:12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.*

Our love in eternity is based on seeing Christ face to face. You see in heaven, all of the promises of God will come to pass. Not one good thing of all that God has provided will be withheld from us. When you get to Revelation 22, it is all fulfilled. Nothing is withheld and nothing is left to be accomplished in our lives. Right now, we need faith and hope because of that dark glass that we look through. It is the reason that death is frightening because it is unknown. When we get to heaven we will wonder, “What in the world was there to be afraid of. That was easy.” Death is a lot easier than being born. And it is a lot more natural. Death is a terrible thing. But not for a Christian. Death is the result of sin and it ushers us into eternity. It is not God’s design that we die. But Jesus said to a woman that he loved,

*John 11:26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?*

We call the thing that happens to Christians, “Death.” But truly it is not death. Death is something all together different for the world, than it is for a Christian.

### **THE DEFINITION OF ... ANYTHING**

Let me say something here that God has really impressed upon me lately. Man likes to define things. It is great to have a dictionary to find out what words mean. We find many definitions in Websters Dictionary. But we have to be very careful about what we define, because if we are not careful, we will define everything by what man sees, not what God sees. God is the definition of everything that you see. You can’t define marriage apart from God. If you missed the Truth Project last week, you have to get the DVD and see why it is so important not to buy into the lie of this world that defines a family by those who love one another. The family

is about a whole lot more than love. It is an impression that is stamped into the relationship between husband, wife and children that bears the image of God. If you leave God out of it, you have nothing to base your definition on. God is the definition of everything that we see on earth.

Again, man defines truth based upon what he can see. Truth is whatever I perceive it to be. But truth is not defined by man. It is defined by God. God tells us what truth is.

Last Sunday, I have a young man come up to me after the morning sermon. He said, "Pastor, I really appreciated your sermon today. I have a friend who is an atheist. He says that you can't have a God because any finite being is contrary to eternity. Eternity disavows events and time." And that man is right, humanly speaking. But (and this is the comment that I made to that statement.) "It is all about who God is. Eternal life does not define God. It can't. God defines eternal life. We may think that we understand what it means to be eternal. We may use our logic. But the Bible says,

*Isa 55:8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.*

*9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*

God defines eternal life. God defines all things. We do not define God by what we see. We define what we see by God. Our society has changed this. We are the norm and we make God fit into our definition. We get angry at God because He is not acting like the God we believe in. If you were God, you would do this. But God is not defined by our expectation or hope. Our hope is defined by God. When it comes to death, death is not what we perceive. Death is defined by what God says concerning death. And He tells us that a person who believes in Christ, will never die. So what we see in a body dying, is not really death. God defines it differently. In fact, God calls it being "absent from the body." He calls it "sleeping."

If you want a true definition for everything that you see on this earth, it is more profitable for you to go to the Bible to find your definition than it is to go to a dictionary.

For instance, when you go to the Dictionary to look up the word Bible. It says, "the volume which contains the Old and New Testament; and authoritative book on a specific subject." That's all it says. When it defines marriage it says, "the legal union between a husband and wife." Honestly, that is not what the Bible is, and that is not what marriage is. By that definition, no wonder there are so many divorces today. The Bible is not defined by God and neither is marriage. Man gives his definition and it is subject to repeal and change.

### **III. If a person rejects the Lord .... The wrath of God abides on Him.**

*John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*

The second part of this message involves another abiding. Faith hope and love abide. But that is in the now. We know that love is greater than faith and hope because love continues unchangeable for eternity. There is another thing that abides for eternity. The Bible says God's wrath abides on him.

The wrath of God is a fearsome thing. God's wrath was poured out upon the people in Noah's day. The entire world population was destroyed with the exception of Noah and his

sons and their wives. Not only did the people die, but so did the animals that lived on the earth. That wrath will be poured out again in the future. Not only will the people die, but even after they die the wrath of God will still abide on them. It will cover them, it will remain upon them and they will never be able to get away from that wrath. Again, this is also contrary to the thinking of purgatory. God pours his wrath upon you and then he forgives you and brings you to heaven. The Bible does not allow for that abiding wrath to be taken away from us.