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October 2012

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DO YOU RECOGNIZE THESE PEOPLE?



I found these photos, along with hundreds of others, in a box of old photos that were kept by Doris, my wife, who died ten years ago. Many of the photos were passed down by my parents and Doris' parents. I don't have a clue who this young man and woman were, but since the photos are in sepia-tone and are yellowed with age, I assume that these people passed from this earthly scene many years ago. There is no one living on my side of the family or Doris' side of the family that could help me identify this couple if I wanted to trace them down.

Now let me read a few verses from 1 Chronicles, chapter 1: *The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, Aram, Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mesheck. Arphaxad begot Shelah, and Shelah begot Eber. To Eber were born two sons: the name of one was Peleg, and his brother's name was Joktan. Joktan begot Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, Eba, Abimael, Sheba, etc, etc, etc.*

I used to wonder why God took up so much space in His book with boring lists of names: in Genesis, Judges, Kings, Chronicles, Matthew, and Luke. But it came to me one day that all these names are important to God and He hasn't forgotten one of them. God's list includes every person who has ever lived or who ever will live on planet earth. And His list includes your name and my name! Whoa! That puts a different complexion on it, doesn't it?

I don't know the identities of that young man and woman shown above. But God knows. He knows every single thing about them: when they were born and when they died, who were their parents and their children, what kind of lives they lived, and whether their names are written in the Book of Life. He also knows all those facts about you and me. I have heard people say that their deceased loved one will never die, since "They will always live in my heart." Yes but in 50 years you will be long gone and no one will remember you.....except God.

Reflect on these declarations at the end of the last books in the Old and New Testaments: Malachi 3:16-18 - *Then those who feared the Lord talked with each other, and the Lord listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the Lord and honored his name. They will be mine, says the Lord Almighty, in the day when I make up my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him. And you will see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not.*

Revelation 20:11 - *Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it.....And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books....If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

Many people live as if their lives are unimportant and of no value. Not so! Your life is tremendously important to God. He loves you personally. He knows your name! The way you live and the choices you make are momentous. They are eternal. If you haven't chosen to submit to Christ, I urge you to bow down to him today.

WHEN GOD SAYS NO

Let me share the personal story of a Jewish man who was born in New York, went to NYU and became a chemist and moved to South Carolina. His testimony appeared in a Messianic Jewish magazine. He said that when he was middle-aged a dear lady, 76 years old, tried to speak to him about Jesus, but he wouldn't listen. He said, "If God wants to change me, only He Himself can do it." In the following two years he went through strange problems that were resolved in a peculiar manner, leaving him wondering about life. At 3:00 AM on an August morning he woke up, sat up in bed with questions racing through his mind: "Where to next? I could work until I'm 70 and then die. But what then?" He writes, "It was at that moment that God showed me the most chilling or terrifying event or place I had ever experienced: an emptiness so deep and pervasive that it agonized me to the marrow of my bones. In terror I cried out to Him for comfort. Within me God answered an emphatic "No!"

I could not believe that the Father whom I loved, the One I had been raised to trust, would deny me comfort. Again I asked him to comfort me, and again His reply was very clear: "No!" And then in mercy He added, "Only through My Son!" Immediately I recognized that God indeed had a Son and that this was the very same Jesus of whom the Gentiles spoke. Within me, I answered quietly, "Yes." Then, where there had been terror, a warm, pervading peace enveloped me, a peace I had never known before." In time he was baptized and followed Jesus as a disciple.

And thus God responds to all who would seek a relationship with Him in some other way than through faith and trust in Jesus Christ. God says, "No, a Way has been provided, a Door has been opened for you." And Jesus says, "I am the way, I am the door. Come unto me."

DEPRESSION IN GOD'S PEOPLE

Sometimes Christians think they should live above normal human problems such as sickness, depression, family problems, children problems, financial problems, etc. Some years back one of my dear friends led a thriving church. He almost died from internal bleeding, and only an emergency operation and much prayer saved his life. The day he was released from the hospital, his worship leader came to accuse him of not having enough faith to be healed and therefore not being qualified to pastor their church. The man convinced two-thirds of the members to join him and a young evangelist in a newly formed "spiritually correct" faith church. In 2 Timothy 4:20, Paul writes that "I left Trophimus at Miletus sick." And in Phil. 2:26 he says that Epaphroditus was so sick he nearly died. So maybe Paul should have been fired as an apostle because everyone was not healed that he prayed for?

Depression has been a condition that many Christians have thought was a certain sign of a lack of faith. But many Godly people in the Bible struggled with depression:

- Job was so discouraged that he cursed the day he was born. His crops and herds and servants and home and children were all destroyed in one day. Then he got a loathsome skin disease, and all his family and friends deserted him. Then his wife told him to curse God and die. And for some reason he got depressed.
- Jeremiah was publicly whipped, put in stocks, abandoned by all his friends, put into a cistern without food, and he also got depressed, accused God of misleading him, and wished he had never been born.
- Mighty King David wrote a Psalm at one point and said, "I am troubled. I am bowed down. I go mourning all the day long. I groan because of the turmoil of my heart." (Psalm 38:6) And in Psalm 143: "The enemy has crushed my life to the ground; he has made me dwell in darkness like those who have long been dead. Therefore my spirit is overwhelmed within me. My heart is distressed, my spirit fails!"

- And Paul, the Apostle Paul, said in 2 Cor. 7:5, "When we came to Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, and we were troubled on every side. Outside were conflicts, inside were fears." Did you see what he said? "Outside were conflicts, inside were fears." And he said in the first chapter of that same book that "We were burdened beyond measure, above strength, so that we despaired of life."
- And Jesus, our Lord, as He hung on the cross, cried out, "My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?"

All of this to say that you and I get a pass for being human and suffering all the frailties and pains of the rest of our race. In the midst of their suffering, Job and David and Paul reached out to God and He lifted them up and rescued them. And God reached out to Jesus and lifted Him up in resurrection and ascension, and He now sits at the right hand of His Father in heaven! Glory to God!

THE APES ARE ENDANGERED!

I saw a report that the great apes are an endangered species because of shrinking habitat and poaching, and it made me very sad. They are such magnificent animals. However, the report did not affect me as badly as it did a lot of people who are directly descended from apes, so they say. It must be especially painful for them to see their kinfolks treated so shabbily.

THE GOD WHO REVEALS HIMSELF

Many years ago a missionary whom I knew made a trip to Indonesia, way back to a hidden tribe who were living in the Stone Age. He went to a small tribe of a few hundred who worshipped the mountain they lived on. A young man had come out of that tribe to civilization, heard the Gospel, accepted Christ, and took the missionary back to his people so he could translate. The missionary shared about the God of the Bible and His great love. He told them about the Heavenly Father who sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to die for everyone's sins who would accept Him as Savior.

An old wrinkled woman with no teeth started laughing and talking in their strange language. The young man interpreted: "She says she always knew there was a God like that, but she never knew His name."

MINISTRY

Last month Lynne Cumming, Fred Feller and I made a short trip to Saint Marc, Haiti, to minister to the church and leaders of Marcel Distine', who is a pastor and apostle. We preached/taught for eight services in six days.

The trip from Marcel's home to the church took about 45 minutes over washboard roads, riding in the back of a 12-ton truck on benches, and packed with from 20 to 40 Haitians. (I don't want to hear any more griping about the uncomfortable cushions on your pews!) The church was packed out with maybe 250 or 300 people, the temperature and humidity were what you would expect in the tropics next to a banana plantation, and we thoroughly enjoyed it (after it was over). We spent one day at an orphanage next to the ocean with a breathtaking view, and another day we drove up in the mountains on a squirrel path to teach/minister to about 20 pastors. At the conclusion of the week, Marcel was very kind and said our ministry had made a lasting impact on him and his people and pastors.

Marcel needs your prayers desperately. He is involved in a family situation (that I don't feel free to publicly share) that is absolutely demonic and that threatens not only his ministry but his life. Please pray for Marcel, his wife Ramonde, his children, pastors, and church. Listen to the Holy Spirit and pray as He leads you.

I want to personally thank those of you who generously sent special offerings to cover the expenses of this trip. Thank you so much, and God bless you.!

Blessings to you all,

Glenn

WEBSITE: glennbrownministries.com

I would like to thank each of you for your support of this ministry.

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