

jan 13

the shadow of death

"before i go to the place from which i shall not return, to the land of darkness and the shadow of death..." job 10:21

most of the world believes it is a final resting place, oblivion, a nothingness. some believe in a reincarnation where they have to do it all over again. others have fantasized a paradise they can earn their way into. whatever anyones' belief may be, death is something that will visit in every life.

i was surprised to find how many time the scriptures speak of the shadow of death. i don't know why. it's something we all have to pass through. david spoke about walking through the valley of the shadow of death. it is "a land as dark as darkness itself, as the shadow of death, without any order, where even the light is like darkness." job 10:22

recently another saint has passed through that shadow. on sunday, january 8, longtime pastor jack hayford gave his last breath as he passed into the arms of Jesus. perhaps some of you may be unfamiliar with pastor hayford. he was a precious saint that had a mighty impact on my life and a multitude of others. i would usually watch him every sunday when he was on television. he had a way of moving words that moved me; moved me more towards Jesus. now he is in the presence that majesty he composed a beautiful song about.

and so, another precious saint has gone home and i am getting to be envious. envious because they are just passing through and don't have to stay there. it is a brief excursion from a temporary life into death, only to quickly emerge into an eternal life. when we put it that way, it doesn't sound so bad. does it? especially when we consider the multitudes that must stay there in a bottomless pit; not escaping for eternity.

there are obviously all the notable ones making that trip recently; ones like billy graham and others. but everyday there are multitudes of unnotable ones that make that journey also; ones noted only in Christ's book. they are each one unique and special to Him. though their name may remain unknown to the masses, their efforts for Jesus may have even surpassed some of the notables. whatever was accomplished by any of them was only done under the anointing. the most important part they brought was a willing spirit. these are all the many ones who have rested their entire hope and future on His saving work of grace. "for they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me." isa 49:23

i know there have been many resurrections from death but they all remained destined to taste it again. that is, all but One. Jesus is that One. His escape from death conquered it for us all. "o death, where is your sting? o hades, where is your victory?" 1 cor 15:55

knowing Christ means He has "called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." 1 pet 2:9 He has won that

victory for us. He's won it for me and He's won it for you. there's no price to pay, no worth to earn, only believe.

people, i am persuaded. no, i am convinced of His power to do what He says and His willingness to do it. because of that i have put all my eggs in His basket. i have found the pearl of greatest price. i have bought the field, lock, stock and barrel. "i know whom i have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what i have committed to Him until that Day." 2 tim 1:12

what day? that day we all have to face. are you ready for it? are you sure? very sure? if you're not, come running to the throne of grace, baggage and all. bring that mustard seed of faith all are given. you won't leave there like you came. not if you truly believe and are truly repentant. He will see to that. the scars He bears were for you too! get out from under the shadow of death and under the shadow of His wings. He wore a crown of thorns that we might wear a crown of life.