

GRACE NOTES

Sunday, February 4, 2018

LORD'S SUPPER

Message: A Higher Level

Scripture: Colossians 3:1-4

If we are to live our lives at a higher level, I truly believe it cannot happen if all we know is low level worship.

Colossians 3:1-4 (ESV)

If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

"I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father." (John 10:14-18, ESV)

Jesus chose to die to bring glory to His Father and to bring us to His Father.

Study Notes:

We all have highs and lows in our spiritual walk. Think of a time when your spiritual walk was dry and dusty. What was that like (and don't say "dry and dusty")?

Think of a time when your spiritual walk was vital and exciting. What were the circumstances?

What do you think was the difference between those times?

Thinking back to Sunday's service, what encouraged you, inspired you, challenged you, or changed your thinking?

Read Colossians 3:1-4.

What do you believe it means to seek things that are above?

What is the cost of only seeking earthly and temporary things?

Paul says we have "died" and our lives are "hidden with Christ in God." How have we died?

If we have truly "died" in this way, how might that affect our view of the delights of this world and the glories of the world to come?

Consider this quote from Dietrich Bonhoeffer —

"The cross is laid on every Christian. The first Christ-suffering which every man must experience is the call to abandon the attachments of this world. It is that dying of the old man which is the result of his encounter with Christ. As we embark upon discipleship we surrender ourselves to Christ in union with His death—we give over our lives to death. Thus it begins; the cross is not the terrible end to an otherwise god-fearing and happy life, but it meets us at the beginning of our communion with Christ. When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die."

Read Luke 9:23-25.

The words of both Bonhoeffer and Jesus seem harsh and perhaps scary. Are they? How is this an invitation to a higher life?

In what ways are we called to "take up our cross" today?

Is the call on believers today any less demanding than the call to believers in Jesus' time?