

Memorial Day 2010 Remembering Life With A Song

Tomorrow is Memorial Day, a day set aside to honor those who have given, as President Lincoln stated in his Gettysburg Address, “the last full measure of devotion” in behalf of their country. Across the nation there will be special gatherings to salute our fallen heroes and service men and women. We want to remember those who have fallen and their families this morning, and we want to remember those who are currently serving in the military as well. Let’s take a moment to remember them and to pray for those in harm’s way this morning.

As I thought about this day and the message I was to share this morning, I thought about the three funerals we conducted just in the past ten days and the families affected by such a feeling of loss. This weekend is about memories. Many of us will visit a cemetery and place flowers upon the grave of a loved one. This weekend is about remembering the past, remembering those precious ones that have gone before us. It is about remembering God’s faithfulness in the transitions and seasons of our lives. As I thought about all of these things, I wrote down several things I thought we should remember in the face of all the living and dying around us. And as I did, I remembered some favorite songs that seemed to illustrate what I was talking about. So if you will permit me, or forgive me, or indulge me, or whatever is appropriate, I want to share four things I think we need to remember about life on this Memorial Day Weekend and I’ll share four favorite songs as well. We’ll call this, **Memorial Day 2010 Remembering Life With A Song**

Turn with me to **Psalm 90:1-10, 12** and let me read these verse to you. Let me add from the epistle of James, “**Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, ‘If it is the Lord’s will, we will live and do this or that.’” James 4:14-15.** These passages remind us of several things really. First is the obvious, the brevity of our life. Like a vapor, like a mist, like grass that springs up in the morning and is withered by evening. Our days quickly pass and we fly away. We are just here for a short while, so,

Remember life is brief – Live in the moment. You can’t get yesterday back. We spend a lot of time thinking and planning for tomorrow but sometimes we miss the

important stuff that is happening all around us today. Your children will only be babies, toddlers, infants, teenagers, once. You only get one chance at being a father or mother of a new born or a preschooler. Don't miss it because you were too busy with stuff that really doesn't matter. Life is brief. Stuff really doesn't matter, not when compared to relationships, not when compared to heaven and eternal life. Live in the moment because this is the moment Jesus gave you. This is the life he has given you to live. Life is brief. Enjoy this evening and tomorrow with family and friends and make it count for today and for eternity. (Here is a song I used to sing every Father's day - it still makes the point about the brevity of life and the importance of not missing the important stuff in life.)

Cat's in the Cradle

The second thing we learn from the passage of Scripture is about the changes and transitions of life. Seasons come and go, the generations come and go, but there is a constant in it all. 'Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations.' Men turn back to dust but God remains the same. A thousand days in God's sight are like a day that has just gone by for us. Everything about life is changing but God is the same yesterday, today and forever. So

Remember life is changing - Hold to the eternal. Life is constantly in flux, in turmoil, in transition. Someone is being born as someone else is dying. Life seems to be about change. It seems time brings more and more goodbyes into our lives. And it seems as we grow older there is less and less that can be counted on or depended upon. With all of the changes that continue to occur, there is one thing that is certain, one thing we must remember, Jesus never changes. You can hold on to him, hold on to the eternal. One song says, "when all around me is sinking sand on Christ the solid rock I stand, when I need I shelter, when I need a friend I go to the rock." Everything is changing, but grab hold and hang on to the eternal. This song says. . .

Hold To God's Unchanging Hand

Stop for a moment and think about the legacy you are leaving. Someone is going to stand up at your memorial service and say something about you. "He left a legacy of.... She really made a difference through her..." I don't want to belittle anyone or their accomplishments, but some things in life that we give ourselves to, at the end of

the day, they really haven't amounted to much. There isn't much left for which we would care to be remembered. "You know those little yellow bags they put the newspaper in every morning? He had the largest collection of those little yellow bags in the western hemisphere." Really? You gave your life to that? Live your life for something worthwhile. Live your life for the things that really matter. The Scripture we read says, "Teach us to number our days aright that we may gain a heart of wisdom." Psalm 90:12 "Help us to discern everyday that which is important to you, Lord." And notice the last verse of Psalm 90 - "establish the work of our hands for us - yes establish the work of our hands." We want to leave behind a worthy legacy. So,

Remember life matters - Live it all for Jesus. In the final analysis, it's what we have done for Jesus and his kingdom that matters. That's the stuff that counts for eternity. Jesus spoke of laying up for ourselves treasures in heaven where thieves can't steal it, moth or rust can't corrupt or destroy it. Invest in what matters and that is in living for Jesus and his kingdom.

Live it all for him. Set your desire upon the Lord and live for him and he will establish the work of your hands. Then you will leave behind a legacy of true value - a life lived for Jesus!

It's My Desire

Finally, the last thing I want to share with you is concerning the finish line, the end of the journey. If life is like a journey, it's pretty hard to complete the journey if you don't know where you are going! We need to make sure of our final destination. You see, this whole thing has been about a journey for home. We are exiles, separated from our Father and his home because of our sin and our rebellion. But he has redeemed us by his great mercy and has gone ahead of us to make all the necessary preparations, to get our room ready in his great house. We are headed home. So...

Remember life is a journey - Keep heaven in sight. What more can I say? This is where we are headed. Heaven is the finish line. If you miss heaven, you've missed everything. Nothing else matters but living for Jesus here and spending eternity with him there. Don't miss it. Run the race, take someone with you, complete the journey and always keep heaven in mind and in your spiritual sight. Don't take your eyes off of Jesus and heaven. The writer of Hebrews, speaking of Abraham and others like him said they journeyed on in faith without receiving everything promised, but keeping their eyes trained on heaven. "...they are looking for a country of their own.

If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country - a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.” Hebrews 11:14-16. Keep heaven in your sights. Keep aiming for home.

I'm Thinking About Home/I'm Going To A City

Four simple thoughts, four simple songs. I hope you'll remember to live in the moment, hold to the eternal, live it all for Jesus and keep heaven in sight.