



November 4, 2022

Value the Simple Things

Warm hellos friends, brethren, co-workers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here in Mankato, Minnesota. We're here on a pastoral and family visit for several days. We'll be traveling to South Dakota while we're here as well. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

As I reflect, often while driving long distances or flying, I think about the difference of age in our church. One would have to be blind to not notice the "church" has aged, as has the size of congregations which reflects this.

As pastors, we serve both young and old, and with it comes joy and sadness.

We were all saddened to hear of the untimely and sudden death of Cody Kitts who was killed in a tragic accident just after the Feast. Gayle and I knew Cody personally as he worked with us on our climbing crews at a couple of youth camps years ago, and he was a great friend as well. We grieve his loss with his widow, daughter, and the family that is left behind.

The wonderful meaning of God's Autumn Festivals that we just recently finished observing does bring us consolation and hope when these losses occur. It doesn't take away the pain and grief but it makes it tolerable. I hope you were able to reach out with a card or call to some of those who had to stay behind and were unable to travel to a Feast site this year. As time marches on, there will be more who will be unable to attend the Feast of Tabernacles in person and even worship services for that matter.

It's always important to go back to our steadfast Rock that helps us. His Word remains constant and sure.

The book of Ecclesiastes encourages us to value the simple but important components of life, our regular work, and enjoying our relationships with family

and friends such as we have done at the recent Feast of Tabernacles. It addresses youth, older, and in between. Quite clearly actually.

We go back to the basics of relationships, and ponder “just what’s really important?”

"Here is what I have seen: It is good and fitting for one to eat and drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labor in which he toils under the sun all the days of his life which God gives him . . ." (Ecclesiastes 5:18)

Meaningful meal times are spent with family and friends. Even the Feast of Tabernacles reminds us that life is fleeting and temporary and that we need to give attention to the important things while we have a chance. Losses in life occur, sometimes with little or no warning. We should make the most of life's opportunities while it is today, but in a way that is centered on God's commandment and instructions. We simply don't know what tomorrow will bring in this life.

"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going." (Ecl 9:10) "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, For this is man's all." (Ecl 12:13)

Friends, let us continue to own and treasure our calling and be positively enduring our challenges while finding meaning and fulfillment in the truths and way of life our all wise God has blessed us with. Let us be focused on others, building those relationships, and realize that ultimately what God is bringing is what we seek.

If you are young, you will be old someday. If you are older, you can cherish the youth you can share your life’s experiences with. God Himself loves the concept of “family” for which His very name expounds.

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



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