

Where Will You Go When Your god Is Buried?

(Some portions of this sermon are taken from "The Dream Peddler" Ken Gurley, p.80-87)

Genesis 35:1-4

35 And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother.

2 Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments:

3 And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went.

4 And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem.

I would like to speak to you on this topic this morning...**Where will you go when your god is buried?**

Our text in Genesis tells the story of the family of Jacob and their departure after his sons had betrayed the Hivite people.

Jacob was in a place where his family was straying from the one true God!

God spoke to Jacob and said go to Bethel and make an altar there unto God!

- I can imagine Jacob walking around his camp, looking at his sons, looking at the state of his household, seeing pagan gods, seeing the false images, wondering what in the world has happened to his family?
- I can imagine Jacob, who was once the 'supplanter', now named Israel, a prince of God, I can imagine him wondering where all the

superstitions of his household had come from...they were the royal family of God after all, it was through them that the covenant would be established!

- I can imagine Jacob walking through his camp comparing these lifeless deities to the God that he now knew! He would see his grandchildren playing with graven images and his heart would cringe with hurt and despair.

What was it that caused them to hold on to these pagan images?

What was it that caused them to lose sight of the one true God?

- I believe that way down deep in the souls of every person God created a place for us to hold on to something beyond the physical...how many of you know that you have a soul?
- The Bible says that God breathed the breath of life into the nostrils of man, and man became a living soul!
- Every person in history has a body, a spirit, and a soul...we were created that way.
- When God created us he created this ability in us and this desire in us to hope for something beyond our physical boundaries.
- It is way down deep in our souls!

That hope or longing that everyone has eventually becomes the anchor for our souls!

James says it this way in...

Hebrews 6:18-19

...to lay hold upon the hope set before us:

19 Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul,

Almighty God desired that this hope would lead every person into a relationship with Him...that is why He created us...

Revelation 4:11

11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

We were created to be in relationship with God...the bible says that we were created by Him and for Him!

- But since we were also created with a free will, this hope that should be the anchor for our souls isn't automatically filled by the one true God!
- Our free will has caused many to look in the wrong direction....and that is what happened to Jacobs family!

Whether you agree with me or not...we all develop faith in something. And the things that we place our faith in eventually become our gods.

Israel's family started placing their faith in idols and pagan gods of all sorts!

Then the call came from God, "Israel it is time, arise, take your family and go to Bethel!"

- Bethel...the place of the ladder with angels ascending and descending.
- Bethel...the gateway of heaven.
- Bethel...the dwelling place of God.

Immediately the preparations were made. Israel's family was going to the house of God!

But first something had to be done with all these strange gods! Israel called his family together and told them to let go of their gods. Idols, images, icons, and earrings were all handed over to Jacob.

He took them into the forest of Shechem and buried them under a great oak tree.

I can imagine some of the children and grandchildren with tears in their eyes asking...

- Where are they taking my lord?
- Where is my god to be buried?
- What is happening to my god?
- How will I ever find him again?
- What will I do now?

Notice where they went...their false gods were buried, and Israel took them to Bethel...[the dwelling place of the one true God!](#)

This story reminds of another time...it was hundreds of years later.

A precious lady named Mary Magdalene had a similar question. She had this hope that was the anchor of her soul.

We find the story in...

John 20:1-2

20 The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, **and we know not where they have laid him.**

We are not sure of the day or even the year of the Lord's birth...we don't even really know the season.

Yet the day of His resurrection is known all over the world! He rose from a tomb not His own on the first day of the week!

But for three days previous to this, each follower of Jesus wondered...What has happened to my Lord, what am I going to do now?

That is how Mary came to the tomb of Jesus early that morning...she came

with a question...What shall I do now?

You see that day is coming for every man, woman, and child that is in this building this morning! This same question will be uttered from the lips of all of mankind!

When we lose that hope...the anchor for our souls is gone...the question will come...what am I going to do now? Where will I go now?

I submit to you this morning that when this happens to your hope, when you are confronted with a buried god...then you must find a Bethel...you must find a Jerusalem...you must find the dwelling place of the one true God!

Imagine Jacob's family at Shechem. He came out of the woods carrying a shovel. They were watching him...expecting to see their gods follow him out...but none ever came!

Millions more have followed in their steps, waiting outside the tombs of...Mohammed, Ghandi, Elvis, Diana and many more....

- They stand their waiting for the anchor of their souls!
- Yet none has ever made it out!
- It still doesn't stop them...they have faith!
- They keep waiting and hoping.
- But the forests of death have claimed their gods.

Others wait at bars, on street corners, some in office buildings and banks, they are waiting for some promise to be fulfilled, some hope to come true...but it will never be...their gods are buried...never to rise again!

Yet for those who waited for those three dark days...they were not disappointed!

- The two angels said to them, "He is not here, why seek ye the living among the dead?"

- The anchor of their souls was alive, their hope was not in vain!

Our hope this morning is not in vain, the anchor of our souls is alive, Jesus is alive for evermore!

Those of you here this morning who don't really know what is anchoring your souls...it is time you start thinking about eternity...it is time to start thinking about the anchor of your soul!

Over the course of your lifetime you have no doubt developed faith in a few different people, in a few different things...

- But what are you going to do when those things no longer offer hope?
- What are you going to do when those things are buried in the forests of this life?

My Bible tells me that He is the only one who can bring true salvation to us...He is the only one who can truly anchor our souls for eternity!

The gods of this world might bring temporary satisfaction, temporary hope, or temporary joy!

But we have a hope that is built on nothing less, than Jesus blood and righteousness!

Acts 4:12

12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

His death made your salvation possible!

Calvary was for you and for me! Jesus died so that we might live!

Can I get a witness in the house this morning?

Since I have traveled to Israel, and seen Golgotha, my minds eye picture of

Calvary has changed a little bit.

- I used to think of Calvary as a nice hill, with three crosses at the top.
- But it wasn't that way at all.
- The crosses, they say, were at the base of Golgatha, which is the place of the skull.
- It is a rocky cliff that actually looks like a skull.
- They crucified Jesus at the base of this cliff.
- The Romans did it this way to intimidate the people!
- The whole crucifixion process was a form of psychological terror!

One Roman Emperor said this...

“Whenever we crucify the guilty, the most crowded places are chosen where the most amount of people can see and be moved by this fear. For these penalties relate not so much to justice as they do for their effect on the people!”

They wanted the terror and shock of Jesus crucifixion to stay with the people for years to come!

And so every step of the crucifixion was really set up for maximum fear and intimidation!

What they didn't know was who they were really crucifying!

Little did they know that this one named Jesus would turn around and use every evil and intimidating step of the crucifixion as an example not only of His love, but also of His coming salvation for His people!

The Romans and even the Sanhedrin didn't really understand what they were doing when they crucified Jesus...this was not an ordinary man!

Satan didn't know what he was doing when he crucified Jesus...the bible even says that had he known he would never have crucified the Lord!

They just didn't understand...

- That the thirty nine stripes that Jesus received with a cat of nine tails would later secure healing for our bodies!
- They didn't know that the cross that he bore on his back all that afternoon would later become a symbol of hope and salvation to billions of people around the world!
- They didn't know that the nails that were driven through his hands and feet would just a few days later restore the faith of one of his doubting disciples!
- They didn't know that the thief Jesus was crucified with would be forgiven of every sin, and find eternal life before he died!
- They didn't realize that when they pierced his side with a sword and spilled Jesus blood on the ground that they were actually taking part in paying the ransom for all sin for all of time! For the bible says that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins!
- They didn't understand the crown of thorns at all, they thought that they were being sarcastic crowning the King of Kings with a crown of thorns!
- They didn't understand that thorns represented sin's curse on the earth! When man first sinned, God cursed the earth to bring forth thorns and thistles.
- And when those thorns pierced Jesus skull and the blood ran down over his head, they didn't understand what it represented at all.
- Jesus Christ, who knew no sin, wore the curse of sin on His head. And the blood that came out of his head literally saturated and covered the curse of sin on this earth once and for all!

Jesus Christ, who knew no sin, became sin for each and every one of us, and at that moment the veil in the temple was rent in two...symbolizing the end of the Old Testament way of sacrifice and cleansing of sin, and beginning a new dispensation called the dispensation of Grace that we still live in this morning!

In their final act, they buried Jesus in a dusty grave (which by the way was given to Jesus by a secret, and recently converted member of the Sanhedrin council), so they buried him in this dusty grave and rolled a huge stone over it!

The bible says that dust we are, and to the dust we shall return...

....but I want you to know, that is not the end of the story!

They returned Jesus to this dusty grave, and that was really just the beginning....Jesus was changed in a twinkling of an eye, and His mortal body put on immortality...

Jesus was alive...yet His resurrection was more than that, it was a foreshadowing of what is to come...

The bible says that when we see Jesus we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is!

Paul called it a mystery...

1 Corinthians 15:51-55

51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal

shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

We don't have to fear death any longer...the bible says if the same Spirit that dwells in Christ, dwells in you, then It shall also quicken your mortal body...just like It did for Jesus!

We are not just celebrating the resurrection of Jesus this morning...but we are also celebrating your future resurrection!

Can I get a witness in the house this morning?

I began this sermon by asking the question, **“Where will you go when your god is buried?”**

There is only one answer to that question...we must go to Bethel...the dwelling place of God! We must go where Jesus still lives!

I want you to know that you are in the right place this morning...Jesus is here...you can find the anchor to your soul this morning!

Jesus followers went to His grave...but were then told to go to Jerusalem and tarry there!

If they wanted Jesus to become the anchor of their souls then they must go and wait in Jerusalem until they are endued with power from on high!

- Guess what happened? Five hundred started the journey, but there were only 120 that were there when His Spirit fell!
- About seventy five percent of them got distracted with life and placed their hopes on other things!

Don't let that happen to you this morning!

There is only one place to go when we lose that hope...we must go to Jesus!

Jesus is the only one who can anchor your soul for eternity!

Jesus is the one hope for this world!

Ephesians 4:4-6

4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

- If you want Jesus in your life this morning you must realize that He is the only hope, that He is the only God.
- You must realize that this faith outlined in the bible is the only faith.
- You must accept that His name is the only saving name...Jesus Christ! And you must be baptized in that name!

And when that happens, Jesus wants you to become His dwelling place...Jesus wants to live inside your heart through His Spirit.

Acts 2:38-39

38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.