

The Little Red Lighthouse and the Great Grey Bridge

The title for today's message is, unfortunately, not a title that I came up with. It is actually a title of a very popular children's book by Hildegarde H. Swift. It's about the most beloved lighthouse in America, thanks to the children's book. The Little Red Lighthouse is actually known as Jeffrey's Hook Lighthouse.

- The lighthouse was first established in 1889. The current structure was built as the North Hook Beacon at Sandy Hook, New Jersey, where it stood until 1917.

The current Jeffrey's Hook Lighthouse was constructed in 1920 and commissioned in 1921; the second light on this site. Its purpose was to aid the navigation of shipping up the Hudson, the major transportation artery between New York City and the interior ports of Albany, Troy, and beyond.

After the George Washington Bridge was constructed in the 1930s, it was determined that the lighthouse was no longer needed and it was deactivated in 1947 and was scheduled for demolition.

However, the children's book popularized the little lighthouse dwarfed by the bridge, and the millions of children who loved *The Little Red Lighthouse* spoke out saving it from destruction. It was later deeded to New York City.

The proposed dismantling of the lighthouse in 1951 resulted in a public outcry, largely from fans of Swift's book, leading to the preservation of the lighthouse by the City of New York/Parks & Recreation. The lighthouse is now a New York City Landmark and was relighted by the city in 2002.

Published in 1942, this children's book uses the story of the building of the George Washington Bridge next to the small lighthouse to affirm the idea that even the small are important.

The book begins by introducing the lighthouse and its job of warning the boats on the busy Hudson River of the rocks nearby. Every night a man climbs up to the top of the lighthouse and turns on its flashing light. When there is fog, the man

additionally turns on the lighthouse's fog bell. The lighthouse is pleased with and proud of its important job.

In the middle section of the book, the lighthouse watches, mystified, as men build a great gray bridge right next to it. When the bridge is finished, it towers above the lighthouse, which now feels small and unimportant. Even worse, one night a light begins to flash atop the bridge's tower, and the lighthouse is convinced that it is no longer needed.

That night, a storm whips up and fog clutches at the boats, but the man does not come to activate the lighthouse, confirming its fears that it will never shine again. However, the boats cannot see the light high atop the bridge, and without the lighthouse's light or bell, the "fat black tug" crashes upon the rocks nearby.

The bridge calls to the lighthouse, reassuring it that it is still needed, "each to his own place." The man finally arrives, complaining that some boys had stolen his keys. The lighthouse resumes its job, glad that it still has work to do. Though it now knows that it is small, it is still very proud.

The book ends by encouraging the reader to go to Riverside Drive in New York City and "see for yourself" the lighthouse next to the bridge.

Some would say this is just a children's book it doesn't really have much meaning, but look at this song's lyrics:

*"There's a lighthouse on the hillside
That overlooks life's sea.
When I'm tossed it sends out a light,
Tis a light that I might see.
And the light that shines in darkness now
Will safely lead us o'er.
If it wasn't for the lighthouse,
My ship would be no more.
Everybody that lives around us
Says tear that lighthouse down.
The big ships don't sail this way anymore,
There's no use of it standing around.*

*Then my mind goes back to that stormy night,
When just in time I saw the light;
Yes the light from that old lighthouse
That stands up there on the hill.*

*And I thank God for the lighthouse,
I owe my life to Him.
For Jesus is the lighthouse
And from the rocks of sin;
He has shone a light around me
That I could clearly see,
If it wasn't for the lighthouse
Tell me where would this ship be.
If it wasn't for the lighthouse,
Tell me, where would this ship be?"*

This song is a great reminder.

The world can build big grey bridges and try to cover the reality of the need of the lighthouse, but the fact remains: we will always need the lighthouse, we will always need Jesus.

Our world has been hard at work trying for decades now to remove the lighthouse out of our world.

- Taking the commandments off public buildings.
- Making laws against prayer in school.
- Passing laws for Homosexuals to get married.
- Trying to get God out of the pledge of allegiance and 'In God We Trust' off our money.

This world doesn't want the Little Red Lighthouse to be of any use anymore. But I got news for the world: try as they may, the world cannot and will not destroy the need for Jesus in our lives.

You cannot and will not be saved without a relationship with Jesus. No matter who you are or what you believe, it does not change the truth.

John 14:6 (KJV)

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

We need Jesus every day. I have good news for you tonight: If you have a need, God is on his way.

God is not attracted to people that are: satisfied, comfortable, who need 'nothing.' God is looking for somebody that has a need tonight. God is attracted to those who have a need.

The enemy will tell you if you have a need, it is because you don't have faith. **That is a lie.** God doesn't show up in your life if there is no need, but when you admit to him you need him it is like opening the door to a miracle.

The greatest words you can say to him is, **"I need you."**

'Satisfied' folks don't seek, pray, and worship; they just sit and criticize all those who recognize their needs. But those who recognize their needs, those are the people you want to sit by in church, because they don't have time to sit back and criticize; they're busy worshipping.

And guess what? Those are the ones who attract God! Those are the ones who are going to get touched.

- The Shunammite Woman
- The Rich Man and Lazarus

God still responds to the need of His people.

- The woman with the issue of blood
- Blind Bartimaeus

The Great Grey Bridge cannot cover up the Promises of God.

Romans 3:3-4 (KJV)

3 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?

4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.

There are 450 promises in the word of God.

From the first promise:

Genesis 3:15 (KJV)

15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

To the last promise:

Revelation 22:12 (KJV)

12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

And there are still 448 more promises for us!

Jeremiah 29:11 (KJV)

11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

Matthew 11:28-29 (KJV)

28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Isaiah 40:29-31 (KJV)

29 He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

30 Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

31 But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

Philippians 4:19 (KJV)

19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:37-39 (KJV)

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 6:23 (KJV)

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

John 7:38 (KJV)

38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

Acts 2:17 (KJV)

17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

It doesn't change the fact that these promises are real and alive.

The Great Grey Bridge cannot cover up the Blood.

Colossians 1:14 (KJV)

14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

The reason your sins are forgiven is because of His blood that was shed for us.

- Even though His blood was shed 2000 years ago,
- His Blood is still forgiving and forgetting sins.

People say God can see everything, but there is one thing He cannot see, that is your sins when they have been covered by His blood.

A preacher was speaking from the text, “The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.” Suddenly, he was interrupted by an atheist who asked, “How can blood cleanse sin?” For a moment the preacher was silent, then he countered, “How can water quench thirst?”

“I do not know,” said the man, “but I know that it does.” “Neither do I know how the blood of Jesus cleanses sin,” answered the preacher, “but I know that it does.”

I don’t understand how it works, but this Bible says His blood has the power to forgive and cleanse us. His blood still works.

- What can wash away my sin...Nothing, but the blood of Jesus.
- There is no cleansing agent as powerful as the blood.
- It will cleanse our past, present, and future!

Aren’t you thankful for the blood? Not only does His blood give us life and forgive our sins.

- The Great Grey Bridge cannot cover up the Holy Ghost.
- The Holy Ghost is trying to get ahold of us.

The Devil can try to use the grey bridge effect. He can try to cover it up all he wants to, but the Holy Ghost still shines.

The Great Grey Bridge cannot cover up the Voice.

Millions of children, who loved The Little Red Lighthouse, spoke out, saving it from destruction.

The world and our adversary is doing everything to silence the church.

Mark 6:21-24 (KJV)

21 And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee; 22 And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. 23 And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. 24 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

John's enemy did not want his possessions. The enemy did not want John's social connections. The enemy did not want John's vest of camels hair.

- The enemy wanted John's tongue to be silenced.
- The enemy wanted one thing, it's the same thing the enemy wants tonight; your voice.

He wants to silence the church, to silence the people of God, to hush the prayers of desire, to hinder the passion of revival, and to quiet the worship of the saints.

- The enemy realizes one of the most powerful tools of victory is your voice.

Since when do we do what the enemy wants us to do!

God wants somebody to bring some walls down with a shout of victory! God wants us to cry out with passion!

God wants us to praise Him with purpose!

The enemy will do his very best to silence you with condemnation and intimidation.

- Why? He's afraid of your voice!

The reason the enemy wanted John the Baptist beheaded was because he was the messenger for Jesus. The message of John the Baptist

1 Corinthians 1:21 (KJV)

21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

The first messenger with a voice is our pastor and the ministry.

It is the ministry that is the voice of God. It is our Pastor that voices Gods desire for us. He is the one voice in the wilderness, constantly pointing the way to the king.

- His voice often urges that a clear path for the Lord be made.
- His voice brings us a word from heaven that is refreshing to our ears.