**Mike Hipes – Facebook Lesson, July 8, 2020**

Good afternoon!

So…. Let me ask you, what baggage are you carrying these days?

2 Corinthians 5:17 says, “Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold new things have come.” OK, but now as Christians, where do we go from here in our daily walk? How do we leave the old life and live a new life in Christ? How do we drop all the old baggage and claim the riches, as a new creature in Christ, baggage-free?

The apostle Paul said Philippians 3:13-14, “forgetting what lies behind, and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.”

In other words, don’t look back! You want to know a good reason why? As new creatures in Christ, we are blessed with every spiritual blessing possible by God! Paul tells us in Ephesians 1:3-13 that we are now holy and blameless, redeemed by His blood, forgiven, according to the riches of His grace… sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. These are unfathomable riches! You may be on the poor side by the world’s standards, but spiritually speaking you are wealthy, as a new creature in Christ!

But beware; you see, Satan loves to get new creatures in Christ to live in the past, and remain in spiritual poverty by walking them through the halls of all their past failures, wanting them to replay every past sin in their lives, shameful acts, disappointments, broken promises, angry moments, and so much more, so that they will be re-condemned, re-discouraged, and continue to carry the old baggage that God had set them free from! The result is that their new life in Christ is constantly still weighing them down and the result is defeat rather than victory!

Back to 2 Corinthians 5:17, two verses earlier in verse 15, Paul said that Jesus “died and rose again on their behalf.” He didn’t come to die for us all for no reason! He didn’t create the universe, redeem mankind, plan a home in heaven for no reason! He came, died, was buried, and rose again, for our behalf! To live a life of freedom, spiritually rich in Christ, free of the old life as new creatures in Christ!

So…. Let me ask you once again, what baggage are you carrying these days?

Past failures, times you blew it as a weak person at the moment. Guilt, old grudges, past regrets, hate, envy, gossip, greed, slander, drug use, dishonesty, immorality, malice, self-centered lifestyle, ungodly ways, or so much more? Let it Go! Claim the Riches!

One of the big problems with carrying our old baggage and being robbed of our spiritual wealth is that it is easy to keep it with us and hard to let it go.

Have you ever been in your garage trying to get rid of some old unnecessary things? It’s hard sometimes, isn’t it? When it comes to all the items, do you say, “I can’t get rid of that, I may need it someday!” Let it Go! Claim the Riches!

Do you own a carry-on bag, equipped with a lift handle and wheels?

I have seen people bring their old carry-on baggage to the foot of the cross and desire to leave it there. But when they get up to leave, they lift up the handle, tip it onto its wheels and carry it back home to their heart. Let It Go! Claim the Riches! Galatians 5:1 may say it best. “It was for freedom that Christ set us free”

Is it time to check your baggage and claim the unfathomable riches we have in Him as new creatures in Christ?

In His service,

Mike