**Mike Hipes – Facebook Lesson, September 21, 2020**

Good afternoon!

While I was picking up groceries the other day at Lowes-to-go, I asked the women from the store how her day was going. She quickly replied, “Great, I’m still on this side of the sod!” I responded to her comment by saying, “well leaving this life is actually better because as Christians we get to experience heaven when we leave this side of the sod, right?” She then answered once more uncomfortably saying, “well I’m going to enjoy this life until I get there!”

My friend Richard and brother in Christ in Texas went in for open-heart surgery some years ago. When he finally came out of the anesthesia the doctor asked him how he was feeling. He said, “disappointed!” When the doctor asked him why he told him that he was hoping to go on to glory! He got his wish not long after that!

Paul said in Phil. 1:21-23, “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better.”

What would happen if you died today? Are you ready? Would you say “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain... for that is very much better?” Just the other day Ruth Bader Ginsburg, one of the chief court justices passed away at the age of 87. Many people have reacted in many ways. People have very different reactions to death. Sadness, pain, void and so much more. In an effort to avoid the subject, some people even choose humor! I saw a bumper sticker one time that said “Don’t take life so seriously, you won’t get out alive anyway.” Comedian Woody Allen said once “It’s not that I am afraid to die, I just don’t want to be there when it happens.” Some people chose denial, others only feel fear but, in the end, it is all very real! The key is focusing on Jesus, who makes all the difference in the world when it comes to moving from this side of the sod to the world to come.

Jesus said in John 11:25-26. “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?”

Hebrews 11;13-16 tells us, “All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. And indeed if they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for He has prepared a city for them.”

Folks, this world is not our home, we are just passing through! I am sure you remember what Dorothy said all through the movie “The Wizard Of Oz.” There is no place like home! Spiritually speaking, I am not talking about the home we grew up in, the home we came from, or even the one we may have moved to or retired to. You see it doesn’t make a difference what state you are from, or even what country you are from. It makes no difference if you came from a rich or poor, big home or small home. There is only one home that exceeds them all! Our heavenly home! There is only one country that surpasses them all! The one and only heavenly country for all Christians is a heavenly one! It’s called heaven! This world is not our home we are just passing through! The reason we can go there is that Jesus is the resurrection and the life! Some day as Christians we will all be there and never be disappointed because there is no place like our heavenly home!

Blessings,

Mike