**Mike Hipes – Facebook Lesson, November 2, 2020**

Good afternoon!

Having three daughters is a wonderful thing! Margie and I could not be prouder of each of them! Our oldest Brooke is married to a great husband. They have two beautiful children and just recently bought a new home. Liz is in her third year of college doing great as well! Allison is in the Army doing a super job defending our country! All very special kids in my book! There is one unique thing however about our family that has impacted Margie and I as parents. As you may know, not long before our daughter Brooke was married and began a family of her own, we adopted Liz and Allison as babies. To say the least there was a large age gap between our daughter Brooke and Liz and Allison. It didn’t really hit me until I was getting a haircut one time and chatting with the girl who was cutting my hair about family. After she listened to my family story she paused for a moment and then said, “So I guess you are second time around parents!” As I pondered that thought a few things came to mind about how we raised Brooke in comparison to Liz and Allison. What was still the same with all three girls this second time around was that all three loved clothes, shopping, make-up, Margie and me and God! What was different the second time around was how Margie and I parented! I felt more experienced, smarter, and had different and better priorities this time around. It was more about building relationships than cleaner rooms if you get my drift. In some ways Brooke benefited as being the sole focus in our lives earlier, however, Liz and Allison benefited from the past experience that we gained over the years as parents. Today all three are faithful Christians and lovers of the Lord God! We have all been so very blessed.

In Genesis 9, God parents His children a second time around, so to speak. From Genesis 1 - 8, the children didn’t do so well and God wiped the slate clean by a worldwide flood. After the flood, God begins this second time around by making a covenant that He institutes that included the sign of a rainbow in the sky! In the midst of a world going bad God’s ongoing love looks for that which is good and seeks to develop it by providing man with a second time around opportunity! Listen to what God says to Noah.

“Now behold, I Myself am establishing My covenant with you, and with your descendants after you; and with every living creature that is with you: the birds, the livestock, and every animal of the earth with you; of all that comes out of the ark, every animal of the earth. I establish My covenant with you; and all flesh shall never again be eliminated by the waters of a flood, nor shall there again be a flood to destroy the earth.” God said, “This is the sign of the covenant which I am making between Me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations; I have set My rainbow in the cloud, and it shall serve as a sign of a covenant between Me and the earth.” Genesis 9:9-13

Folks, when Adam and Eve were blowing the blessings in the garden, God came to them to help them see the problems. When Cain was about to kill his brother Abel, God came as a father rallying him to overcome his anger and warned him to be on guard. When the world went wrong God was sad but saw the flicker of light in Noah’s life of righteousness and was hopeful for the future! When God sees our world, and us, He looks for the spark of good to develop into a roaring fire for His kingdom's sake! Speaking of His coming Son, the Father says, “A bent reed He will not break off and a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish.” With Jesus in our lives, it only takes a spark!

Chapter 9 and 10 of Genesis begins God’s second time around family. Following God’s rainbow promise in chapter 9; we see beginning in chapter 10 His unconditional care for the decedents of Noah which included the seed line to Christ. However, we also notice a recording of those who are not part of the seed- line. In other words, the elect and the non-elect. To be honest it is kind of hard to get excited about somebody else’s family tree. The program, out these days called Ancestry is big for some folks, but even for them, it may be hard to have a deep interest in other people’s past family trees! Do you think that the folks who work at the photo-mart Oooh and Ahhh at stranger’s family reunion pictures? Genealogies can be dry! So, why record the table of nations in chapter 10? I get the idea of listing Shem, one of Noah’s children since the seed line does go through him but who really cares about the family tree of Ham and Japheth? Do they count? They didn’t influence the seed line! So, who really cares about God’s non-elect seed line people? GOD DOES! Notice the Lord Jesus Himself and what He says! In Luke 7, Jesus praises a weeping prostitute over His Pharisee host for her greater love of the Lord. In Matthew 8, Jesus praises a gentile leader’s faith above the entire nation of Israel. In Luke 18, it was the humility of a tax-gatherer over the Pharisee. In John 4, Jesus, for the very first time shares who He is to a sinful Samaritan non-elect woman. John 3:16 tells us that God so loves the world! The whole world! Folks, the elect does not mean the elite! May we as Christians never ever forget where we were, (lost) what happened, (were saved) and where we are now, (Christians) only by the amazing grace of God to all the world! So, next time we see a rainbow in the sky, while noticing a misguided world around us, as Christians, may we not turn up our nose but put out our hand, just as God did for us this second time around!

Blessings,

Mike