**Mike Hipes – Facebook Lesson, January 15, 2021**

Good afternoon!

Do you tend to live in the past or focus on the future?

I have been taking a survey over the past few years. The survey included young people, older people, church members, those who do not attend church, and even unbelievers. I asked this question, “When you think about Jesus what comes to mind, how do you picture Him?” The following are 9 of the answers, exactly as they were stated. 1. Unfathomable human that is not human but God at the same time. 2. He is perfect! 3. On a cross, also walking and talking with people, on a hill or mountain while people were listening. 4. Someone who will forgive me. 5. Humble. 6. Biblical person in robes, a man with a beard and long hair. 7. Walking in a desert. 8. With the children. 9. Suffering for our sins and our salvation.

Did you notice that most people are connected with the Christ in the flesh, who walked on earth? Their tendency is to live with the Jesus of the past rather than see Him as the risen Christ of the present and the future! How about you? As we begin to look forward to a new year may we see our risen Lord as He is now! He is the resurrected Christ! The One who has been raised from the dead, and the One who can raise us from the dead!

The apostle John who identified primarily with the earthly Jesus sees Him as the risen victorious resurrected Christ in heaven in the book of Revelation beginning in chapter one. Let’s get a needed glimpse for ourselves! John describes Jesus in chapter 1:8 saying, “I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.” The beginning and the end, the first and the last, the eternal Jesus, as well as almighty! The word here for almighty is PANTOKRATOR, the most powerful word in the bible! The One who has dominion over all things controls all things and holds all things in His grasp!

This is followed by a detailed description of the victorious resurrected Christ in 1:12-18, “Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking with me... I saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and wrapped around the chest with a golden sash. His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. His feet were like burnished bronze when it has been heated to a glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters... and out of His mouth came a sharp two-edged sword; and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.

John had never seen Jesus like this! Just as John did, we need to see Him in this way too! John was so humbled and in awe at this point, he says, When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. But, don’t you just love Jesus’ response? And He placed His right hand on me, saying, “Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore...” The Lord wants us to know, I am the living One no matter what anyone says, and I can raise you from the dead, just ask Lazarus! I control all life and death. I am still Your loving shepherd with My hand of comfort on your shoulder.

Folks, it’s been a hard year I know or even a tough life here on earth, but hang on through the crisis. Jesus is telling us; I will bring you home! I didn’t just survive death; death could not hold Me! Because of My victory over death, it will be yours as well!

Folks, It’s all about the DBR, Death, Burial, and Resurrection! Let’s share the good news at every opportunity! Some years back I selected a cake from the bakery to have for a dessert at a home bible study that evening. When the bakery worker asked what I would like written on the cake I said, please write D. B. R. on it! I knew he would probably ask me what that stood for, and he did! When he did, I took the opportunity to share a word about our risen Christ!

As we look forward to this coming year let’s not only look forward but be looking up and remember the resurrected victorious Christ that we serve! Let’s cherish the Christ who walked the earth but live daily with power and assurance that we have with the Jesus who reigns in glory! His hand is upon us all saying, “Don’t be afraid...”

In His service,

Mike