

Looking for the light

a devotional from
ST. CHARLES AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Saturday, April 18, 2020

by Libbie Reiss

Read:

Corinthians 15:1-11
The Resurrection of Christ

Now brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise you have believed in vain.

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures that he was buried that he was raised on the third day according to the scriptures and then he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all he appeared to me, as to one abnormally born.

For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet, not I, but the grace of God that was with me. Whether, then it is I or they, this is what we preach, and this is what you believed.

Reflect:

Poor Paul. As he speaks to the people of Corinth, I can just see him grabbing one of them and getting in his face as if to say, “Do you understand what I am saying? Huh, do you?” I think we have all felt this way at one time or another. When disciplining a child or perhaps a co-worker or friend who has refused to accept what you are saying, when you know in your heart and soul that what you are saying is without a doubt correct and you are trying so hard to get your point across. I feel like this is what Paul is doing here.

I was a little confounded when he referred to himself as to one “abnormally” born. At first, I wondered if he had a physical impediment that I had forgotten about, or perhaps trouble with his speech, sight, or hearing. After reading several explanations in various Bibles and journals, I came to the conclusion that he is simply degrading himself for not having believed in Jesus Christ and the resurrection all of his life. We all know that he was not a believer for many years but finally had a moment of reckoning allowing him to come to his senses and accept that Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, was in him and is in every human being on earth and hopefully, in all of existence.

Paul seems to feel inferior as he says he is the “lesser of the apostles” even though he spends most of his adult life begging and pleading with the people he spoke to in the different territories and countries to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. He wants people to know that it is only through God’s grace that he feels he was allowed to finally “see the light.” Paul feels that he owes his life to God and God’s acceptance of him even though he had sinned in his earlier life by persecuting the church. He seems relieved almost and wants everyone else to find this same grace and love. “It is never too late” he wants the people to know. Any of us can be resurrected.

Do we as Christians in 2020 understand that it is never too late? I think of the many people who come to God later in life and how joyous and “relieved” they must feel. I think of the homeless I see when my company serves dinner at a large homeless shelter. Here each participant attends a short church service before dinner. I wonder how many of these people have been saved by people like Paul. Or people who have had great sadness in their lives and realize that a belief in Jesus Christ is so uplifting that it can make anything feel a little better.

We need to be faithful in this incredulous time. And if you have never fully accepted Jesus Christ into your life, I promise, it will help. It is never too late.

Pray:

Dear God: I am grateful that I have you in my life and like Paul, I say, you, also, can have Him in your life. Just ask Him.

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If you would like to contribute to our daily devotionals, please email Pastor Sarah, sarah@scapc.org.

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