

## **A TIME FOR REFLECTION – [Pastor Gene Henderson]**

Two of the biggest questions of the human race:

1. Where did we come from?
2. Where are we going?

I'm going to heaven. I hope.

I don't hope God loves me, and I don't hope Jesus is my Savior. I hope there's a heaven. Confused? Read on.

You can go to church a hundred times (if you went every week except vacations that would be about 2 years) and not hear many sermons about heaven. In fact, it's possible these days to go that many times and not hear even one teaching on heaven. In a strange way it kind of makes sense. Except for special stories that pop up now and again, no one has been to heaven and come back to tell us about it. So all we have is what the Bible tells us about heaven. ***Of all the elements that make up the core of our faith, heaven may require more of faith than anything else!***

We can believe in supernatural events like healing because we have some cases that are unexplainable by any other means. We can believe that Jesus is the Christ and that He rose from the dead because we have at least five hundred eye witnesses. That many witnesses strains the limits of a conspiracy theory. It would stand up in any court anywhere. We can believe in a devil, even when he remains invisible, because we **know** there is evil in the world. We can even believe there is a God because it takes no more faith to believe in God than it does to believe in the big bang and evolutionary chance.

Heaven is another story entirely. We have no unexplainable phenomena to track us back to a celestial kingdom. No extensive list of eyewitnesses. All we have are bits and pieces of Scripture, little glimpses into a place that makes us want to believe, that makes us want to go there. (Just not today.) And Christians are not the only ones who believe in a beautiful, peaceful afterlife. In other words, we do not have irrefutable proof of heaven, but we have lots of hints and prophetic word pictures.

And hope – one of the most powerful forces in the human soul. Doctors call upon the power of hope when they start a treatment plan. Scientists harness the power of hope in their search for answers. Business people create plans and launch enterprises driven by the power of hope. Even average people like us walk to the altar motivated as much by hope as by love. We raise our children in hope. We hold our grandchildren and we hope. We come to church because of hope. Would it upend your theology to know that's why God comes?

# **Welcome!**

## **June 3, 2018**



*"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I have come so they can have life. I want them to have it in the fullest possible way."*

### **SERVICES**

Sunday Morning Worship: 10:30 AM

Unity In Prayer: 6:00 PM

Wednesday – Bible Study: 7:00 PM;

Kid's Club & Youth

Prayer ½ hour before services

**A VOICE – A MIRROR – A STEP OF FAITH – PART 3**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Wednesday Bible Study** – We are studying the Book of Romans. Kid's Club for the children in the basement.

**Snacks For Children** – There is a basket in the foyer for donations of snacks for Children's Church and Wednesday night Kid's Club.

**March For Life New York** – will have their third annual march in Albany tomorrow, June 4th, 2018. All are meeting at 10:30 AM at the Children's Memorial at Empire State Plaza for prayer. Then we will be marching to the State Capital steps for a Pro-Life Rally. We encourage all to plan to attend.

**Ladies Bible Study** – the Bible study will be cancelled this week due to the pastors being away. Leah will resume next week.

**Missionary Letters** – there are new missionary letters on our bulletin boards in the foyer.



**3. A STEP OF FAITH – Matthew 14:22-33**

It was \_\_\_\_\_ that drew Peter out of that storm-tossed boat.

He was walking over what \_\_\_\_\_ him.

But he took his eyes off Christ, and \_\_\_\_\_ the turmoil around him to cast down his \_\_\_\_\_.

He was always above it all – because He was never doing His \_\_\_\_\_ work or fulfilling His own \_\_\_\_\_.

God's way of \_\_\_\_\_ is to put us above all our circumstances by the energy of a faith \_\_\_\_\_ on Him.

All who pursue Christ, all who keep their eyes fixed on Him, all who by faith step out to go after Him – will soon be \_\_\_\_\_ by their circumstances.

A bold step of faith is to plunge right into my stormy \_\_\_\_\_ and circumstances and learn to rise above it all in His \_\_\_\_\_.

**4. \_\_\_\_\_ AND THE \_\_\_\_\_ CANNOT BE SEPARATED!**

We \_\_\_\_\_ have one without the other. Hebrews 5:8-9; 2:9-10; 2 Corinthians 1:5; Colossians 1:24; Romans 8:17-18; 2 Corinthians 1:7; 1 Peter 4:1, 13; 5:10; 2:21

The fire of affliction \_\_\_\_\_; it filters out all dross and leaves but the gold. Romans 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 11:30; 12:9-10

The \_\_\_\_\_ believer is one who has been thoroughly tested and put through the fire – and who has been \_\_\_\_\_ and matured in the process.

Our suffering and \_\_\_\_\_ are not meritorious – they add nothing to grace – but they are the cost of \_\_\_\_\_.

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