

## **“You are Something Else”**

***“In fact, you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. Indeed, as many of you as were baptized into Christ have been clothed with Christ.” (Galatians 3:26-27, Evangelical Heritage Version)***

The lives of most people who have existed before us have faded into earthly history. Oh, perhaps the name of someone who lived centuries ago may still appear as an entry in a congregation’s baptismal records or on a tombstone in a cemetery. But unless deliberate attempts were made to document (and then preserve) facts about a person, most deceased individuals have become a “nobody” in this world once the living memories of them stopped. Oh, as I said before, a trace may be left behind somewhere that a person of a certain name and identity once roamed the earth. And it’s true that technology is making our names and identities ever more accessible and widespread. Yet, what will this data mean to those living two centuries from now (provided this world still exists in two hundred years)? Likely, even if it’s still readily available, such data probably won’t reveal a whole lot of intimate information about most individuals.

See, unless individuals leave a tremendous mark on human history, the memory of their existence in this world soon passes after they die. Names like Plato, Julius Caesar, Martin Luther, and George Washington are still well known centuries later. But such individuals are few and far between. And even among those from the past whose names are still well known today, the only information that historians and archeologists have to work with is what has been left behind and preserved for posterity. For the fact is that most people live quiet and ordinary lives, and after a matter of decades (normally ten or less), ***“they are soon gone, and we fly away” (Psalm 90:10, ESV).***

This harsh fact can be rather depressing. For the life of every human being is meaningful. Every person means something to somebody, and accomplishes any number of things while alive in this world. But this will all soon be forgotten, and most of us will one day be a “nobody”. This can make life in this world seem pointless.

But as you are probably aware, the Bible tells us that human life doesn’t end with the death of the body. For everyone rises from the dead when Jesus returns. The condition of that unending existence, though, will depend upon one’s connection to the Creator of all life. Those who reject Him will live separated from Him eternally (Hell). Those united to Him will live forever with Him (Heaven).

And see my fellow Christians, ***“you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. Indeed, as many of you as were baptized into Christ have been clothed with Christ.”*** While this fallen, corrupt, and dying world offers us no hope that we’ll amount to anything after death, in Christ, however, you and I aren’t a “nobody.” Quite the opposite. We are something else – we are heirs of everlasting resurrection life. Oh, those who rise in Christ on the Last Day won’t become a different species, but ***“we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed” (1 Corinthians 15:51b-52, ESV).*** In fact, through their Baptism into Christ, already in this world believers receive new life – for ***“if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old***

*has passed away; behold, the new has come” (2 Corinthians 5:17, ESV). For “as many of you as were baptized into Christ have been clothed with Christ.”*

My brothers and sisters in Christ, you are children of the Lord - **“sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”** This is a status like no other in this world. You truly are something else. For whether or not you leave an extraordinary or noteworthy mark in this world when you die, the fact is that you are deeply loved by God and are a member of His kingdom. What you do each day to serve your neighbor matters to God. We ought not be arrogant or self-absorbed. But we ought to rejoice that God’s Son Jesus Christ sacrificed His life into death as the necessary **“ransom” (Mark 10:45, ESV)** to spare us. We are blessed. For Jesus suffered on the cross in our stead – taking the punishment that our sins deserve, and thus bringing us back into everlasting fellowship with our Creator. And three days later our Divine Savior rose again in victory. And through His Means of Grace in the Word and Sacraments our risen Lord and Redeemer now freely offers us the forgiveness, deliverance, and new & unending life that He earned for us (along with the faith to receive these saving gifts).

See, you aren’t a “nobody.” You are someone God’s Son laid down His very life to save. And He has planned far, far more for us than an impressive legacy to leave behind in this world. He has an everlasting inheritance prepared that is far, far richer than anything this world could ever imagine – **“new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (2 Peter 3:13, ESV).** And in this paradise we will get to be with all who died in Christ - including anyone who may have been considered a “nobody” by the standards of this world. My uncle Larry is one of many, many such examples. I never met him because he died shortly after birth. My maternal grandparents and my mother and her siblings had very little time to get to know Larry. And he, of course, didn’t even have an opportunity to leave much of a mark in this world. And I’m sure that most of you could tell of similar stories in your families. But the Good News is that baptized into Christ, my uncle Larry now lives. And one day he shall rise to live with God’s people forever. See, in Christ we truly are something else. For in Christ we have the best identity possible – a child of God.

So, we rejoice in our Baptism into Christ – we rejoice in God’s free gift of salvation. And we daily care for our neighbor. For God’s promise of paradise isn’t a reason to treat life in this world as something that doesn’t matter – to focus so heavily upon Heaven that we forget to care for those in need in this world. For while Christians don’t live *for* this world and this life, they do live *in* it. So, we reach out to our neighbor in acts of loving service because we know that this fallen world is difficult and painful. And we journey through this life with our hearts and minds focused upon Jesus, and our lips ever sharing with our neighbor the Good News of what the Savior has done to rescue us and provide us with hope beyond this world. For in Jesus, we truly **“live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28, ESV)** – both now and forevermore.

See you at church,  
Pastor

**Psalm Readings for October**

**WEEK ONE: Sunday, October 01; PSALM 90; Monday, October 02; PSALM 91; Tuesday, October 03; PSALM 92; Wednesday, October 04; PSALM 93; Thursday, October 05; PSALM 94; Friday, October 06; PSALM 95; Saturday, October 07; PSALM 96**

**WEEK TWO: Sunday, October 08; PSALM 97; Monday, October 09; PSALM 98; Tuesday, October 10; PSALM 99; Wednesday, October 11; PSALM 100; Thursday, October 12; PSALM 101; Friday, October 13; PSALM 102; Saturday, October 14; PSALM 103**

**WEEK THREE: Sunday, October 15; PSALM 104:1-23; Monday, October 16; PSALM 104:24-35; Tuesday, October 17; PSALM 105:1-22; Wednesday, October 18; PSALM 105:23-45; Thursday, October 19; PSALM 106:1-27; Friday, October 20; PSALM 106:28-48; Saturday, October 21; PSALM 107:1-22**

**WEEK FOUR: Sunday, October 22; PSALM 107:23-43; Monday, October 23; PSALM 108; Tuesday, October 24; PSALM 109:1-20; Wednesday, October 25; PSALM 109:21-31; Thursday, October 26; PSALM 110; Friday, October 27; PSALM 111; Saturday, October 28; PSALM 112**

**WEEK FIVE: Sunday, October 29; PSALM 113; Monday, October 30; PSALM 114-115; Tuesday, October 31; PSALM 46; Wednesday, November 01; PSALM 116; Thursday, November 02; PSALM 117; Friday, November 03; PSALM 118:1-14; Saturday, November 04; PSALM 118:15-29**