

Paul offers his words as evidence of a faith that is worthy of God's call upon the life of every follower of Christ. Using these attributes of 1) growing faith, 2) increasing love and 3) steadfastness as benchmarks of your faith, where are you in your faith journey? Is your faith and reliance on God deepening? Is your love for God and humanity increasing? How does your faith hold up in the face of adversity and challenges? Meditate on these questions and write your reflections here.

### **Thursday, November 10**

One of the blessings of my (Pastor Jack) ministry is helping families with their process of grief. I do quite a few funerals and memorial services beyond the membership of our church. Our Rose Memorial Ceremony as part of All Saints Sunday is a ministry to those who come to worship with our church family in a time of mourning and grief. I have found myself giving advice at the end of my funeral homilies on how to process loss and grief. My first advice is for people to be gentle with themselves and consider taking a full year in mourning the loss of a loved one. Having written that, how have you processed your grief in the past? How long has your grief process lasted? Do you have unresolved issues connected with your grief? Pray for God's abiding peace as you record your thoughts here.

### **Friday, November 11**

Yesterday you were asked the question, "Do you have unresolved issues connected with your grief?" Take some time today to consider your answers to that question. What steps do you need to take in order to resolve those issues? What conversations do you need to have in order to move through your grief? What emotions surround your grief? Anger? Disappointment? Depression? Begin to develop a plan to emerge from your grief as you write your thoughts here.

## **Message Notes – November 6, 2022**

### ***God's Power From The Grave\****

- I. Cemeteries are often viewed as \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ places – dangerous and possibly deadly places.
  - A. In the past, if you wanted to visit a graveyard, you wouldn't go to one of today's "memorial \_\_\_\_\_" or high-rise mausoleums.
  - B. Instead, you'd go to \_\_\_\_\_! The graveyards of the past were planted around the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - C. Graveyards are no longer seen as \_\_\_\_\_ ground.
  - D. We forget that the \_\_\_\_\_ of the church is underground.
- II. Why do we so quickly whisk the dead away to fenced-in (or is it fenced-off) "\_\_\_\_\_ ghettos"?
  - A. Is it a way to safely ignore the \_\_\_\_\_ of death?
  - B. The common ground of the church graveyard overruled allegiances to \_\_\_\_\_, tribes, \_\_\_\_\_ or cliques.
    1. We belong to \_\_\_\_\_.
    2. We don't belong to our \_\_\_\_\_. We don't belong to our community. We don't belong to \_\_\_\_\_.
    3. We belong to \_\_\_\_\_.
- III. All Saints' Day. It's a sort of Christian \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ day when we remember the early Christians who were persecuted and killed.
  - A. Bearing the very name of "\_\_\_\_\_ " was enough to earn one a death sentence.
  - B. Today's scripture recalls how early church communities were forced to face the persistent possibility that they might suddenly find themselves victims of \_\_\_\_\_.

---

\*II Thessalonians 1:1-4, 11-12

1. The Thessalonian Christians faced the danger and uncertainty of bearing the name of Christ with grace, \_\_\_\_\_ and good spirit.
2. There were always new saints ready to risk everything for the sake of their \_\_\_\_\_. Why was that?

- IV. Pastor Steve Wilson suggests an answer and shocks our sterile sensibilities by writing "God's \_\_\_\_\_ works best in a graveyard."
- A. He's applying the principle of \_\_\_\_\_ and expanding what happened two thousand years ago to our \_\_\_\_\_ living.
  - B. My purpose while working with families who are grieving is to remind them we do not have funerals and memorial services because our loved one has \_\_\_\_\_.
  - C. We not because our love one has died but because he or she \_\_\_\_\_! They loved and were beloved.
- V. On \_\_\_\_\_ Mornings, one of my favorite hymns to sing is "He Lives!"
- A. The Biblical concept of Salvation means \_\_\_\_\_.
  - B. I am well aware of the \_\_\_\_\_ in people's lives when they have lost a loved one.
    1. God, through Jesus the Christ, wants to \_\_\_\_\_ your brokenness.
    2. That doesn't mean that you can't admit to the brokenness or \_\_\_\_\_ and cry.
    3. Just know that \_\_\_\_\_ is with you.
  - C. It's an Easter hymn but it's indicative of God's \_\_\_\_\_ and a way of \_\_\_\_\_!

## ***Daily Devotional Guide***

The following is a daily devotional and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

### **Monday, November 7**

Pastor Jack began the message with a story about his grandmother who would ask him to stop at cemeteries to walk around and look at the grave markers. She would marvel about the dates and look at the names and imagine the people who were buried there. What are your earliest memories of cemeteries? Were you frightened by them? Would you use the word "creepy" to describe cemeteries? Contemplate these questions and write your reflections here.

### **Tuesday, November 8**

Read Hebrews 12:1-2. Have you ever seen a cemetery on the same property as a church? Sometimes the church graveyard is just outside the sanctuary of the church. Perhaps you even attended a church with a cemetery on the same property. The symbolism is tremendous and reflective of the scripture from Hebrews. The vision of the writer of Hebrews is of a cloud of witnesses (those who have died) sitting in the seats of a stadium cheering on those still living who have the race of faith still before them. It a reminder that the majority of the church is in heaven! What are your thoughts of this image? When speaking of the church do you ever think of those who are in heaven cheering us on in our faith walk? Write your response here.

### **Wednesday, November 9**

Read II Thessalonians 1:1-12. The Apostle Paul brags about the people of the church in Thessalonica. He wrote to them saying they are exemplary as people who possess a growing faith, a love that is increasing and a steadfastness that demonstrates endurance (verses 3-4). Paul further commends these early Christians that they possess these attributes even as they suffer "persecution and afflictions."