

Sermon ~ Sunday, June 7th, 2021, by Pastor Dwight

Text: Joshua 14: 10

Title: "Living *after* the Meantime!"

The meantime has pasted! It is post-Pandemic! The meantime, was that time before **GOD** demanded "Be still, and know that **I AM GOD**: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." (Psalm 40: 10) And, when that specific period somewhat ends, ends the meantime.

Much of life is lived in the meantime—between dreams and reality, between **HOPE** and fulfillment, between the death of our loved ones and moving on with life.

Question? How do we live *after* the meantime? Surviving a meantime is one thing but living after a meantime is totally different.

The text before us, is a personal experience of one, Caleb, he's not a full-blooded Israelite. His father, Jephunneh, was a Kenizzite (Numbers 13: 6, 14: 30). The Kenizzites were one of the tribes to be driven out of the Land. Somehow Caleb and his family ended up in Egypt with the Israelites and became part of the Israelite community. As Caleb came to understand the history of **GOD'S people**, he fell in love with **The GOD** they *served* and devoted his life to **HIM**. Caleb knew about the Meantime! What can he say to us and help us...?

1. Appreciate the Past.

I know, it has been *painful* for us all, Caleb is saying, "don't hate the past." Do not live in the past. Do not worship the past. It is easy to worship the past when one had fond memories of that *place*, that *person*, that *pleasure* and or even that *pain*. But to *worship* the past is to live in the *wilderness* of the past.

So how are we to relate to the past? We can not and do not want to erase it from our memories. Rather, we *must* Appreciate the Past.

- Past Blessings. "Bless **The LORD**, O my soul, and forget not all **HIS** benefits." (Psalm 103: 2) The reason past hurts stands out so much is because they are few. Really our past Blessings far outnumber our past hurts. [I have learned and am learning, to appreciate my past Blessings—the Projects where I was reared, The Church and the Church-house where I was *saved* and called to **Preach The Gospel of JESUS The CHRIST**, the family **GOD** gave me, the Churches I served and am serving!]
- Past Hurts. Caleb said, "I brought [Moses] back a report according to my convictions, but my fellow Israelites who went up with me made the hearts of the people melt in fear." (Joshua 14: 7-8 NIV). Caleb shared his heart with his people. He was certain they could conquer Canaan. But his own "brothers" turned against him. How disappointed he was! How disillusioned! How hurt! Yet he learned to appreciate this past hurt. Because of it, his greatest Victory would come when he was an 85-year-old man!

"Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is **GOD'S Will** for you in **CHRIST JESUS!**"
(I Thessalonians 5: 18 NIV)

2. Celebrate the Present.

We are never too old to Celebrate the Present. In Joshua 14: 10-11, Caleb says, "I am eighty-five years old and I can still travel and fight!" He was saying with the Psalmist David, "This is the Day which **The LORD** has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." (Psalm 118: 24)

Rightfully said another, "Yesterday is a canceled check; tomorrow is a promissory note; today is the only currency you have. Spend it wisely; celebrate it joyfully!"

Our **LORD JESUS** was criticized for celebrating life too much. **HIS** enemies said, "**HE** is a glutton and a drunkard." (Matthew 11: 19 NIV). **JESUS** believed in Celebrating the Present.

To live in the future is to rob the present of any Celebration. The question is not "Is there life after death?" (It is!) But the question to be raised is "Is there Life before Death?"

Our fear should be that we will die before we ever Lived as we ought!!!

3. Anticipate the Future.

One is never too old to Anticipate the Future. Caleb at eighty-five said, "Give me this mountain." (Joshua 14: 12) His **Faith in GOD** was still unwavering. Even though there were still giants in the Land, Caleb knew **The LORD** would help him conquer the Land. We *must* be **Faithful to GOD**, not only at the start but to the very end. For there is a Bright Side Somewhere! *Since GOD* did it for Caleb on this mountain... *Since GOD* did it for **JESUS** on the Hill called Calvary, surely, surely, surely, **HE will** do it, **HE promised** to do it, for you and for me!!! With this knowledge, you and I can live *after* the Meantime!

Many things about tomorrow, I don't seem to understand,
But I *know* **WHO** holds tomorrow, and I *know* **WHO** holds my hand!

GOD sent HIS SON, they called **HIM JESUS**;
HE came to Love, heal, and forgive.
HE Lived and died to buy my pardon. An empty grave is there to prove my **SAVOIR** Lives.

Because **HE** Lives, I can face tomorrow;
Because **HE** Lives all fear is gone; Because I know, **HE** holds the future,
And Life is worth the Living just because **HE** Lives.

And then one Day, I'll cross the river;
I'll fight life's final war with pain;
And then as death gives way in Victory, I'll see the Lights of Glory and I'll know **HE** Lives.

Because **HE** Lives, I can face tomorrow;
Because **HE** Lives all fear is gone; Because I know, **HE** holds the future,
And Life is worth the Living just because **HE** Lives!!!