

#1765

Psalm 71:8&9¹
We praise the LORD
for he does not cast us away
when we are old.
Funeral of George Arthur Hudson

Pastor A. J. Kunde
Grace WELS Durand MI
11:00 a.m., Thursday
March 7, 2013

⁸ My mouth is filled with your praise -
your splendor/beauty/glory all day long.

⁹ Do not cast me away when I am old;
do not forsake me when my strength is gone.

GOD THE SOVEREIGN LORD
HEARS OUR PRAYERS AND PRAISES
I. OUR PRAYERS NEVER TO FORSAKE US
II. OUR PRAISES OF HIS SPLENDOR

In the Name of the Father, who created us; the Son, Jesus, who redeemed us with his holy precious blood and with his innocent suffering and death on the cross; and the Holy Spirit, who has called us to faith in Jesus and kept us in that faith in Jesus, Dear Fellow-Redeemed – and especially you Gladys, children, grandchildren, relatives and friends of George Hudson.

So what is George doing now? Some might think that the answer is obvious. George is lying right there now – in the coffin – doing nothing. But that is not correct. George's body is here; George's remains are here; but where is George? Where is George now? What is George doing now? King David gives us the answer in verses eight and nine of Psalm Seventy-nine. That answer applies to George and to you as well; for, GOD THE SOVEREIGN LORD HEARS OUR PRAYERS AND PRAISES. GOD THE SOVEREIGN LORD HEARS OUR PRAYERS AND PRAISES ... I. OUR PRAYERS NEVER TO FORSAKE US; and, II. OUR PRAISES OF HIS SPLENDOR.

GOD THE SOVEREIGN LORD
HEARS OUR PRAYERS AND PRAISES
I. OUR PRAYERS NEVER TO FORSAKE US

David prays in verse nine, "Do not cast me away when I am old; do not forsake me when my strength is gone." No one wants to be cast away, cast aside when they are old. No one

¹ *The New International Version*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House) 1984. All Scripture references are taken from this translation unless noted otherwise.

wants to be forgotten and forsaken when the strength and vigor of their youth is past and no more. This is true of believers also. But believers have promises from Jesus that they will not be forsaken, forgotten or cast aside, when they are old and when their strength is gone.

Before his ascension into heaven, Jesus told his disciples, “Surely, I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20b). The writer to the Hebrews repeats this promise of Jesus, when he reminds believers that “God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you’” (Hebrews 13:5b; cf. Deuteronomy 31:6). These are the promises our God and LORD, Jesus Christ, has given to believers. But why should we believe these promises?

We should believe these promises? These promises are made by God, the Sovereign LORD. Concerning him, Moses recorded, “God is not a man that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill?” (Numbers 23:19). Moreover, look at that one special promise that God the Sovereign LORD made and fulfilled.

Through the Old Testament Prophet Isaiah, God, the Sovereign LORD promised: “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a Son, and will call him Immanuel [God with us]” (Isaiah 7:14b; cf. Matthew 1:23). God fulfilled this promise when he sent his One and Only Son Jesus into the world to be the Savior of all (cf. John 3:16-18).

Jesus came into the world and “God made [Jesus] who had no sin to be sin for us” (2 Corinthians 5:21a). Jesus took away the sin of the world (cf. John 1:29b,36b). Jesus “committed no sin” (1 Peter 2:22a; cf. Isaiah 53:9); although Jesus was tempted in every way just as we are, Jesus was without sin (cf. Hebrews 4:15b). Jesus’ holiness, righteousness, sinlessness and perfection, has been credited to the entire world and to us. Jesus also suffered and died on the cross.

On the cross, Jesus took upon himself the punishment for sin that the entire world deserved – that you and I and George deserve. Jesus took that punishment as our substitute. Jesus is “the atoning sacrifice for our sins and, ... for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2). Jesus’ resurrection from the dead is the assurance that all sins have been forgiven and taken away.

APPROPRIATION

So you and I join in this prayer of King David and of George Hudson: “Do not cast me away when I am old; do not forsake me when my strength is gone” (71:9). For some of us, age has not yet caught up with us. For others of us, we are looking at old age and the fading away of mind and strength. Society may cast us off. Relatives and friends may forsake us. Sons and daughters may leave. Nothing in this world is constant. But there is something that is constant and will never change and that is our LORD Jesus Christ.

The writer to the Hebrews reminds us that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Hebrews 13:8). It is this unchangeable Jesus Christ who has made the

promise: “Surely, I am with you always”; and, “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” Those were the promises that were given to George – your husband, father, grandfather and friend. Jesus always – always – keeps his promises. George is enjoying the fulfillment of those promises even now. Those promises have also been given to you.

The promises of Jesus that he will never cast you away, that he will never forsake you, were given to George and are being given to you also. So what is our response? King David tells us ...

GOD THE SOVEREIGN LORD
HEARS OUR PRAYERS AND PRAISES
II. OUR PRAISES OF HIS SPLENDOR

King David writes, “My mouth is filled with your praise – your splendor (beauty, glory) all day long” (71:8). What is so splendid and glorious about this God the Sovereign LORD?

Well, God the Sovereign LORD is splendid and glorious in himself. There is none greater than he. Then is none more powerful or wiser than he – this is seen in the fact that he is the creator of all things – the heavens, the universe, the earth, the seas, and all that is in them. He is the creator of mankind. God the Sovereign LORD is also splendid and glorious in what he has done especially for mankind.

All mankind have fallen into sin. The result of sin you have seen in George – the onset of old age, weakness, feebleness, loss of mental ability, and, finally, death. This will be the result for you too. But God the Sovereign LORD in his splendidness and glory did something about mankind’s sin – he sent his One and Only Son, Jesus.

Jesus is God the Sovereign LORD with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the Redeemer. Jesus paid the ransom price of his holy precious blood and innocent suffering and death on the cross. Jesus is the Savior who has taken away the sins of the world. And, so that mankind could benefit from what Jesus did, God has also given to believers his Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is God the Sovereign LORD with the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit brings people to faith through the Good News – or Gospel – of Jesus – all the things that Jesus did to redeem mankind from sin, death and hell. Through that Gospel, the Holy Spirit brings a person to faith and keeps a person in faith, so that when a person dies, he or she has eternal life with Jesus in heaven forever.

Here then is the splendor and glory of God the Sovereign LORD. God the Sovereign LORD created us; God the Sovereign LORD Jesus Christ redeemed us; God the Sovereign LORD – the Holy Spirit - called us to faith and kept us in faith through the Gospel. This God the Sovereign LORD is, therefore, the object of our praises now and in eternity.

APPROPRIATION

We especially direct our praises to God our Sovereign LORD Jesus Christ. Jesus is our crucified and risen Savior. Jesus has taken our sins upon himself and paid the ransom for us. Jesus' resurrection is the public statement that our sins have been forgiven. This is message of the Gospel that has come to us and that came also to George.

George was baptized on April 7, 1960, and confirmed on April 10th of that same year. George continued in Word and Sacrament by regular attendance at worship and frequent attendance at Holy Communion. Through these Means of Grace, God the Sovereign LORD, the Holy Spirit, brought George to faith and kept him in faith. That also means that during his lifetime, George was directing his praises to God the Sovereign LORD. That is the privilege we too have been given.

The same Gospel that George heard, you too are hearing and have the privilege of continuing to hear. This Gospel works faith in Jesus in your heart for eternal life, so that in heaven, you may continue to praise the splendor and glory of your God the Sovereign LORD.

CONCLUSION

Where is George now? By the faith in Jesus worked in George by the Holy Spirit in the Gospel, George is in heaven now.

What is George doing now? Along with King David and all the saints who have moved on to eternal life in heaven, George is praising the splendor and glory of our LORD Jesus Christ – praise which George also gave to our LORD Jesus in this life on earth. Where shall we be when we die?

Where shall we be when we die? What shall we be doing when we die? By grace through faith in Jesus, we will be in heaven praising our God, the Sovereign LORD – our LORD Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son our LORD,
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
Born of the virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

And is seated at the Right Hand of God the Father Almighty.

From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit;
The Holy Christian Church,
The Communion of Saints;
The Forgiveness of Sins;
The Resurrection of the Body;
And the Life Everlasting. Amen.