

## WHAT INSURANCE POLICY DO YOU HAVE?

I invite us to think for a moment about all the different kinds of insurance available: life insurance, health and dental insurance, homeowners insurance, motor vehicle insurance, and many more. The purpose of these different policies is to give us some form of security. It is sort of like purchasing an assurance that everything is really going to be all right no matter what happens. In fact, this need for assurance that all will be well goes beyond the purchasing of insurance, for people have a tendency to look to other things as security, as insurance against the unknown. We are told that we must have the right job, live in the right neighborhood, attend the right school, and buy the right clothes and the right things. The danger in all of this is that we tend to place these things in the wrong places.

The Gospel reading for today heralds the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. Jesus proclaimed, "*The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God has come, hear, repent and*

*believe in the good news.*" The kingdom has come! We are living in the kingdom now and it is progressing toward its completion in the second coming of Christ. On this journey as Xians, we are given the opportunity by God to move closer to the center of the kingdom, to where Jesus is. If at all we are going to move towards the center of the kingdom, that is preparing ourselves for the coming of the Lord in our personal lives, there needs to be some radical changes in our lives. We need to entrust our lives to God's Word, the Word spoken through JC, the word that came alive and active in him, and not go after our own insurance policy. We tend to spend a lot of time on our success and security that leads us to compromise our own Xian values and our personal well being. When we allow activities associated with work or school or personal life to eat away at time for family, for worship, and for service to others in our sphere, the good news of Jesus cannot be heard.

While Jesus did not promise that the journey into the kingdom would be a smooth road to where all our dreams will come true, he does promise that

he will be with those who believe in him. When we turn to Jesus it means turning away from all those voices that beckons us down the wrong security path without Jesus.

It is good to have insurance policies. It is good to advance at work. It is good to get a good education. It is good to want a decent home, and there is nothing wrong in trying to make our lives more pleasurable. All these things will wither like the grass. Vanity. When we forget that these things only last for a time, and that they tend to replace God in our lives. They become idols.

In the book of Jer., God says to put away those detestable idols and do not let them get in the way of our relationship with God. When we let those "idols" get in the way, we forget God and forgetting God is the base of all sin. For Xians, when Jesus is not at the center of their lives, they are actually putting idols in the place of God. This is what Jonah meant when he prayed from the belly of the fish, "*Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs.*" [Jonah 2:9] I believe that each of us here

should ask ourselves the question. "*Do I want to live in the grace of God or in my own insurance policy?*"

We must not forget that living in the grace of God involves a cost. The first disciples of Jesus recognized that cost when they left all to follow Jesus. Each person called to be a disciple must be willing to give up something in order to receive the good news and then to share it with others. It means then that Jesus becomes our insurance policy and not the idols that we make.

In 1Cor., Paul is not telling people that they may not attempt to improve their condition. He is just cautioning them against letting their lives slip out of focus that they lose sight of the fact that the grace of God must be the true center of their lives.

Paul reminds Xians that position in life, job security, and all the other idols do not provide true security. He says that to improve one's state in life is good, but to be centered on material well-being and security, and not on Jesus Christ, is empty. You see, it is not

the outward appearance, it is not the position that one has in life, the home one lives in, or the job one has that enables the Xian to succeed in God's kingdom. It is not the possessions we have gathered that enables personal security, not our insurance policy, but rather, it is what happens to us on the inside, the spiritual movement to Jesus Christ.

Jesus came to proclaim the good news that God is with us. But for God to be with us, we must center our lives on Jesus. In fact, the only insurance policy for redemption is Jesus Christ. The only assurance for success on our kingdom journey is our willingness to turn to the Lord.

AMEN.

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