

10-9-20

Here's Hope
by Rev. Jerry Rea

You Are Not Alone

The Christian life is often compared to a “walk.” It is our pathway. It is a lifestyle much more than just a decision. Deciding to trust Christ is our first step, but it is not the last. With that first step a long walk with Jesus opens up. It was no mistake when Jesus said “follow me” and not “join a church.” First we’re walking with Him, and second it is our life and I mean by that our lifestyle. It is a walk.

On our walk things can be smooth or they can be rough. Some lives have little pain and no trials. That may be you. Or, it may be true that your life is one trouble after another. That is (I think) more the norm. Some are graced with sunny days all along, but most struggle through rain and even storms. There are times with most of us that we think the rain will just *never* lift. The virus has felt a bit like that. We ask “when will this ever be over?” We need remember, though, that this time of distress and social distancing is not the norm. This too will pass.

The walk is easier when you know where you’re going. If you can see just a bit of a light ahead your heart jumps up to hope. When all looks distressing and that’s all you can see, you feel... dark. Have you had that “there it is” feeling? You round a corner and there it is. You find your destination on a map and say “there it is.” You reach the final leg of the trip, and there it is. Christian people know where they’re going. They know (at least in their heads) that Jesus has made a home for them. We hear Him say, and “I’ll come again and receive you unto myself.” Even if you have a problem hearing His voice, that seeds hope. That is the light in your future. Sometimes if you look closely you can see it. It’s worth the work of searching, because that light always brings hope.

The walk is easier when you’re not alone. In my old age I’ve come to believe that most people feel very alone. Some feel alone often. Billy Graham once said that “loneliness” is that with which most people struggle. That was their report to him. I’m not sure why that is but I have to agree there is a deep sense of loneliness in people as they *walk* their lives. Even if you feel alone, you are not alone. Feelings can be terribly deceptive. Some of us live our entire lives within our feelings. Facts can become secondary if even that. Jesus said, “I will be with you.” As you follow you are not alone. He is there. Here’s my take on this “walk.” In the Garden of Eden God (Himself) walked with Adam and Eve in the cool of the day. After Adam and Eve sinned, the *walks* were not the same. Something had come between them. When Jesus arrives in the New Testament He restores the closeness of our walk. First, He finds us, then He leads us. As you follow Him you will not be alone. His presence is just exactly that for which your heart thirsts. We walk with through sunny days and rainy days right up until our deaths. And when we reach that end, we step over together.

You are not alone,
Jerry Rea