



Hidden: Hidden Life

August 2, 2015

Stewardship Moment: On April 15, 1912, the British luxury liner, the “unsinkable” Titanic, struck an iceberg and began to sink into the frigid waters of the North Atlantic Ocean. One frightened woman found a place on a lifeboat that was about to be lowered into the Ocean. But she remembered something she’d left in her stateroom. She asked permission to return to her stateroom before they left. She was told they were letting the lifeboat down in 3 minutes, whether she was with them or not. She raced through the boat, which was now listing, past the gambling tables with all its money, and found her way into her room. She wasn’t looking for her expensive jewelry or diamond necklaces or rings. Instead, she grabbed 3 small oranges and raced back to the lifeboat before it descended.

That seems incredible! Before hitting the collision she would never have chosen 3 oranges over the smallest of diamonds, but something had changed. Death boarded the Titanic. Values were transformed. Priceless things became worthless.

Worship is transformational, too. It rearranges our values. What seemed important before, all of our temporal concerns, pales in comparison with a new reality. The world teaches us to think of YOURSELF; the faith teaches us to think of God and others. The world teaches us NOT to FORGIVE; our faith proclaims forgiveness – received and given. The world teaches us to GRAB, the faith teaches us to give. So now, we give of our very best back to Christ – who has given His very best for us!

August 2 “Hidden Life”

A review of “Hidden”

-“Hidden **PEOPLE**” (Adam & Eve in the garden – hiding from **God/each other**)

Guilt/Shame/Blame/Lying.

-“Hidden **STUFF**” (More fruit from Adam & Eve’s garden – sin and cover it up.)

Sexual sin, Money, and Addictions are frequent problems. They sometimes result in cover-up, deception, and sometimes even murder.

-“Hidden **POTENTIAL**” (**Fear** crowds elbows out faith and faithfulness)

Up until now, “hidden” has taken on the connotation of the “bad news” of darkness. But today is the transition: “Good News.” Being “hidden” can have a benefit. It can be positive. We can have a “Hidden **LIFE.**”

Earlier in Colossians, Paul has spoken about this transition of going from something bad to something good. In chapter one he said: (1:13-14)

For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

In chapter 2 he identified Col 2:12-15 ***having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.***

Col 3:1-4

Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³ For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

My identity: *“you have been **raised** with Christ”* (Christ resurrection changed everything)

My focus: *“set your **hearts** on things above (where Christ is seated at the right hand of God)*

*“set your **minds** on things above (not on earthly things)*

My identity: *“you **died**”* (and your life is now hidden with Christ in God)

My future: *When Christ appears, you will also appear with him in glory.*

What’s your identity? Who are you? I’m a son. I’m Hugh Thomas Harrison, Jr. (“Hugh Tommy” in Arkansas) I’m a brother. I went to WRHS and ORU. I went to ATS and on July 30, 1977. I was married (38 yrs). I’m a pastor – started in 1979. I’ve served 4 congregations. I became an uncle in 1980 and a dad in 1981 and again in ’84 and ’87. I hope to be a grandfather in October. But the most important thing that happened to me was in April of 1968. I was in the 9th grade. I gave my life to Christ. My sins were forgiven and I became a new person. These other things are indisputably part of who I am. But my very essence = “I’m a grateful believer in Jesus Christ.” That doesn’t mean I don’t have issues, problems, worries or fears. Paul, who wrote this text, had them, too.

Therefore....

Paul says that because Christians have a new identity including the fact that we died to our old ways of life), we are going to have a glorious future (when he comes again – or when we meet him). Until then, we are charged to keeping our focus on “things above” (over against “things below”)

Past: raised with Christ. For you died.

The old way of life = hidden within myself. It’s based on my sin: anger, blame, confusion, deception, distortion, fear, guilt and shame. There’s loneliness. There’s no sense of hope. The best the old way of life has to offer = get a lot of stuff; eat drink and be merry because we’re all going to die.

Future: appear with Christ in glory

Present: hidden with Christ

The new way of life = hidden with Christ. This life is really not seen in a lot of ways. It's a life with forgiveness, grace, healing and hope. It's rooted in the love of Jesus Christ.

The movie, "Inside Out," asks the question, "Who's in control of our lives?" Anger, Disgust, Fear, Sadness and Joy are some of the options. It also deals with memories, both conscious and sub-conscious. We are quite complicated! The truth of the matter is, we need all of these operative in our lives. But for the Christian there's one more at the control panel: Resurrection.

Cameron, a 10 year-old boy, walked into his pastor's office and told the pastor, Sarah: "We were learning about Jesus' baptism in Sunday School. The teacher asked the class who was baptized, and all the other kids raised their hands. I'd like to be baptized too." Sarah said

"Cameron, do you really want to be baptized because everyone else has been?" "No! I want to be baptized because it means I belong to God." The pastor was touched by the young boy's understanding.

"Well, how about this Sunday?" His smile turned to concern and he asked, "Do I have to be baptized in front of all those people in the church? Can't I just have a friend baptize me in the river, like Jesus was baptized by his cousin John?" Caught off guard, Sarah said: "You have a point. But, if a friend baptized you in the river, how would the church recognize it?"

Cameron quickly answered her question. "I guess by my new way of living" he said.

At baptism we affirm that as children of God we are called and equipped to live a new way of life. As tradition has it, whenever Martin Luther felt his energy flagging, his doubt growing, or his fear strengthening, he would cry out, "I am baptized!" In that cry would be the renewal of strength to go forward on whatever journey he faced.

Make that your rallying call: I am hidden in Christ. I've been baptized! Do you find yourself wondering about your own sense of self-worth and identity? Remember your baptism, for God has claimed you as one of his own! Do you find yourself thinking that you don't have what it takes to live as one of God's children? Remember your baptism, for God has given you the Holy Spirit to equip you for doing the work God has called you to do!

Eugene Peterson quote: "The reality is that baptism, not Myers-Briggs, defines who I am."

Receive God's grace. Importance of **TRUST**:

1.) Trust **God. Be hidden in Christ!**

2.) Trust other Christians. As "A.A" says: "You're only as sick as your secrets." Find safe places to do so.

Pastors, Stephen Ministers, Celebrate Recovery,