

our generation: “There is a Heaven to gain, and a Hell to shun”. May the Lord enable me to impress these eternal truths upon the hearts of all present in the chapels this summer.

“THE WEIGHT OF THE WORD”

Our camp theme this year is “Chabod”, the Hebrew word for “glory”, “heavy” or “weight”. I am not surprised in the least that this one word shares these meanings, as that is exactly what happens each summer at camp when God’s glorious presence, i.e., His “glory”—“the manifestation of His perfections” (Charles Hodge) fills the chapel, & more importantly, the hearts & minds of those present. How does this happen? If being the eternal, infinite, immense, unfathomable God that He is, when He comes upon, when He comes into a room or a person via His presence, minute, microscopic, infinitesimal human beings cannot help but “feel His “weight”. This often happens just by the sheer weight of the *truth* of His Word, when it is preached & laid upon the human heart by His Spirit. Of course, we all have seen an infinite number of times this NOT happening to humans, when God by His Spirit chooses not to. This still dumbfounds me. We truly are blind dead spiritually by nature until He quickens us first by His Spirit & sows the seeds of truth of the gospel.

“SAVED TO A PERSON, NOT A PLACE”

Both John Piper & Francis Chan have asked their audiences something to the effect of: “If when you die & went to Heaven, with all of its beauty, comfort, bliss, joy, & eternal blessings, you saw that Jesus wasn’t there, would it bother you?”. To answer “No” to such an interrogative would indicate such a dearth & shallowness of soul, & such a reply I’m sure would break the heart of The Godhead.

“STUCK IN THE MIDDLE WITH YOU”

If there is one truth of Scripture that has warmed, comforted, & awed my soul, it is when God’s acts of redemption toward His people are expressed in the Greek language’s “middle voice”, i.e., when the subject of the action does such an action “to or for” himself. The first that comes to mind is Eph.1:4, where it says the Father chose [middle voice] us in Christ (to Himself) before the foundation of the world. Verse 5 states that He predestined us to be adopted “to Himself”. Oh, blessed thought—that He didn’t predestine us *to Heaven!* Who cares, if it’s not *to Him!* But, in His fatherly love, consistent with His love for Jesus, He adopted His own to Himself. I’d rather spend eternity in Hell, if it’s with Him, than Heaven without Him! His presence *is* Heaven!

“EARLY MORNING SLEEPING PILL”

I haven’t slept well lately. This morning was no exception. When I awake earlier than I would desire, my mind “turns on”. That’s basically it. I have to get up, as falling back to sleep for me is a near impossibility; but not this morning. I proceeded to lie there & meditate on some verses from John 14 which I was reading last evening.

Jesus said, “I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go, I will come again & receive you unto Myself”. Oh, that it is again! “Unto *Myself!*” He goes on to say, “...that (or, so that, i.e., this is My reason for doing so) *where*

am, you may be also". Just prior, in John 13, before He washed His disciples' feet, it says He did so, knowing He came forth from the Father, & was returning *to Heaven*. No, Beloved—not "to Heaven", though, of course He was! The Holy Spirit through the hand of the Apostle John had him write "to *The Father*". We too, have been "brought close" to Him by the blood of Christ. May we continually avail our-selves of this unfathomable privilege! Thank you for reading this; I pray it was worth your time & effort.

Love in Him,

Michael and Kim