

Leaves Of Hope #11

Family Devotion written by C.M. Gullerud

Jesus, Thy boundless love to me - no thought can reach, no tongue declare;
Unite my thankful heart with thee and reign without a rival there.

To thee alone, dear Lord, I live; myself to thee, dear Lord, I give. L.H. 349:1

Ecclesiastes 6: 1-4

I have seen another evil under the sun, and it weighs heavily on men: God gives a man wealth, possessions and honor, so that he lacks nothing his heart desires, but God does not enable him to enjoy them, and a stranger enjoys them instead. This is meaningless, a grievous evil. A man may have a hundred children and live many years; yet no matter how long he lives, if he cannot enjoy his prosperity and does not receive proper burial, I say that a still born child is better off than he. It comes without meaning, it departs in darkness, and in darkness its name is shrouded.

When we look at those things which most people prize most highly and for which they are willing to spend their best efforts, what is the sum total of it all? What is truly worthwhile? It is well that we give serious consideration to this question especially when we are young and the future lies before us and there are, humanly speaking so many years to be lived and used and devoted to gainful occupation. In this connection it must be

remembered that the pride of life, the pull of the flesh, the lust of the eyes are powerful forces drawing us in the wrong direction. To embark upon the course that Satan has laid out for us is the easiest thing in the world. There may be thrills and exciting heart-throbbing moments, but the end thereof is the lake of fire of which the book of Revelation speaks.

For those who choose this course of the flesh and the world and remain true to this alone, it would be better for them that they had not been born. In the days of Solomon it was considered a blessing to have a large family of children. The Psalmist says that this person is truly blessed. And yet the writer of Ecclesiastes says that even though a person has a hundred children, the end is vanity and darkness for those who live for this life alone. Even though a person lives twice a thousand years (twice as long as Methuselah - the oldest man for whom we have a record in the Old Testament) – yet what would one profit, if this led to a life centered upon self and only earthly worldly pursuits? All efforts will finally go down to the same place – for all will eventually die and be buried. There is no escaping that nothing will remain and even one's name will be covered in darkness.

While we live and breathe we need to think on these things soberly and carefully. What profit is there in life if it is lived in

vanity with the soul bereft of all spiritual blessings while all labor is for the material world only? Instead of laboring for the food which perishes, we should work for “. . .food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.” John 6:27 When the question is asked, “To whom shall we go?” may we turn to the Savior and say, “You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” John 6:68-69 Surely, as we make this confession our own, it will follow that we will desire to be his witnesses, to serve him with all that we have and to serve him as long as we can. God move us to this end by his Holy Spirit.

Still let thy love point out my way;
What wondrous things thy love hath wrought!
Still lead me lest I go astray;
Direct my work, inspire my thought;
And if I fall, soon may I hear
Thy voice and know that love is near!

L.H. 349:6 Paul Gerhardt 1653