

Leaves Of Hope #13

Family Devotion written by C.M. Gullerud

Dear Christians, one and all, rejoice,
With exultation springing,
And, with united heart and voice
And holy rapture singing,
Proclaim the wonders God hath done,
How his right arm the victory won;
Right dearly it hat cost him.

L.H. 387:1 Martin Luther, 1523

Ecclesiastes 7: 1

A good name is better than fine perfume, and the day of death better than the day of birth.

Among Christian confessors of the faith there are names that stand out as good names and may well serve as witnesses to the truth of our text: “A good name is better than precious ointment.” Precious ointments are widely advertised. The more fragrant they are, the higher the price. They are much sought after by those who want to present themselves as desirable and attractive. But this fragrance lasts for only a few fleeting moments. There is no ointment on the market which makes it possible to say that the day of one’s death is better than the day of his birth - but for a child of God this is true.

As Christians we know that death brings freedom from vanity and from the foolish things of this earth. Death above all, brings the child of God into the presence of the Savior and he will be met fact to face. It brings God's children into the presence of the saints, the patriarchs and angels whose fellowship we will enjoy forever and ever. How can we be assured of this? How can our names, which all too often have been soiled with sin and muddled by our foolishness, be considered good in the sight of God? It is made possible through regeneration, the new birth which is God's gift in Christ for he has cleansed us from our sin and guilt. Our hope is found in the forgiveness of sins poured out from the heart of God for the sake of his Son who paid the price for our redemption. Let us ever be proud to bear the name – "Christian" after the name of him who redeemed us.

Oh, draw me, Savior, ever to thee;
So shall I run and never tire.
With gracious words still comfort me;
Be thou my hope, my sole desire.
Free me from every guilt and fear;
No sin can harm if thou art near.

L.H. 349, Verse 5 by Paul Gerhardt, 1653