

I BELIEVE IN LIFE EVERLASTING

2 Corinthians 5:8

June 1, 2008 p.m.

INTRODUCTION

- A. This is the final message in our series about the Apostle's Creed. Let's remember....
 - 1. It's the oldest Christian Creed-approx 250 A.D.
 - 2. It wasn't written by the Apostles but may have been what they taught.
 - 3. It may have been a baptismal confession.
 - 4. It follows a Trinitarian format.
 - 5. Its not meant to be comprehensive.
 - 6. Its not on the same level as Scripture, more like our BF & M.
- B. The final phrase in the Creed says, "I believe....in the life everlasting. Amen".

I. WHAT IS LIFE EVERLASTING?

The Apostle Paul tells us in our text-**READ**. What is everlasting life or heaven according to Paul?

⁸ **We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.**

- A. First, Paul says heaven is our real home ("....**at home...**").
 - 1. An American tourist visited the Polish rabbi, Hofetz Chaim: Astonished to see that the rabbi's home was only a simple room filled with books, plus a table and a bench, the tourist asked, "Rabbi, where is your furniture?" "Where is yours?" replied the rabbi. "Mine?" asked the puzzled American. "But I'm a visitor here. I'm only passing through." "So am I," said Hofetz Chaim.
 - 2. The writer of Hebrews says the same thing in Hebrews 13:14 NLT
¹⁴ **For this world is not our home; we are looking forward to our city in heaven, which is yet to come.**
 - 3. We must remember this from time to time.
- B. Second, Paul says that heaven is where Jesus is ("...**at home with the Lord**").
 - 1. The funeral for Pastor Bob Russell's father was held on a cold, blustery day in Pennsylvania. The roads were too bad for cars to go to the cemetery after the service, so the funeral director told Bob he would take the body to the grave. Bob couldn't bear the thought, so he, his brother, and their sons piled into a four-wheel-drive SUV and followed the hearse to the cemetery. In his own words, Russell says:
"We plowed through ten inches of snow into the cemetery, got about 50 yards from my dad's grave—with the wind blowing about 25 miles per hour—and the six of us lugged that casket down to the gravesite. We watched the body lowered into the grave, and we turned to leave. I felt something was undone, so I said, 'I'd like for us to have a prayer.' The six of us huddled together, and I prayed, 'Lord, this is such a cold, lonely place.' And then I got too choked up to pray any more. I kept battling to get my composure, and finally I just whispered, 'But I thank you, for we know to be absent from the body is to be safe in your warm arms.'"
 - 2. This is Jesus' promise to us-Luke 23:43.
⁴³ **Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."**

- C. Third, Paul says that eternal life starts now not later (“**We are confident....**”).
1. Eternal life isn’t the proverbial promise of “pie in the sky, bye and bye.”
 2. “Eternal” doesn’t mean “later”. It means “life will never end”.
 3. This eternal life doesn’t start when we die. It starts when we believe in Jesus Christ—John 5:24.
- ²⁴ **"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me *has* eternal life and will not be condemned; he *has* crossed over from death to life.**

II. WHY DOES THE CREED END WITH THE WORD “AMEN”?

- A. For most of us, “Amen” either means “the prayer is over” or “its time to eat”.
- B. It comes from a Hebrew word used in the Old Testament and it has three meanings.
1. “So be it”—i.e. let it happen as you say.
 2. “I agree”—i.e. with what you just said.
 3. “Yes, its true”—I concur the truth of what you just said.
- C. The Creed makes three important points by using the word, “Amen”.
1. First, it implies that everything found in the Creed is true.
 2. Second, when we say it, it implies we also agree the Creed is true.
 3. Third, it’s a reminder that Jesus is important to the Creed and our faith since it’s another name for Jesus—Rev. 3:14.
- ¹⁴ **"To the angel of the church in Laodicea write: These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation**

CONCLUSION

- A. Some churches recite the Apostle’s Creed every Sunday.
- B. I think a better response is to live according to the truth of the Apostle’s Creed every day.
- C. However, as we conclude this study let’s read it together.