

In the name of Christ, greetings from my home to yours,

SCRIPTURE:

Joshua 24:15 (CEB) – Larger reading: Joshua 24:

“But if it seems wrong in your opinion to serve the Lord, then choose today whom you will serve. Choose the gods whom your ancestors served beyond the Euphrates or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you live. But my family and I will serve the Lord.”

STORY:

Charles L. Slattery relates the story of a woman who told her husband one evening that the new pastor had called during the day. “What did he say?” the husband asked. The wife replied: “He asked a very strange question. He asked: ‘Does Christ live here?’” “Did you tell him that we are respectable people who read the Bible and pray every day and go to church every Sunday?” asked the husband. “He didn’t ask that,” the wife said. “He only asked: ‘Does Christ live here?’”

REFLECTION:

G. K. Chesterton, the noted British poet and theologian, was a brilliant man who could think deep thoughts and express them well. However, he was also extremely absent-minded and over the years he became rather notorious for getting lost. He would just absolutely forget where he was supposed to be and what he was supposed to be doing. On one such occasion, he sent a telegram to his wife which carried these words: "Honey, seems I'm lost again. Presently, I am at Market Harborough. Where ought I to be?" As only a spouse could say it, she telegraphed back a one-word reply "HOME!"

There is something special about that word ... Home. It is a place of safety, warmth and comfort. The smells are familiar to us. The people there know us with all of our faults and they still love us. As the old saying goes, “home is where the heart is.” And as the Christmas song states, “I’ll be home for Christmas if only in my heart.”

So one of my counted blessings this Christmas season is my home. Our present home has taken us more time than usual to become comfortable in our house ... maybe it is because we loved our last home so much and really hated to move out, but this is where our grandchildren live and they make all the difference. It really helps to have the familiar Christmas decorations surrounding me. It is also a blessing to know that our daughters have homes in which they are comfortable and are discovering happiness in life.

Sometimes we can get lost ... even in our own home. We simply forget how to live. Oh, our bodies are at rest, the surroundings are familiar, and our stuff is scattered about, but our heart simply gets lost in the process. We go through the motions, moving from one day to the next. There seems to be a disconnect between our mind and our heart, our spirit. Nothing, or very little, makes any real sense.

It is at these times that I have found it necessary to check my spiritual compass. Nearly every time my directional needle is pointing in the wrong direction. It doesn't take much to get us off course and only a fraction of a degree in one direction or another can bring about disastrous results.

We all know what we are supposed to do to remain on course – prayer, Bible reading, meditation, etc. At best I run hot and cold in these spiritual disciplines and it usually takes the sense of that disconnect between mind and heart to bring me back. The message of Christmas that his name is Emmanuel, God with us is extremely helpful. If God is with me then I am not lost and wherever we are together is home!

QUOTE:

“A house is made of walls and beams; a home is built with love and dreams.” – source unknown

PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, I choose you and I invite Christ to live in my home. Too many times, Lord, I make the assumption that he lives here, but lately I've struggled with that as a reality for my home. My favorite “news” stations runs nonstop. Fills the air and atmosphere with negativity and feelings. So don't let me fool myself to think that my Savior lives here when in truth he doesn't ... at least not full time. Help me, Lord, help me!

And the faith journey continues, Pastor Jim
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