

- Greetings to all the wonderful Saints at Manatee Life,
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SCRIPTURE:

2 Timothy 1:10 (MSG) – Larger reading: 2 Timothy 1:6-14

But we know it now. Since the appearance of our Savior, nothing could be plainer: death defeated, life vindicated in a steady blaze of light, all through the work of Jesus.

STORY:

In Valladolid, Spain, where Christopher Columbus died in 1506, stands a monument commemorating the great discoverer. Perhaps the most interesting feature of the memorial is a statue of a lion destroying one of the Latin words that had been part of Spain's motto for centuries. Before Columbus made his voyages, the Spaniards thought they had reached the outer limits of earth. Thus their motto was "Ne Plus Ultra," which means "No More Beyond." The word being torn away by the lion is "Ne" or "no," making it read "Plus Ultra." Columbus had proven that there was indeed "more beyond."

OBSERVATION:

I like that thought, "more beyond". Our vision for life is limited not by our physical sight, but by our spiritual insight. We all fear death to some degree – the separation from our loved ones and the special journey we are on with them as well as the physical process of death – pain, pills and diminishing capability. But I've often wondered if we would lift our gaze beyond the earthly reality and embrace the reality that God has for us would we really fear death ... even the separation and pain?

The phrase that I find offensive, as a Christian, is, "Well, it bets the alternative!" WHAT? The alternative to this life for a Christian is eternity ... with Christ and those who have preceded us in death ... that's the "more beyond". Life doesn't end it just changes the venue ... where there is no more sickness, no more pain, no more heartache. Who wouldn't want to embrace that!

Now granted, I'm not and neither are you, ready to get on the eternity bound bus today. But when the time has arrived and our date with God's destiny has arrived, if our vision is on the "more beyond" then we will be able to depart with grace and hope because death has been defeated in Christ Jesus. Therefore, life has been vindicated, the light of eternity is bright and there isn't any darkness any longer. We see that there is "more beyond".

The challenge is that once we have been freed from the fear of the beyond we can begin to live in the here and now with abandonment, throwing off the shackles that have fettered us to our fears and anxieties. Release us to live with the reality that there is "more beyond".

*Get on board, little children
Get on board, little children
Get on board, little children
There's room for many-a-more.*

*I hear the train a comin'
I hear her close at hand
I hear those car wheels rumblin'
And rollin' through the land.*

*Get on board, little children
Get on board, little children
Get on board, little children
There's room for many-a-more.*

*The fare is cheap
And all can go.
The rich and poor are there
No second class upon this train
No difference in the fare.*

QUOTE:

“The people feel and look the same, like they've settled here even though they know there's something more - something better - just beyond where they are.”

– Courtney Summers

PRAYER:

Thanks for giving us the hope that there is “more beyond” than just what we physically see. Thank you for giving us hope when we see so little hope. Thank you for the alternative.

And the faith journey continues, Pastor Jim

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