

## Minister's Message – September 2014

### Where Do You Come From? Where Are You Going?

Most of us have an innate desire to know where we come from. If you don't the government still wants to know! We want to know when and where we were born. Adopted children often try hard to find their biological parents. Many are searching their family tree to learn more about who they are. Maybe they will find an ancestor who was a royal, a famous or an infamous person. We have this longing to know who we are.

For some this family tree goes way, way back – they want to know the origin of life. They want to know where they came from in a cosmic sense, and their place in the universe. Some think their family tree goes back to the apes. I am content that mine goes back to Adam. In the beginning God made men and women in his own image. This is what is written in the Bible, the word of God. It is a nobler and more comforting truth than the idea of coming from apes!

Where are we going? This is the other big question we ask. We know that death is up ahead, but is this all we know? Is death the end? Most of us know there is something beyond death – but what? For generations human beings have been searching for an answer. Must we just go on searching? Is there no answer to this question? Do we have to keep living in ignorance – in the dark as it were?

There is one man who knew where he came from and where he was going. That man is unique in that he is the Son of God, but fully human nevertheless. He was born into this world and he died in this world. He was made like us in every way, except without sin (Hebrews 4:15). It is written of Jesus of Nazareth that he knew 'He had come from God and was going to God' (John 13:3). How amazing! Jesus was not searching his origins – he knew where he was from. Jesus was not in the dark about his future – he was going to God. Such knowledge allowed Jesus to live the life he did. It allowed him to humbly wash the feet of his disciples. It allowed him to suffer and die on a cruel cross. Knowing where we come from and where we are going has a huge impact on the way we live today.

So, where have you come from? You were born into this world as a baby. You know your birthday and hope others remember it also. It is marked on the calendar as your day. This is part of who you are. The day of your death is not yet marked on the calendar, but will be one day. It will be engraved on your tombstone as part of who you are.

You can have a different life and death scenario. It is said that if you are born once you die twice, but if you are born twice you die once. What does this mean? Jesus said to Nicodemus, 'You must be born again' (John 3:7) – you must be born of the Spirit. When you repent of your sin and believe in Jesus he forgives your sin and you are born again of the Spirit. This second birth makes you a new creation in Christ Jesus (II Corinthians 5:17). In this birth you receive eternal life (John 3:16). Eternal life is to know Jesus Christ and be united to him. It means that just as Jesus faced death knowing he was going to God, you can face death with the same knowledge. You will not face the second death (Revelation 20:14-15). Death will not separate you from the love of God in Jesus Christ. 'Whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord' (Romans 14:8). Wow!

This is not just 'pie in the sky when we die'. This is the truth, and this is knowledge that affects how we live today. This knowledge led to Jesus washing his disciple's feet. It led to him going silently to the cross as a lamb to the slaughter – when he had the power to blow his enemies away in an instant. Knowledge of where we come from and where we are going plays a big part in how we live today. Do you know where you are from, and where you are going? Jesus did, and you also will know if you believe in Jesus.

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