

BACK TO THE BASICS-JESUS!

One Friday afternoon as I was preparing to write the Sunday sermon I sensed someone looking at me. I looked up from the computer to see this little doleful face peeking at me from the doorway of my study. It was my nine-year-old grandson Preston.

Now all the grandkids know that when Grandma is studying with the door shut that they are not to bother me, so I knew something was up. I told Preston to come in and asked him what was wrong and how could I help him.

Tears formed in his little eyes and dropped onto his cheeks as he whispered, *Grandma, I need help with my English homework. I'm trying to do it, but I just don't understand what the book is talking about, and I have a big test tomorrow and I just have to pass it. I've worked so hard to keep my grades up so I can go to camp, I've just gotta pass this test. I just gotta! I know I'm not supposed to bother you when the door is shut, but...* his little voice trailed off.

I closed down the computer, quickly pushed my chair back, stood up, and putting my arms around his little body, gave him a hug and told him that of course I would help him. He wiped at the tears with his shirt sleeve and in a quivering voice whispered *thanks Grandma!* We sat down at the kitchen table, he handed me his book, *Back to the Basics of English* and 30 minutes later his homework was done and he was heading out the door to play—slamming the door in his excitement. Suddenly, the door burst open, Preston stuck his head in and said, *I love you Grandma,* and then he was gone again. But the smile he gave me said it all.

Back at the computer I gave a quick thank you to the Lord for being able to help my grandson and for blessing little Preston and meeting him at his point of need. *Now I thought, I need to get back to preparing the Sunday sermon, as I still didn't have a clue of what to write. Help me Lord,* I prayed. *What do you want to impart to the heart of Your people?*

Suddenly, I remembered a story that I once read and even typed out as I knew in my heart that one day, the Lord would use it in a sermon. *Well,* I thought, *today is that day!* Searching through the archives, I found it and asking the Lord for His anointing upon it; I started writing.

Watching a little TV on Sunday instead of going to church, I watched a church in Atlanta honoring one of its senior pastors who had been retired many years. He was 92 at that time and I wondered why the church even bothered to ask the old gentleman to preach at that age.

After a warm welcome, introduction of this speaker, and as the applause quieted down, he rose from his high back chair and walked slowly, with great effort and a sliding gait to the podium. Without a note or written paper of any kind he placed both hands on the pulpit to steady himself and then quietly and slowly he began to speak....

"When I was asked to come here today and talk to you, your pastor asked me to tell you what was the greatest lesson ever learned in my 50-odd years of preaching. I thought about it for a few days and boiled it down to just one thing that made the most difference in my life and sustained me through all my trials. The one thing that I could always rely on when tears and heartbreak and pain and fear and sorrow paralyzed me... the only thing that would comfort was this verse....."

*"Jesus loves me this I know.
For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to Him belong,
we are weak but He is strong.....
Yes, Jesus loves me....
The Bible tells me so."*

When he finished, the church was quiet. You actually could hear his footsteps as he shuffled back to his chair. I don't believe I will ever forget it.

A pastor once stated, "I always noticed that it was the adults who chose the children's hymn 'Jesus Loves Me' (for the children of course) during a hymn sing, and it was the adults who sang the loudest because I could see they knew it the best."

This truth was again brought into play when a friend of mine had a fall and ended up in the ER. As we were waiting for the gurney to come take her to surgery, one of the pastors came in to pray for her. Standing next to him I was blessed by his prayers and then quite surprised as he started singing *Jesus Loves Me*. Then he followed it up with another song and my friend, although in pain, sang right along with him. It was a first for me, but one that I would never forget. You could feel the presence of God in the room and peace settled upon us all.

I was reminded of John 14:27—*Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.* There is a peace here that the world cannot provide let alone understand, yet, this peace of God is the very thing we most need, and especially needed that day. I have visited many people in the hospital and to be honest, I would pray, but I have never thought to sing to the patient, let alone sing *Jesus Loves Me*. It just seemed to be a strange setting, in that little ER cubicle, but you know what, IT WAS OF GOD AND IT FIT PERFECTLY!

Galatians 2:20 – I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of god, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

When we go BACK TO THE BASICS, JESUS

Things happen!

It is good to remember that the teakettle, although up to its neck in hot water, continues to sing. *Rejoice evermore. In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.* (1 Thessalonians 5:16, 18) Discouragement seeds are so effective and they take root so quickly, but they don't seem to thrive in the heart of a grateful person. Don't let the seeds of discouragement take root in your soul. Seek always God's peace. It is part of your heritage.