

SERMON MEMORIAL DAY 2100 WHEN GOD WRITES YOUR NAME

Isaiah 49:8-16

We all would like to be remembered.

Even when were kids,

SLIDE----Didn't we all love to inscribe or carve our name on things.

I carved my name and initial on the trees around our farm,

In our barn,

Some of the places I'm guilty of

I wouldn't want to mention,

Like a particular desk in the Olivet school house.

It was just too tempting.

SLIDE----Yet you will find EHR inscribed on the underside of the desk,

I did it with a knife that today I would have been expelled for carrying to school.

Besides as little four grader I didn't think I'd get caught.

Hey in my defense,

I was just another name among many.

Etched in memory there.

Don't be doing it now kids.

SLIDE---Look at the headlines of a New York Paper in march.

Alexa Gonzalez, 12-Year-Old, Arrested For Doodling On School Desk: Taken To Station In Handcuffs AP | Posted 03.23.2011 | New York

Our names means something to us.

We carve our names,

And write our epitaphs so we will be remembered.

A businessman wanted to be remembered on his deathbed, so he called his friend and said, "Bill, I want you to promise me that when I die you will have my remains cremated."

His friend asked "And what do you want me to do with your ashes?"

His said: "Just put them in an envelope and mail them to the Internal Revenue Service, and write on the envelope, 'Now you have everything'."

I. God Knows Our Names

This passage from Isaiah came at a time of great difficulty in the life of the nation of Israel.

So much difficulty,

that the nation thought God had forgotten them.

God remind Isaiah that he had not forgotten them.

Indeed, God is leveling mountains, raising highways,

making the path back to God safe and level for His people.

And then, God says,

SLIDE----**16 See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands...Isaiah 49:16**

Maybe we don't engrave names on our hands,

But we do engrave them and implant them on our children,

At birth they are legally implanted on their person.

For the rest of their lives..

Names represents thoughts, feelings, and traditions.

We don't even name our dogs lightly.

SLIDE----Young parents and families spend a lot of time researching names.

Many cultures honor their elders

by naming children after them.

None of my grandkids are named Eldon,

Course none of my kids were name that either.

My mother on her death bed couldn't even remember why she choose that name for me.

My middle name is Herbert, which was my father's name.

Since my 4 year old grandson found out my middle name,

He has had great delight and laughs when he calls me.

Pappa Eldon Herbert.

Baxter's book "In Search of Your British and Irish Roots"

describes a pattern that was popular in England in the 1700-1875 period:

The first son was named after the father's father

The second son was named after the mother's father

The third son was named after the father

The fourth son was named after the father's eldest brother

The first daughter after the mother's mother

The second daughter after the father's mother

The third daughter after the mother

The fourth daughter after the mother's eldest sister

After trying to remember all that, no wonder

We have so many named John and Mary, Jim and Susan.

Up until this century,

Parents could usually count on one third of their children not surviving.

SLIDE----If a child died, the name was often used again.

If a baby died, the next child of the same sex

would often be given the same name.

So when checking birth records,

We should never stop when we find the name we are looking for.

If you see George in the 1850 census as a six year old

and then in the 1860 census as an eight year old,

it may mean the first one died shortly after the 1850 census was taken.

Names mean something to us.

It's been interesting to watch my grandchildren learn how to write their names.

I don't remember what it was like to write my name for the first time.

But I remember helping my grandchildren.

To spell it out.

Then Sound it out.

Then write it out.

They would say : Is that my name?

Then to put the pencil in their hands and have them try to write it out.

How proud they were to be able to write down who they are.

SLIDE----How proud we are to get mail and have it signed with their names.

This is the name by which we are known.
 Its has become a part of me as much as my birthmark,
 Or my brown eyes.
 That's me, right there on that piece of paper.
 Suddenly my name has taken on a life of its own.

I remember the first time I felt accepted as an adult.
 It was a proud day when I signed my first check,
 And the bank accepted it just like any other adult.

II. MEMORIAL DAY IS ABOUT NAMES

and its about remembering.

SLIDE---This is what the LORD says:“In the time of my favor I will answer you,and in the day of salvation I will help you;I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people,to restore the land and to reassign its desolate inheritances, Isaiah 49:8

God says he will remember and deliver us.
 Tomorrow our nation pauses to remember those who
 have given their lives in service to their country.
 The President and other leaders across this nation,
 Will pause in silent tribute to those who have made
 the ultimate sacrifice for duty, honor, and country.

SLIDE----Our monuments of remembrance have the names of our loved ones on them.

Veterans of the many wars.
 Wives, husbands, sons and daughters.
 Which we weep, and grieve over.
 The killing is not ended in Iraq or Afghanistan, Librya, or Egypt.

With the death of Osama Ben Lauden,
 We are reminded of the more than 3000 names
 That will be remembered in NY city.
 Because we do not want their names to vanish,
 To disappear from our consciousness,
 Like the dust cloud over NYC on that fateful day.
 Here in Aberdeen we to have our monuments to our loved ones.
 Not just the war time remembrances.

SLIDE----But the little markers that are spread across this lands in prairie Cemeteries,

And Ornate vaults, in simple meadows,
 And mown lawns.
 Every name of the child, or spouse,
 The son or daughter, we want to remember.
 We want to stop
 Our hearts may skip a beat
 As we call out their names
 Those who have been beloved of us.

So that we will never forget them.

We may act like we get on with our lives,
 But they have touched us and
 And their memory lingers on
 Because we have been changed and moved by them.
 Even in our church today we remember those who have died.
 Because they shared a part of the direction we now enjoy.

III. WHOSE NAME DO YOU REMEMBER TODAY

God wants us to remember as well.
 And to reassure us that he remembers.
 We may think he has forgotten us

SLIDE---14 Like Zion said, “The LORD has forsaken me, the Lord has forgotten me.”

But God says:

SLIDE---15 “Can a mother forget the baby at her breast and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget you! Isaiah 48:14-15

Then God Gives us a graphic pictures of his love for us.

SLIDE---16 See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands... Isaiah 48:16

Why does he says we will be engraved on the palm of his hands,
 And not his heart, or his mind?

Because hands are one of our most important tools for expressing love.
 We place our hand on the shoulder of a grieving friend to show our care.

SLIDE---We hold hands to quietly show our affection for another person.

Or to comfort one another.

We use our hands to sooth a fevered head or hold a child’s face.

Did you know that our hands have some
 Of the most sensitive skin on our entire body,
 Our hand have such delicate control that ¼ of our brain surface area
 is dedicated to our hands,

SLIDE---We use our hands to touch our loved ones tenderly.

We shake hands to give a warm greeting.

It is with our hands, the work of our hands that we so often give to others.

And where there is intense love,

there is a desire to give and give and give, even if giving hurts.

The Psalmist say

SLIDE---Oh Lord our how majestic is they name in all the earth.

When I look at thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou

SLIDE--hast established; 4 what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man

SLIDE--that thou dost care for him? 5 Yet thou hast made him little less than God, and dost crown him with glory and honor. Psalms 8:1,3-5

It was God’s hands that formed the firmament.

It was God’s hands that formed Adam from the dust,

And Eve from a rib bone.

SLIDE---It was Jesus hands that reached out
And grabbed hold of your sin and mine,
And they pierced his hands and side
As he took them into himself.
There on the cross his hands and feet cried out
With his broken body in agony.

Think about it this way.

A man was building a deck on his home, and when he went to reach for a
2/6 plank his hand slid down it and a large sliver carved its way into the palm of his hand.
He painfully pulled it out, stopped the bleeding, bandaged it,
and went back to work thinking that he would quickly forget about it.
But he discovered that each time he grabbed a tool with that hand,
Each time he picked up another board,
the wound in his hand painfully reminded him of that two by six.
Every small amount of pressure smarted.
The cut was in the exact place that would ensure that the busier he got,
the more he would remember.

Listen again... to God...

SLIDE---"See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands."

I have pierced my hands in remembrance of your.
To Thomas he said,

**SLIDE---"Put your finger here, see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side.
Stop doubting and believe!" (John 20:27)**

God has cut us into his hands, so that no matter how busy he is
in the infinite macroscopic universe, he cannot forget us.

God has cut us into his hands so that even as he works on the atomic details
of those microscopic molecular machines which display the work of his hands,
he cannot forget us.

because we are the ones cut into his hands,
the busier God gets,
the more he remembers us.

So if you are in a world of hurt,
If grief has overwhelmed you,
Sorrow has encompassed you,
Guilt and sin has depressed you,
Loneliness is calling out for you,
Remember God's word of Isaiah is for you.

SLIDE---"See, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; I cannot forget you".

.. stop doubting and believe!

Friends, No matter what God is up to today,
How busy he may be,
be assured, he is remembering you.
But God takes it a step farther.

He says:
"I have engraved you."
I have carved you,
Not your name.
YOU AND I ARE are there carved on the heart of the living God.

Do you see the depth of his love.
He has engraved your person,
Your image,
Your circumstances,
Your sins,
Your temptations,
Your weaknesses
Your wants,
Your works, on the palm of his hand.

When a person returns to that Olivet school
Lift the top of the wooden desk,
They will see only my name ,

But when we look on the hand of God,
You see all of me.
Engraved, tattooed, carved and grafted forever
In the palm of his hand.

My name will be in the book of life,
But my image and person will be in the palm of his hand.
Just as God remembers us,
Today on this memorial day we remember
Our loves one as well.

So as we close today: Let's listen to
Listen to Jamie O'Hara's song
50,000 names carved on the wall.
START SONG