



# Blackfoot Church of Christ

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## Rest in Peace

By Doy Moyer

“Rest in Peace” (RIP, requiescat in pace): these are the words we most often hear when we know that one has died. Certainly we wish for those who have passed on to “rest” in some fashion. There are some things about that phrase, though, that warrant a little more thought.

First, the child of God recognizes that just because one passes on is no guarantee of peace. We cannot legitimately expect those who have rejected God to rest in peace, whether in this life or thereafter, when “the way of peace they have not known” (Rom 3:17). While we are not the final judges, God has not been silent about this matter. Those who “do not know God” and “do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ ... will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might” (2 Thess 1:8-9). That is not a promise of peace or rest, and while we may be well-wishers as a good gesture, we must finally yield to the judgment of God. Well-intentioned wishes or prayers won’t change that.

Second, there is a legitimate way to know that we can “rest in peace.” John wrote, “Here is a call for the endurance of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus. And I heard a voice from heaven saying, ‘Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ‘Blessed indeed,’ says the Spirit, ‘that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!’ (Rev 14:12-13)

There is indeed a Sabbath rest for the people of God, “for whoever has entered God’s rest has also rested from his works as God did from his. Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.” (Heb 4:10-11) When a child of God passes on from this life, “rest

in peace” is indeed appropriate, for it is then based upon God’s promise. We can stand on that!

Third, peace, as we are using it here, is a state of tranquility or serenity. This is a function of the mind. It would be odd for unbelievers to utter such a phrase for one who has died. If they really believe the dead one is no more (i.e., the material body was the totality of the person, and once dead nothing else of that person remains at all), then there is no real meaning to resting in peace, for there would be no mind to experience any form of true serenity. It would just be completely silenced and unable to experience anything. Nonexistence and the feeling of peace are not the same. I would argue, though, that people uttering such in the face of losing a loved one is evidence that we do in fact want there to be some form of eternal peace that can be experienced and felt in some way. It is an expression of hope.

The above are premised on what happens after we depart from this world. However, resting in peace is not something to be experienced only after we die. Rather, it is part of the continual experience of the child of God now. The appeal of Jesus should always be before us: “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt 11:28).

Paul wrote, “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Phil 4:4-7)

Rest and peace are both available now. It is not merely some illusive idea to be wished upon one who has passed regardless of their eternal outcome; it is an offer from God to those who come to Jesus and trust His promises. Don’t get me wrong. Once we have experienced the full redemption of our bodies (the resurrection) and are safely in the presence of God eternally, we will rest in peace in a way that we can only begin to taste now. We already have it through Jesus Christ and His forgiveness and spiritual blessings (Eph 1), but there is a “not yet” aspect to this that keeps our living hope fully expectant.

The point, then, should not escape us. “Rest in peace” is not something I desire to wish upon those who have passed only; I want to wish it upon all now. And I can do so knowing this: those who are Christ’s already have a sense of rest and peace because they have been reconciled to God.

“Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all.” (2 Thess 3:16)

## **A Day of First Things**

By Joe R. Price

We cannot overstate the importance of what happened of the Day of Pentecost, recorded in Acts 2. Many firsts occurred that day, which continue to impact the lives of Christians, as well as the whole world.

The first day of the week. It is notable that Pentecost (also called the Feast of Weeks) was on the first day of the week (Lev. 23:15-16). From that day forward, we worship on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7).

The first gospel sermon preached by the apostles (Acts 2:4, 11, 22). The gospel had been preached in promise, and prophetically (Gal. 3:8; 1 Pet. 1:10-11). Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom (Matt. 4:23). Now, His apostles use the keys that opened the door to the kingdom, by preaching Jesus as Lord and Christ (Matt. 16:19; 18:18; 1 Pet. 1:12).

The first time the plan of salvation was preached to the lost. Jesus commissioned His apostles to preach salvation to the world (Mk. 16:15-16). On that day, sinners who believed Jesus is the Christ, were told to repent and to be baptized for the remission of sins, and to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:37-38).

The first conversions. About 3,000 souls believed, and obeyed the apostles, and they were saved that very day (Acts 2:41).

The first church came into existence. The church of Christ was composed of “about three thousand souls” on that day (Acts 2:41). The Jerusalem church became the first local congregation of Christians. There would be more (Acts 8:4; 9:31).

The first kingdom worship is recorded. After their conversion and salvation, the Christians continued to worship together (Acts 2:42). Theirs was not a flash-in-the-pan conversion; it was a life-changing, life-absorbing decision.

The first acts of church benevolence occurred. Shortly after Pentecost, the church began caring for its own, by giving and distributing as any among them had need (Acts 2:44-45).

## Prayer Requests & Announcements

- Porters are traveling out of the country and will be back this week.
- April had a procedure to replace a battery in her monitor.
- Empey's will be traveling Wednesday-Friday for a Dr's appointment this week.
- Keep April in your prayers as she deals with health issues
- The Christians in the Philippines.
- Bible class tonight 6:00pm at Chad and Kass' on evangelism

**For prayer requests, call or text**

Chad @ (208) 221-2587 or Ross @ (208) 680-6590

## Assignments

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| <b><u>Today</u></b><br><b>Bible Study</b> – Ross Ward<br><b>Song Leader</b> – Tom Mitchell<br><b>Lord's Table</b> – Chad Mitchell<br><b>Sermon</b> – Ross Ward       | <b><u>Wednesday</u></b><br><b>Bible Study</b> – Chad Mitchell<br><b>Song Leader</b> – Tom Mitchell<br><b>Invitation</b> – Ross Ward       |
| <b><u>Next Sunday</u></b><br><b>Bible Study</b> – Ross Ward<br><b>Song Leader</b> – Chad Mitchell<br><b>Lord's Table</b> – David Porter<br><b>Sermon</b> – Ross Ward | <b><u>Next Wednesday</u></b><br><b>Bible Study</b> – Chad Mitchell<br><b>Song Leader</b> – Chad Mitchell<br><b>Invitation</b> – Ross Ward |

Blackfoot Church of Christ  
370 North Shilling Ave.  
Blackfoot, Idaho 83221

### **Meeting Times:**

Sunday Morning Classes 10:00AM  
Sunday Morning Worship 11:00AM  
Wednesday Evening 7:30PM



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