



Pastor's Corner

Dear Friends,

"You would know the secret of death. But how shall you find it unless you seek it in the heart of life? If you would indeed behold the spirit of death, open your heart wide unto the body of life. For life and death are one, even as the river and the sea are one."

Kahlil Gibran, The Prophet

In John 1:1-2 we read, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God."* "The Word" referenced here is Jesus Christ. When I first read this verse, I was like—what???! *What do you mean Jesus was around in the beginning?* In the Bible he doesn't take the stage until the second act (New Testament)—when the world was being created Jesus should have still been in hair and makeup. But there it is, Jesus, present from the get-go: laying the foundation, directing the workings of the world and the vast places beyond it. I imagine him wearing one of those yellow hard hats, with blueprints in his hand, talking with a worker and pointing off into the distance where some really important construction project was taking place; making sure everything was done right.

This brought to mind Kahlil Gibran's quote above, about Life and death. Because of God's grace, Life is always on the scene; a force holding all things together; a power that has the final say, because of Jesus' Resurrection over death. But there'd be no need for Life without death. Rather than being adversaries, though, they flow into each other as naturally as an inhale and exhale, and we have to embrace both, or we'll miss out on Life's power. Though death seems to prevail, Life is there, maybe even wearing a hard hat and holding the blueprints, so that all unfolds as it should. *"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" ... [T]hanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (1 Corinthians 15:55-57).

As I went through my sister's closet recently, and packed up her clothes, preparing to take them to Goodwill, I reflected on how sad it is that all remnants of 56 years of living can be wiped away in the 17 hours it took to empty her apartment. As if she'd never been there. And it is true that if we only look with eyes that see the tangible, she is gone. But for we who look with different eyes, who can see the empty tomb instead of the cross, her life is ever-present. Paul wrote, *"if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's"* (Romans 14:8). Sorrow will never have the final word—that belongs to Christ alone, and he promises the Resurrection Life. Thanks be to God! Amen.

Pastor Kara