

On the Wings of Forever; 1 Peter 1:3-4

I. Character

- A. "She is such a character"
- B. Merriam Webster's — one of the attributes or features that make up and distinguish an individual.
- C. Hebrews 1:3 (ESV); He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

II. The Same

- A. "The only thing constant in life is change" Heraclitus (a Greek philosopher who was active around B.C. 500)
- B. Our vocabulary has changed (as well as society's morals and values)
 1. That's bad (good), or it's fly (good), that's lit (good)
 2. Most of the other terms I looked up are not suitable for decent conversation
 3. Sometimes we use a word and we don't know it has been changed — it can be embarrassing
 4. One of the terms was very interesting to me, considering it is in use by people who typically don't believe or listen to the Scriptures — "Bible"
 5. You are supposed to put that in front of or behind of a statement of truth — "I didn't take your food from the fridge, that's Bible"
 6. It seems there is a subconscious recognition that the Bible is truth!
- C. Hebrews 13:8 (ESV); Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.
- D. We don't have to be concerned with changing language or truths
 1. The promise he gave Abraham has come to fruition for us today
 2. All nations will be blessed through his offspring (Genesis 12:3, 7)
 3. And that blessing is something absolutely amazing!

III. It Is Well

- A. That blessing means we can well and truly say, "It is well with my soul"
 1. Horatio Spafford was an attorney in Chicago
 2. In 1871 he lost his son to Pneumonia (Scarlet Fever)
 3. He lost much of his business in 1871 to the great Chicago fire
 4. He planned a vacation to Europe in 1873 for him, his wife and four daughters
 5. At the last minute, due to some zoning issues (from the fire) in Chicago, he could not sail with his family and he sent them on planning to take another ship in a few days
 6. Four days into the journey across the Atlantic the ship Ville du Harve collided with an iron-hulled Scottish ship, the Loch Earn — it only took 12 minutes for the Ville du Harve to sink
 7. His wife, Anna, survived, but his four daughters drowned
 8. She sent him a telegraph that said simply, "Saved alone, what shall I do?"
 9. Horatio took the next available ship to Europe
 10. About four days into the journey the captain called on Mr. Spafford and told him they were over the place where the Ville du Harve sank
 11. According to a daughter born after the tragedy, it is here that Mr. Spafford penned the words to this hymn
 12. I can now imagine Horatio Spafford, on the ship sailing over the wreck of the Ville du Harve thinking to himself, "my daughters are dancing on the wings of forever"
- B. I know many of us have said, "what shall I do?" after tragedy strikes
 1. I remember waking up with that very feeling — Sherril waking me up at 7:00 in the morning and seeing all zeros on Elijah's monitor
 2. While the words that came out of my mouth were, "no, no, no, no, no!" as I rushed around to the other side of the bed, I was definitely feeling "what shall I do now?"

3. Even though I knew that his particular chromosomal disorder was about 90 percent fatal Elijah's death still came as a shock to me — I imagine I was thinking the very same thing Anna Spafford was, "saved alone, what shall I do now"
 4. I have the blessing of 'passing over' the place of Elijah's death multiple times every day — and now, as I walk around the bed, I think "he's dancing on the wings of forever" and it is well with my soul
- C. Overcoming is not easy
1. Grief can be the catalyst for some very bad decisions — and some very good ones
 2. Recognizing their category before we make them is very important
 3. Turning my grief into actions that glorify God was instrumental — that helped me overcome the bad decision-making that I so wanted to engage in
- D. The promise that never changes can well and truly give us the ability to say, "It is well with my soul"
- E. It is well because we are dancing on the wings of forever
- F. God has promised us (and He will not change) the glory of heaven
- G. Colossians 1:13 (ESV); He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,
- IV. How Can It Be
- A. But some of us just can't understand that — we say "how can it be?"
- B. What about us makes the Almighty Creator want us?
1. It is not about us — it is about His love
 2. It has never been about us, but always about Him and His love
 3. Our human thinking is so quick to say, "why have you abandoned me?" "why have you taken my son away?" and blame Him
 4. But we often forget that we took His Son away
 5. Our sin crucified His Son
 6. Our lust, passion, pride, desire caused His Son's death!
 7. And His death gives us life! How can it be?
 8. 1 Peter 1:3–4 (ESV); ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, ⁴ to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you,
 9. Because He loves us, he rescued us — God Rescues, Jesus
 10. Romans 5:8 (ESV); but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
 11. Can you imagine dying for someone who had just killed your child?
- C. But He has freed us from the prison we created for ourselves
1. He has set us free from a life of behaviors that lead to spiritual death — a life of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord
 2. He has given us freedom to chose Him — How can it be?
- V. On The Wings of Forever
- A. When this life is over, when this world ends, we will be gathered into the arms of a loving Father
- B. He will sweep us up in love and we will dance on the wings of forever!