



A Spiritual Legacy

Richard Ondicho's Newsletter 3/2019 – 25.6.2019

These words in 2 Timothy 1:3-5 were written as Paul sat in a dark prison in Rome likely waiting for execution. The aim of Paul's letter was that he was concerned for Timothy who he loved like own son. During that time Christians were facing intense persecution. But this time the persecution did not come from jealous Jews, but from Roman Emperor named Nero. Nero took great pleasure in torturing and killing Christians. Paul knew that Jesus had said that things were not going to get easier for Christians.

St. Paul in his letter to Timothy he wrote, ***"In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evildoers and imposters will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived"*** (2 Timothy 3:12,13). *Paul reminded Timothy that he was well-prepared because of what his mother had taught him. He knew the Scriptures, the timeless and saving truths of God's Word. This was the lasting legacy that Timothy's mother had left for Timothy, one that prepared him not only for this life, but more importantly, for eternal life.*

As I write this newsletter I have been thinking and wonderful of our young theologians around us here at the International Lutheran Congregation Helsinki. I wondered what legacy that I want to leave to them? In life many people holding different positions that they leave to their followers after retirement or moving to different areas or countries. Even Christian Missionaries each of us in one way or



another is creating a legacy. The questions that I keep on asking myself is what I will be remembered after my work as a Pastor and Missionary? Hard working? Kindness or generosity? ***Am I leaving a legacy that truly prepares children for the world in which they live now and more importantly, for what happens after this life?***

Besides the fact that in Finland there is no direct government that is torturing Christians, Christian faith is under attack especially among our students and young adults. There's the atheist society that boasts freedom without god, and the humanist's society that claims that mankind is god. There is the encouragement to explore your sexuality, to question your gender, to rebel against authority. College professors target Christians, attempting to embarrass and belittle them until they break, calling Christianity out-of- date, repressive and dangerous. The deception and danger is clearly present in our homes through TVs, computers and phones. Like Paul concerned for Timothy, we might wonder about our kids how are they ever going to make it or hold onto their Christian faith.

If there is a legacy that I would want to leave to the young theologians or Pastors to be is Holy Scriptures (Scripture alone). The Scriptures reveal the truth of who we are and who our God is. In fact, the Holy Scriptures does not paint an unrealistic picture of humanity but recognizes the depth of our sin and its effects on us and our world. The Holy Scripture provides answers to the pain, suffering, disappointment and death that we see in the world around us. Scripture acknowledges the guilt that we feel when we do something that it not God's will for us. The Scriptures show us a God who provides a real solution to the guilt of our sin - a God who is personally interested in your peace. The Scriptures show us Christ Jesus who came to earth for no other reason than for you - to live perfectly in your place- to take sin's punishment in your place. Jesus has risen from the dead for you to demonstrate that the God we trust in for our salvation can absolutely deliver on what he has promised to us. These are the timeless truths of God's Word that do not shift according to the latest fads or trends. God has chosen to have these truths written down so that we could clearly know what is right and wrong, good and bad. The Scriptures show us a God who has made us wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

I am certain that there is no any greater legacy to leave than one that demonstrates the importance of the Scriptures in our lives and those of our children. The legacy of encouraging the young theologians to every opportunity to hear, read, learn and study the Scriptures. To encourage them to strive by God's help to make time to be at worship, Bible study and Catechism studies. Like I told my son Amos who was confirmed two weeks ago *That the usefulness of Scripture does not stop on his Confirmation day or any other point in our life, but continues throughout life.*

Apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 1:3-5, I was reminded how strongly Paul encouraged Timothy not merely to continue in the Scriptures, but to be sure to train others in the Scriptures so that they might lean to depend on the Scriptures. St. Paul understood that there was nothing of greater value than knowing the Scriptures - because the Scriptures made and continue to make people wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

May the Lord lead us to boldly and gratefully take it up, so that future generations may know the Scriptures and share in the salvation that God proclaims through Scriptures is ours. Amen.

My family and I have been blessed to see our first-born son Amos get his confirmation three weeks ago. My wife Kirsi, Eliel, Sinuhe and I attended the confirmation celebration and it was so emotional and really blessed to have my son move to confirm his Baptism which he was baptized as a baby fifteen years ago. The Lord God has been good to us to bring up this youngster.

In a few days LEAF will have its annual gospel festival at Pori. I am encouraged and looking forward to meeting many faithful supporters of LEAF at the gospel festival this week. On my personal level my family and I have been looking forward to attending this meeting. Each year it has given me a wonderful chance to meet people who have prayed for me for the work that I oversee. I wished to say to all who have supported the immigrant work with prayer and finances that I thank them for the wonderful support. I wish to say in person and by my own mouth that "God bless you for standing with me" and even to say "*Please continue to carry me in your prayers so that many more people will come to now Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour*".

Another very important part of the LEAF's annual festival to me is to see the over 10,000 people coming together to get meet and listen to the speeches. It is a wonderful legacy that has continued for many generations. Just mingling with brothers and sisters in the Lord is so encouraging and energizing as the Bibles says: "*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles.*", Hebrews 12:1.

It is that speaker, it is that singing group, it is that hymn, it is that person who salutes me as we walk to different areas of the events in the gospel festival that forms the really essence of this very important event. My family and I were commissioned to be LEAF's Missionary among the immigrants some three years ago and so this festival forms a very important element of our calling.

It is my prayer that the Lord God will grant safe trip to all who will come by car, by bus and by train to be Pori to attend this meeting. May God alone grant us the good weather just as He has done to us in the past weeks where we have had warm weather.

I pray that God will bring more supporters of the immigrant work at LEAF and more especially at Luther-Kirkko Helsinki so that soon Kirsi would come in to participate in this mission work as we have had the call to work together as Missionaries from the beginning.

Please keep us in your prayers for without your prayers it will be even more challenging.

I wish you a blessed summer 2019.
In Christ I remain His servant and yours.

Rev. Richard Ondicho

Haluaisitko tukea Richard Ondichon työtä. Voit laittaa haluamasi summan Sley'n lahjoitustilille

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Tukesi tekee mahdolliseksi evankeliumin viemisen niiden pariin, jotka eivät vielä tunne Kristusta. Kiitos tuestasi! Jumala lahjasi siunatkoon.

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