

A Promise for the Ages

A church in Atlanta was honoring one of its senior pastors who had been retired for many years. He was 92, and one could wonder why the church would ask the old gentleman to preach at that age.

After a warm welcome, introduction of this speaker, and as the applause quieted down, he rose from his high-back chair and walked slowly, with great effort and a sliding gait, to the podium. Without a note or written paper of any kind, he placed both hands on the pulpit to steady himself, and then quietly and slowly began to speak.

“When I was asked to come here today and talk to you, your pastor asked me to tell you what was the greatest lesson ever learned in my 50-odd years of preaching. I thought about it for a few days and boiled it down to just one thing that made the most difference in my life and sustained me through all my trials. The one thing that I could always rely on when tears and heartbreak and pain and fear and sorrow paralyzed me ... the only thing that would comfort was this verse:

“Jesus loves me, this I know ... For the Bible tells me so ... Little ones to Him belong ... They are weak but He is strong ... Yes, Jesus loves me ... Yes, Jesus loves me ... Yes, Jesus loves me ... The Bible tells me so.”

When he finished, the church was quiet. You actually could hear his footsteps as he shuffled back to his chair. It was an unforgettable moment.

A pastor once stated, “I always noticed that it was the adults who chose the children's hymn, *Jesus Loves Me* (for the children of course), during a hymn sing, and it was the adults who sang the loudest because I could see they knew it the best.”

This story brings to mind a senior version of this song: It is for those of us who have gray or white hair, or no hair at all:

Jesus loves me, this I know ... Though my hair is white as snow ... Though my sight is growing dim ... Still He bids me trust in Him ... Though my steps are oh, so slow ... With my hand in His I'll go ... On through life, let come what may ... He'll be there to lead the way ... When the nights are dark and long ... In my heart He puts a song ... Telling me in words so clear ... Have no fear, for I am near ... Yes, Jesus loves me ... Yes, Jesus loves me ... Yes, Jesus loves me ... The Bible tells me so.

No doubt, you, like me, have lived long enough to understand the truth of this Bible promise – and its sustaining power.

--Beecher Hunter