



Brave and Beloved

Jesus knew that the hour had come for Him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. John 13:1

That is the opening scripture of a chapter in the New Testament that has all the elements of a movie script. Love, friendship, intrigue, betrayal, a heartrending goodbye, demon possession and a last request. Jesus is looking at his closest friends, most of them for the last time, before a great change takes place that will leave them reeling and running for cover.

He knows that they will be confused, afraid, leaderless, vulnerable and grieving. It is up to Christ to help them find their own brave voices as their world is turned upside down. He uses the Passover meal as that vehicle. *Having loved His own, He loved them to the end.* Love would make all the difference.

Christ who had lived and worked with these men for three years, pouring himself into them, now tells them He is leaving them with a new commandment- that they are to love one another *just* as He has loved them. He assures them of their connection to Him, of the relationship between Himself and the Father and in turn between themselves and the Father but also of the relationship among themselves which was to be based on Christ's motivation for all of His actions, love.

It is about to get crazy, get scary. They will need a courage they never imagined. Christ knew that it was easier to be brave if you knew you were beloved, so He gave them to one another just as the Father had given Christ to them. There it was, that three-strand cord not easily broken. When the ground shifted, love was their security. When He was taken from them, they would love one another into a place of courage and strength.

We are looking toward the celebration of the Resurrection, a celebration like no other. Grace and mercy were confluent rivers; forgiveness had been turned loose with the keys to every cell and death itself took a ten count. Love won. It won the prize that can only ever be won by love, freedom.

Freedom is not the goal of every soul who comes to the Mission. Some have given up on that. Some come with only the hope of a borrowed bed and a bowl of soup. Some come like the prodigal son returning to his father's house, who came not in the trappings of sonship but as one dead, hoping to be accepted as a hireling. Wearing the trappings of his hard life, absent of any means to raise himself, he finds himself instead the object of unmerited favor and unconditional love and is resurrected in his father's passionate embrace to life and sonship. "Your brother who was dead, lives," the father tells his elder son. "Let's celebrate!"

This Easter we will be opening our arms and loving people to Jesus. As wonderful as Easter is, the wonder of it is that in the Kingdom of God *every day* is Easter. Every day there are new clothes for the inside as well as the outside. Every day the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the grave is waiting to stand people up on their feet and not as beggars in better clothes but as sons and daughters. It is a brave thing to move out of one way of life and into the unknown. That is why that love message is so vital. *It is easier to be brave when you are beloved.*

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Resurrection is coming. What about you? Are you living short of the life Christ was crucified for? If you are a believer is there part of your wardrobe that needs to be exchanged for something befitting the new life you have been given? Take heart. Be brave. His love is your covering and the banner over you. You are beloved, claimed, celebrated. There is no stone blocking your path that love cannot lift.

Now to the God who *can* do and *is* doing more than we could ever imagine or hope, to the God who brings us victoriously into the light and daily renews our strength, to Jesus in us the hope of glory, to Him be all honor, power and praise now and forever more.

Happy, Holy Easter from all of us at the Rescue Mission.

Thank you for helping us do this work.

Pastor John LaMantia

Charis Bible College



Special guests in our Sunday evening chapel service, Charis Bible College from Woodland Park, CO. Wonderful, compassionate ministry in song, testimony, skit and personal prayer time with our clients. What a great group.

Easter Dinner Service Needs

- Hams
- Chicken legs and thighs
- Canned corn
- Carrots
- Mashed potatoes
- Apple or Peach pie

Needed by April 5th

“Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.” ~ Colossians 3:23 NLT

April Memorials



Memorial for: Ed Rasmuson	by: Kurt & Diana Lindsey
Memorial for: Russ Wilmot	by: Renate Wilmot
Memorial for: Bill Harple	by: Karen Soukkala
Memorial for: Mary Husted	by: Karen Soukkala
Memorial for: Marian Genovese	by: The LaMantia Family

*Sing with all the saints in glory,
sing the resurrection song!
Death and sorrow, earth's dark story,
to the former days belong.
All around the clouds are breaking;
soon the storms of time shall cease;
in God's likeness we awaken,
knowing everlasting peace.*

*Resurrection Song
~ William J. Irons, (1873)*

We Love Tours



This is Gwendolyn Noble who came for a tour and a chat. She also wanted to draw our attention to an organization that constructs coats that convert into sleeping bags. Folks might want to make a purchase online and have the coat delivered to the Mission. Go to empowerment.org.

Spread the Good News of Jesus While Caring for the Needy.

Please consider the following options some of which have added tax benefits:

- Name the Anchorage Gospel Rescue Mission as a recipient on your employer online matching gift platform.
- Consider a direct transfer from your IRA, 401K or brokerage account.
- Make the Mission part of your estate plan.

Our Tax ID: 92-6003040



Enjoyed a wonderful time at the Mission Dinner with the Birchwood Bride at The Crossing. These faithful folks are such a support for the new starts we are trying to bring to people. They contribute so much. Their congregation and their school constantly involve themselves with the needs of their neighbors. They have a food drive for us every year that we depend on. It blesses so many. We are deeply grateful.

*What I give remains not mine. What I give is only Thine.
But in Thy hands a blessing be, now mine
throughout eternity.
~ Celtic Wisdom & Customs*

I am so excited to share that we are a *breath away* from completing our 4-million dollar Kitchen Upgrade! The contractor showed me through both floors and it is marvelous. The space is ready for the appliances to be installed. I am already scouting out the space where I can cook Mama LaMantia's Special Sicilian Spaghetti Sauce for our folks.

There is an old Disney movie called *Darby O'Gill and the Little People* where a poor church is being given a wonderful bell by a larger church but the poor church has no way to bring the bell home. The pastor offers Darby O'Gill the "music of the bell" for himself and all his descendants if he will use his wagon to fetch it. The bell finds its way home and the O'Gill family receives a generational blessing.

Disney is all about fiction but they got this right. Whatever we give to God out of love and service becomes our own blessing without limit. God's memory is eternal.

We have accounted for 94% of our funds and only about 6% remains. In this season of Lenten devotion, when we are so aware of all Christ gave to us, is there a way, however large or small, that you can help us bring our "bell" home?

Whatever you contribute to our kitchen from a heart of love, will merit the blessing of every child whose hunger is answered by a meal, every person in recovery who is learning to cook and serve their way back to a productive life, every family that can stay together and housed because our table was open. Those blessings are served up every single day. They are *your* treasures.



If there is a way for you to answer this call, please do so and I believe we can finish by Easter. Help us ring the blessing bell.

Thank you so very much. In faith I am tying on my special cooking apron.

Pastor John LaMantia

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Nightly Services 7:30PM - 8:30 PM
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



God Never Left Me. God Gave Me My Life Back.

The other day I was asked if I would like to describe, in a few paragraphs, some of the good things God has been doing in my life. This is a daunting task as a couple of dozen paragraphs would be insufficient to describe all of His workings on my behalf.

I can say that around Easter of last year I had hit bottom. I was completely lost and living a godless existence with no prospects, no friends, and no hope. I felt unwanted, unwelcome, and completely unnecessary. It seemed even God had no desire to be in relationship with me.

Although I didn't believe so at the time, it was my great good fortune to have arrived at the Anchorage Gospel Rescue Mission which made a place for me sight unseen. After some difficult months, I came to realize that while I was no longer welcomed by friends and family who saw me as a lost cause, God had not abandoned me.

Since that time, with the help of the Mission staff, my fellow programmers and even the shelter clients, I have reestablished my relationship with God. I came to realize that He had never left me but was patiently waiting for me as it was I who had turned away.

God never left me. God gave me my life back. All I had to do was ask. That was the first of many good things He would do for me.

John Odham
LifeSkills, Work Phase

