

## Memorial Service for Clinton Goff, Front Royal, VA, September 12, 2020

Workers present: Ray Hoffman, Barry Barkley, Dale Parker, Jim Holt, Greg Swenson, Dennis Kinnan, Loren Spellman, Robert Flippo, Ken Penny, Jared Snyder, Tylar Jayne, Dan Helenek, Scott Hamilton, Stephen Jayne, Duane Topinka, Delmar Stockwell, Grace O'Keefe, Deborah Wentz, Stephanie Jayne, Kristen Jayne, Cheri Beck, Rachel Hildebrand, Dora Gilmore, Karen Cleveland

Hymn #348 "Seeking for a Better Country"

Prayer: Jared Snyder

Dan Helenek – I was with Clinton 25 years ago. He would not want any accolades for himself. People like to say nice things about others, but we want to be accurate, too. What would we like for someone to say of us at our funeral? John 15 :13, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." This phrase is sometime used in regards to the military, that one would offer his life for another. Clinton was in the military, but this applies to him more because of how he served. Clinton loved much. There's not much better that can be said of anyone. Not selfish at all, living for others and for the Work, with the limitations of what we are. Clinton was called to a higher service. Because he loved God, he loved God's service. Luke 7 - A sinner woman, in her boldness, made it her business to be in a home where she was not invited. She washed Jesus' feet and dried them, she kissed His feet and anointed them. The Pharisee criticized, but Jesus said, "She loved much." That's one of the nicest things that could be said about us. Then He said something more, He said, "Thy sins are forgiven." That's one of the best things anyone could say of us! Then He said, "Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace." That's the best of all, that we have faith in Jesus, and have taken very definite steps. "Go in peace" – wonderful words. What would the deceased person tell us? To those serving God, he would say, "Continue what you're doing." To those not serving God, "Consider thy ways."

Duane Topinka – People in a good many different states and places would have loved to have been here today. Quite number are rejoicing because Clinton had a part in bringing the Gospel to them, and the hope they could embrace because of his willingness to give his life. Today we rejoice in that. This day there's sorrow involved with losing family and loved ones, but for Clinton today, his passing brings more rejoicing than sorrow, knowing the life that he lived. Luke – the lost sheep and the piece of silver were found, and there is joy in Heaven in the presence of the angels because of one sinner who repents. How much greater joy over one faithful child of God that finishes their race, their life, faithfully! I don't know if we can comprehend the joy there is in Heaven when one of God's little ones reaches their desired haven. Luke 9, Moses and Elijah appeared in glory and spoke with Jesus of His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. As for as Jesus' life, it brought sorrow and mourning to many that loved Him, but Jesus understood that this would be an accomplishment, as the will of God for Him, He knew that it would be far reaching. This day in Clinton's experience is an accomplishment, finishing in a race. The way might be rough at times, but to see and cross over the finish line – there's nothing but rejoicing. We had Romans 1 for our study. "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God..." The same could be said of Clinton, and his response to the call of God. First there was the call to become a child of God and to follow Jesus, then the call to give his life for the souls of others, his willingness to lay down his life until the end of his strength, separated unto the Gospel of God. There was a certain cost involved, but Clinton, looking back, would feel that it was well worth it, that God was faithful to His promise. There is hope for us. God may ask us to do something, and we don't feel able, but He is still able to follow through, and to give all that He has promised. In Romans 1, there is a sense of urgency. Paul was ready to preach the Gospel to them, he felt a debtor to people he didn't even know,

because of what Christ had brought into his life. Clinton looked upon his call very seriously, and diligently gave his best. I had the privilege to be with him in his last full year in the Work. He had the same eagerness, the will to do, but the mind and body were beginning to fail. But he did not spare or pity himself, he gave himself as much as he could. He was always eager. We appreciate his zeal in pouring out the very best that he had as long as he could. Most of all, his faithfulness to respond to God's call, trusting that the God of Heaven who called him would give him the strength to continue.

Barry Barkley – Hebrew 2:9 “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons [a whole family!] unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation [that's Jesus] perfect through sufferings.” I was with Clinton on a few occasions. We were in the British Isles one year. We were roommates on occasion. He had lot of nervous energy, it was hard for him to sit still! But a brother whom we mutually respected gave this advice to many young workers: “Chain yourself to the chair!” Or – Get into this Book and study it. In a little cabin up in Canada, Clinton spent hours sitting on his bed, propped up against the headboard, Tuesday and Wednesday before the convention, reading and meditating on this Book. He learned to chain himself to that chair. Knowing a little of his nature, it was hard for him to do that. He loved the Work. Clinton spoke one time of Amos 1:3 God's judgment was against these people “because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron.” Clinton said that was too hard. It destroyed the corn rather than conserving it. Clinton was truthful, and if it hurt, it hurt. He was truthful, but he was balanced. He was a merciful man, he loved the souls of others, a man who would not willingly stand in the way of anyone else.

“Bringing many sons to glory”. One definition of glory is “as very apparent”. How does that fit in with Jesus? John wrote, “We beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” To those close to Him, it was very apparent who He was. They had a revelation of it. On the Mount of Transfiguration, it was very apparent. They saw Him in the glory of when He comes again. In II Peter 1, Peter said, “We were with Him, and there came this voice from the excellent glory that said, 'This is my beloved Son, I am pleased.'” It was very apparent to those three disciples. I could say that I am a child of God, and I believe it is so because of His work, but the crowning glory is not what I say about myself. But if we can hear God the Father say, “My child. Come, my child”, that's the glory. Sufficient glory is that it would be very apparent because of the testimony of God Himself on that day.

Romans 3:23 “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” We needed help, that many sons could be brought back to glory. I Corinthians 15 speaks about the resurrection. v. 40 “There are celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.” There's a certain glory to creation; one glory of the sun, another of the moon, etc. “So is also the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power.” How do the sun and the moon glorify God? They abide in the purpose for which they were created, and their glory reflects the One who created them. What about man? We did NOT abide in the purpose for which we were created. “All have sinned.” But there is a remedy. Hebrews 2 – God provided through His Son Jesus a way for man to have a second opportunity, and the purpose for which he was created, that there could be a work of recreation in that life, bringing many sons to glory. It's not finished yet, but it will be. For Clinton, it is finished, he has reached the finish line. But not yet for us. But is He is leading, and if we will follow, it will be finished and God Himself will make it manifestly apparent, “This is My child”.

John 17: 4 “I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.” v. 22 “And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one.” II Peter 1:17, “My beloved Son”, a child of God. Jesus made it possible that we all could become a child of God. We only get a glimpse of that glory, a little taste, the earnest, the down payment. It's so far beyond

our human realm, we just see a tiny bit – but it's glorious, the bit that we do see!

Romans 8:15. “Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” In joy or sorrow, in victory or defeat, a child turns to the father. v. 16, “The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.” That might not be so apparent to others, but to the person who has that feeling, it's a wonderful assurance. v. 17, “If children, then heirs of God, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together...” “The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed...” v. 21 “...the creature shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.” The glory of deliverance, of liberty. Liberty from the power of sin, not liberty from the struggles or warfare, but liberty from being a captive of sin. Clinton has experienced that final liberation. “The creature was made subject to vanity.” Simply, these human frames are not going to last, they're vain in that sense. It may be suddenly, it may be gradually. Clinton's health failed, his mental and physical health failed, but we are rejoicing because now he is experiencing that glorious liberty of the children of God, more fully than we have. Clinton in a nursing home down in Texas. If we put too much confidence in what we are in the human frame, it's going to let us down. What comforted me was v. 26, “The Spirit helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit maketh intercession for us” A person may come, if it's their lot, to that condition; some don't even know to pray any more, but the Spirit knows those deep groanings, those deep desires, that purpose that has been there all along – He knows, for God is faithful. Rev. 21:10, where it speaks of leading many sons to glory. The time when it will be very apparent, because of God Himself saying, “This is My family.” His children are compared to a city [many citizens is a city], a great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending from Heaven having the glory of God. “Leading many sons to glory” – Let's follow!

Ray Hoffman – There is a heavenly scene in Revelation 5:9, “They sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” There's another scene in Heaven, where we believe Clinton is. Rev. 7.9 “A great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.” The Here and Now will pass, but this scene is true reality, it will not pass. This song will only be sung by those redeemed by the blood of Jesus; the angels won't sing it. Only those in the book. Clinton sang songs in his pilgrimage along with the rest of us. But now it's a new song. No human nature, no world, no devil, free from all those shackles, limitations, opposition. They're in a new body, they're singing because they've reached the goal, Heaven for all eternity.

Something about those two words Redemption and Salvation that is very meaningful. Redemption means to be purchased, bought back (from sin). Not redeemed with gold or silver, but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Salvation means to be rescued, delivered. Both of those words really exclude any thought of good human nature and good human works getting them to Heaven. To have redemption, you have to have a buyer and a product. Salvation has to have a rescuer and a person that needs to be rescued. And that's the case of every person that's going to be in Heaven. Heaven isn't going to be a big party or a golf game! How shallow and human! They'll be praising the Lamb for His sacrifice, Jesus Christ. Clinton will be singing that song with them.

Clinton loved this Book. Psalm 119. All but 2 or 3 of the 176 verses speak about God's word, commandments, law, statutes, etc. We think of Clinton's involvement with the Word of God, little pictures of what happened in Clinton's life that brought this about, the wonderful benefits of submitting to God's Word. v. 71, “It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.” That means to be brought down, to be depressed, the work of the Holy Spirit in preparing us by the Gospel. Repentance – there's no redemption, no salvation, without repentance. We go down to it, it's humbling.

God's hand is heavy on us, on our conscience, and thinking on eternity brings us a great fear. It moves a person to do the right thing. v. 59, "I thought on my ways., and turned my feet unto thy testimonies." What's down the road on my ways? Destruction! No continuation of the joy I might have had in this life, a lost eternity. "I turned my feet unto thy testimonies." Not my words, my speech, but my feet. Afterwards, like v. 9, "Wherewith shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to thy word." When Clinton surrendered his life to this Gospel, the word of life, there was a cleansing in his life. v. 75, "I know, oh Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me." We look back and are so thankful that the Lord troubled us! That He did not let me go until I finally surrendered my heart to Him. Whatever age we might be. That glorious liberty that we heard about, even in this life. Wonderful things happened! v. 16, "I will delight myself in thy statutes, and not forget thy word." v. 18, his prayer, "Open thou mine eyes, that I might behold wondrous things out of thy law." v. 97, "O how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day." No doubt but what that could be said of Clinton. That was his delight, that was his prayer, that God would open up to him His word. If you have sat in Clinton's meetings, you've been fed! He had a wonderful way of opening up the Scriptures, very concerned that we'd have the right understanding, the right interpretation, v. 63, "I am a companion of all them that fear thee." We are all sitting together in meeting, Sunday morning meeting, Wednesday night meeting, Gospel meeting, convention, with the same desire to hear Him; we are companions of all who love His word. v. 98, "Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies, for they are ever with me." He wasn't talking about a human being, he was talking about Satan. Not more clever, but by obeying, we are wiser than Satan! Jesus in the wilderness answered, "It is written." Satan had a lot to say, but Jesus responded with a very short sentence – "It is written." He was wiser than Satan. Wiser than His enemies, like He said, "They re ever with me." A lot of times people don't realize the battles others are fighting against the enemy of their soul.

v. 92, "Unless thy law had been my delights, I should then have perished in mine affliction." The first time I met Clinton was around the year I professed, in 1975 in a special meeting in Milwaukee, and this was his prayer. The last few years of his life I was mostly acquainted with him here in Virginia. They weren't easy years for Clinton, trying to keep up, struggling, but his body and mind were not able. It was a sad day in his life and mine when we had to take him to Texas, and he knew his active years in the Work were over, because that was his life. He loved to tell the Gospel story. I'm sure when he was called to the work, it was the last thing he ever wanted to do, but it was God's will for him, and he obeyed that. He was very apt at using the sword of God's word. We used to love to hear him speak.

The last time I saw Clinton in Texas was at a nursing home about a year ago. It was not a good time to visit, but it was the only time we could. It was about 8 PM, the lights were off, but by the little light from the hallway we could see him and he could see us. We spoke his name, and he was coming out of a daze, the covers were disheveled, and he was confused, but I think he did recognize us. The visit didn't go on very long. The thing that I remember most was that there was his Bible. Every time I saw him, he held his Bible close to him; he loved God's word and what it meant to him, it was his salvation. He was a very very faithful warrior. He had years in the army, and was in Iwo Jima. Any captain would want his soldiers to be loyal. Jesus rebuked His disciples for competing about who would be the greatest, but He commended them, saying, "Ye are they which have continued with me to the end." Clinton was a very very loyal soldier, and an inspiration to me. We esteemed him highly. Many of his companions would have liked to have been here today. Now he's with his Saviour, praising his Redeemer; there are no more battles, no more suffering. We're so thankful for that.

Prayer: Stephen Jayne