

Where do you live? You might answer that with an address, a place of employment, or a neighborhood, but what I am asking is to think about where your “living” is located. What IS your life about? Where do you feel energized and excited? Where are you feel you don’t belong? Where do you feel “at home” and where do you feel you are still searching? Where DO you “really” live? I mean, REALLY live? **For until one knows where to live -- can't begin to know how to live.**

Several years ago I read book by Wallace Stegner called “Crossing to Safety.” It told of two couples who were best of friends yet very different from each other. The storyline followed their lifetime apart and together. The story is very ordinary, full of years of waiting for “something,” and always being surprised by the unexpected. And the cycle kept repeated. As I followed all the twists and turns (both good and bad) I found myself wanting to shout at each couple “You are missing the obvious!” (Then I realized how much of that story is just like mine.)

At times I have waited for things to change, wondering where I will settle in. For many of my adult years I would joke about wondering what I would do when I grew up; and now I realize how ridiculous that sounds. But we all on similar journeys, and often wonder whether we are living where we belong and find ourselves waiting for something new. And what peace comes when you finally know you are “home!”

Sin drove Adam/Eve away and a wait for home began. Almost every Bible story has to do with someone’s journey to find their true home. Whether Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau, Israel in the desert, or prodigal sons, all such accounts are about a search for peace with God and finding one’s true home.

Christ the King ends that cycle of waiting and celebrates God’s joyful “Welcome Home!” Paul wrote, *“he has rescued us from darkness and transferred us into kingdom of his Son”*

Calvary on Good Friday shows that search of “home.” Two men were crucified because of where they had chosen to live their lives. One sinner “figured it out” and another didn’t. One learned and the other ran out of time. Hanging between them was our Savior, who chose the cross as his “home away from home” to begin to lead us to a “forever home.” Love is the only motive to explain a sacrifice so complete!

This story reminds us that **where and how one dies shows where he or she finds life.** What an amazing confession by one sinner who proclaimed “we are all dying justly,” because we lived “far from home.” How refreshing is Jesus’ promise that despite loving in all the wrong places and wrong ways, faith is all it

takes to live by grace!"

From Baptism, we live in that new "home." With the uncertain waiting of life removed from the equation by Easter, now we can truly live a life of comfortable peace in our marriages, our vocations, our discipleship, and with our families. We already have come home and live in the light of a heavenly throne.

Christ the King reminds us that our rollercoaster ride and journey in the wilderness is over. No longer having to wait, our attention can be spent on settling into a new "home." Christ has ended the dying. We must begin the LIVING!

In a book by Cathleen Falsani book called "**Sin Boldly; A Field Guide to Grace,**" she wrote of a group of widows in a village in Kenya. Traditionally, when widowed, a wife's life ended. Each widow was required to sell her possessions to pay for funeral, and was "given" to a relative as a second or third wife. The new husband had the right to seize all her property and no responsibility of share any of it with her or her children.

One Christian widow refused to follow that tradition. She kept her cow, remained in her home, and started her own business. She said, "*I am not going to wait to die, because Christ has set me free to live! I am not going to wonder where or how I will live but will celebrate that Christ has set me free to live here and now!*" Now many of the widows of that village have done the same, and collectively that have begun their own businesses, and beyond that have adopted all of the orphan children of the town. They are an example of what it means to be rescued to live with Christ as King! They are home!

Next week, we begin Advent, and this cycle of life and faith resumes as we begin another twelve months of remembering what God has done to bring us home. This week I read a fascinating article this week about Christians who live in Egypt. For over 2000 years, there has been a strong Christian presence in Egypt but that has drastically changed since the "Muslim Spring." Over a million Christians have fled the country, thousands have been killed, and those who remain are persecuted by Muslim extremists. The story is titled "God's Garbage People."

There is a neighborhood in Cairo called "Garbage City." Almost everyone there spend their life gathering trash, picking up waste, driving trucks full of unclean and unwanted garbage. They pile it in front of their houses where the women and children sort it out, surrounded by rats and flies. These men and women are know by the rest of the city as "garbage people."

But this phrase has another meaning as well. Because it refers also to their faith,

for most of the “garbage people” are Christians, and they are looked down on by the majority of their Muslim neighbors. It isn't just the trash that makes them unclean in the eyes of the Muslim Brotherhood, who rules the city, but it is their faith in Jesus Christ that makes them objects of contempt!

It is against the unwritten law of the majority for them to display crosses or symbols of their faith, and yet their homes are adorned with Bible passages from the New Testament, images of Mary surrounded by clouds or Jesus himself. And while the men are out gathering garbage, the women dress in their finest clothes, take their children by the hand, and head up the hill to the ancient Christian monastery for worship.

The author writes, *“They are God's own garbage people, despised but elect, valuing what the world rejects. They welcome the outcast, adopt the unwanted, and make relics of refuse. Seeing them, one feels the force of Psalmist's prophecy. ‘There is in Zion a tried stone, a precious stone, a sure foundation. For the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.’*¹ In other words, their search for home is over!

The question we began with remains for each of you and for me, to answer: Where DO we live? HOW will we live? Baptism has given us a new home and a new lifestyle, no matter where we live. Some people take that for granted. Others are able to endure, no matter what, because there is no question who has given them a place to live.

Remember “the Wizard of Oz?” Each character was searching for something that would allow them to go home in peace. And in the end, each found they had been so busy searching they missed the “home” that was already theirs. And so it is for us. No matter who we are, Jesus' love gifts us with the peace of knowing where “home” really is! And when that is clear, it certainly changes how we live. Today we celebrate because the waiting is over. And there truly is “no place like home!” Amen

¹ **God's Garbage People.** by [Matthew Schmitz](#) December 2019. First Things Journal.

