

Epilogue - How Should We Then Live?

We all have agendas for a day, a year or for a whole life. Along that path of living, we often try to do things on our own, under our own power, maybe without others and certainly without the help from a distant God. To many, God is so removed from daily life, that He seems to not exist at all. Many believers in God, often opine that God does not seem to be daily active in their lives; those with troubles may even figure God has left them altogether. It is times like these where we tend to try to be God ourselves; thinking, if He isn't involved, then I am going to do things myself.

I think some, like Sam Harris, want science to be God or that science is so much more than God [because to them God doesn't exist or that the idea of God is "preposterous"] that it is science actually trying to be God.

Sam Harris, tells us in his blast at religion, entitled "*Science must Destroy Religion*" published in the left-wing Huffington Post:

"We must find ways of meeting our emotional needs that do not require the abject embrace of the preposterous. ...When we find reliable ways to make human beings more loving, less fearful, and genuinely enraptured by the fact of our appearance in the cosmos, we will have no need for divisive religious myths. Only then will the practice of raising our children to believe that they are Christian, Jewish, Muslim, or Hindu be broadly recognized as the ludicrous obscenity that it is. And only then will we stand a chance of healing the deepest and most dangerous fractures in our world."

The ONLY way we will make "human beings more loving, less fearful, and genuinely enraptured by the fact of our appearance in the cosmos" is to come to a faith in the LORD Jesus Christ through whom everything was created that exists.

My position is that we need to firmly reject trying to be God and be thankful for the lives we get and the lives we have...regardless of events and experiences. Be thankful for the small things you experience...look for them and be aware that you are blessed!

In December of 2007, I published a short book (available free at Muskrat Books) entitled: *11:11, The Importance of Putting Jesus First in Your Life*. In the Fall of 2014, our church enjoyed, with many other churches, a program called: *I Am Second*, founded by Norm Miller and produced by e3 Partners, that shows how athletes, celebrities and everyday people have grown in Christ by putting Jesus first in their lives.

One film shows a young 13 year old, Ethan Hallmark, giving his story after he learned he had cancer, a cancer with only 20% survival rate. Ethan died September 26, 2014. Like any boy, Ethan wanted to live a long life, but it wasn't his main plan. Ethan and his parents, in fact all of us, deal with uncertainty, disappointment and pain. It can make you stronger or it can break you...the decision is yours. Ethan, with his parents suffering alongside, endured 4 years of cancer treatments. Treatments that made his body feel like it was all on fire. As Ethan's mother and father asked God why, it was his father that heard God say that Ethan was His son [God's son] and that Ethan was loved even more than the love of his earthly father.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son" (John 3:16), coupled with "Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13 NIV)

We see with these two verses that God loves us more than we could ever hope or think...a love that will not let us go (Romans 8:39)!

With these heavenly connections, Ethan and his family showed the true meaning of family and of togetherness. At a time when there are many stories of husband beating their wives, and children killing their parents, families disintegrating, and the whole breakdown of God's Marriage Covenant into non-Biblical unions, we see a family pulling together and thriving in the middle of tragedy. Ethan and his family pulled closer to God rather than blaming God and

shaking their fists at Him. Ethan's favorite Bible verse was Psalm 40:5,

"Many, O LORD my God, are the wonders you have done. The things you planned for us no one can recount to you; were I to speak and tell of them, they would be too many to declare." (NIV)

I see Ethan's victory story, a story probably quietly repeated a hundred times a year, and compare it with the sad daily news stories of dysfunctional families, their hate and violence, and ask two questions: Why can't we wake up as a country founded on God Principles where "all men are created equal and endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights" to live as brothers and sisters, drawing closer to God rather than our current destructive path traveling a break-neck pace, to throw God out of our lives? Why is it wrong to give young school-age children Bible lessons, but okay to pass out Bibles in our over-crowded prisons? We are applauded for chaining ourselves to a tree to save it; but arrested when protesting the child-killing going on inside an abortion clinic. What we doing as a country...as a Christian country?

The Psalmist says in verse 10 of Ethan's Psalm 40:

"I do not hide your [God's] righteousness in my heart; I speak of your [God's] faithfulness and salvation. I do not conceal your [God's] love and your truth from the great assembly." (NIV, brackets added)

We citizens that know God, that call ourselves "children of God" would do well to follow this verse. Stop trying to be God, live holy humble and thankful lives. Can we stand in the face of poor health, pain and death as strong as 13 year old Ethan? If not...should we not be asking, why not?