



Title: "I Know That Face!" (Memorial Service for a Miscarried Child / Grave Side)

Psalm 139 is written under the guiding hand of the Holy Spirit as He moved upon David. "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. (Psalm 139:13-16)

David has just written about the all knowing God, and the Apostle Paul writes about a time when Christians will fully know. Paul is lead of the Holy Spirit of Christ and he writes, "Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known."

Grasp this truth. Jonas knows fully as he is fully known by God. I do not have the answer and nor does anyone else on why the Lord chose to take Jonas into His presence. I can assure you, however, that Jonas knows, as well as everyone else who is in heaven right now.

However, God who created you, Christ who died for you and the Holy Spirit who speaks to your spiritual heart right now has truths that you must grasp if you are going to enjoy eternal things.

We gather together broken hearted over the loss of Jonas Mark Applegate. Bonnie and I know the cut of grief, the doubts, and the many questions that plague the soul in trials just like this one. Bonnie and I lost our first child to miscarriage, close to the age that Jonas was. We understand how it feels to make preparations and have exciting plans in the heart for the future, then to have them taken away never to be fulfilled on this earth. I do know now that the loss of our baby in 1984 prepared our hearts to minister to others who lose their babies. (2 Corinthians 1:4) I urge you to let the Holy Spirit use this difficult trial to prepare you to comfort others.

No one here is taking this lightly. All of us grieve with Jamie, her family and her friends. It is okay to grieve, it is okay to cry. Tears are not a sign of disbelief in God, nor lack of trust in Christ. Crying with those who grieve over of the loss of child is not a sign of weakness. It is showing compassion and most importantly it is ministering to all who mourn. Jesus Christ showed the example when He raised Lazarus from the dead. (John 11:1-44)

When Jesus arrived in Bethany He saw Mary and all the Jews weeping over the death of Lazarus. Even though the Lord knew He was going to do a miracle by raising Lazarus from the dead, He still wept, because He was saddened by the grief of those who loved and knew Lazarus. (John 11:1-44)

During their time of grief, the Lord presented truths to grasp and in our key text there are truths to understand. Psalm 139:13-16 is the Word of God and there are truths worth thinking upon in regard to thinking of Jonas.

Jonas was never seen by us but he was seen by the Lord. While Jonas's body was hidden from us, he was not hidden from God's sight. Even while his body was unformed, the Lord knew him and the Lord's plans for his life will see its fulfillment.

We too often see death as untimely, or too early – but He is in full control. We are surprised, the Lord is not. We are naturally grieved, but heaven welcomes Jonas home.

David wrote our key text and he knew the pain of losing a child. He knew the truths of God and he said in regard to the death of his son, "I will go to him, but he will not return to me." (2 Samuel 12:23) The Apostle Paul who tells us that we will someday know everything and have every question answered, also gives us revelation we can understand today. He writes, "We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord."

Here we see a great man of God who did a great work that still affects lives today, saying, it is much better to be with Christ and not be in the body. I have often said, "Those who are in heaven have no desire to come back and be with us, but all in heaven want to someday, in God's time, see all of us be in heaven."

Children are in the mind of Christ and He longs for them to be with Him. Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." (Matthew 19:14)

Our Lord gives this teaching about heaven, a real place and gives this promise "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me. In My Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that you may also be where I am." (John 14:1-3)

Christ is in heaven, the Bible is very clear on that truth and He has prepared a place in heaven for Jonas who was personally received by Christ. Do not let any lack of faith, any world view or even the lies of the devil keep you from enjoying that truth. Jesus is not a man that He should lie, nor does God lie.

God has a purpose in this. There is no way we on earth can explain all the reasons for Jonas' going to be with the Lord at just a few months of age. This does not change God's truth. Little unseen, unformed Jonas is now a citizen of heaven. He has literally been welcomed into the arms of Jesus.

In the last movie of the Lord of the Rings trilogy, "The Return of the King," there is a scene where a man, Théoden, is dying of his wounds, and his daughter, Eowyn runs to his side. As she places her face over his, he fixes his gaze, his eyes brighten, and he says, "I know that face!" He expresses great joy at the appearing of his child.

Today we rightfully grieve over the loss of Jonas, whose face we have not seen and whose form we could not recognize. Let the Holy Spirit place this image in your mind and heart. When Jonas left this life he did not feel the sting of death, (1 Corinthians 15:54-55) but entered immediately into the presence of Christ.

Jonas knows the glory of God, understands angels rejoicing and is involved as much as anyone in praising God in heaven. The first person to see Jonas was Jesus, who said, "I know that face."

We are now about to leave this graveside. The Word of God has this promise to us. Jonas is not staying in the beautiful jewelry box forever, for there is coming a day when his body will be called forth to meet the Lord Jesus in the air. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 says, "Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in Him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words."

We are about to suffer one of the most difficult tests that can be experienced. Each and every one of us, along with Jamie are going to leave Jonas' body here in this cemetery. The fact is, Jonas Mark Applegate's body is not staying here forever. Someday the Lord is going to come in the air and with a loud command to call all who have died in Christ up from the grave and they will meet Him in the air. At that time all Christians will get a resurrected body. The Bible says in the twinkling of an eye the bodies of Christians will be raised imperishable. (1 Corinthians 15:51-54)

At this time the balloons are going to be released as a symbol of the truth that when Jonas's body ceased to live, he went to be with Christ in heaven, and as a visible reminder that his body is not going to stay here. Someday Christ will return. Let us sing Jesus loves me!