
PASTOR'S CORNER

From the Desk of Pastor Daniel Simmons

Book of the Month

**The Shack: Where
Tragedy Confronts Eternity**
By: William Paul Young
ISBN# 978-1-455568-29-1

Scripture Readings:
Jesus Is Born (NIV)

Week of **December 3rd** –
Isaiah 9:6-7

Week of **December 10th** –
Matthew 1:18-25

Week of **December 17th** –
Matthew 2:1-23

Week of **December 24th** –
Luke 1:26--56

Week of **December 31st** –
Luke 2:1-35

I Am With Thee Always

(Many Members, One Body)

*For I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor
angels nor principalities nor powers nor things present
nor things to come nor height nor depth nor any other
creature shall be able to separate us from the love of
God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Romans 8:38-39

Losing loved ones is an experience we never look forward to or forget. *Death appears to be such a permanent ending on this side of life.* In Christ, we are family – be it through our bloodline or friendships – and the absence of our loved ones is especially difficult to bear during celebratory times like birthdays, graduations, weddings...and the holidays. Like so many people all over this world, we have – in 2017 - experienced the loss of several of our Mount Zion members and the loss of members within our members' families. During the month of August, Mount Zion said, "*See you later,*" to eight of its fellow members. And that is just in one month alone. Storms, illnesses, accidents, violence, and suicides have wreaked havoc throughout the land on local, state, and national levels. And making the weight of grief even heavier are the pressures of injustice, turmoil, and fallen leadership that continue to saturate the headline news every waking day.

Coping with grief is a very difficult thing to do. The void, the pain, the depression that envelopes us with a smothering sadness that seems impossible to overcome. But we must remember the experience is a natural process we will get through with the help of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Jesus knows exactly how we feel during our times of sorrow. Before we've said our final farewells, He is already with us in our after-days to comfort and strengthen.

When God allowed His Son to enter the darkness of this world in the form of a baby, the light of the world had arrived forevermore. That was over 2000 years ago.

Every tear of sorrow shed throughout that time unto this day has been tenderly caught and kept by our Saviour. And in return, He gives us His everlasting joy. We must know that *Jesus is ever present with us as we grieve, and He will see us through.* In due season - as the healing process occurs - the love of Jesus will channel through our hearts like the healing balm of our loved ones' touch that nudges our spirit as though to say, *"My darling, I'm still with you in your fond remembrances of me. Death only appears final, but it has no power. Jesus won that victory for us on Calvary. Rejoice! I love you...and I'll see you later."*

During the between times of loss and healing it is important that we do not pull away from the body of Christ. We are very much loved and needed there. Grief may say, *"Pull away,"* but Jesus says, *"Come and stay with Me."* On this side of life, death is really the beginning of Eternity with Jesus Christ. Knowing that He is just as eternally with us now as we will be with Him when He calls us home gives us the strength to pull through to the better days we still have in store for our lives right now. Let's be encouraged as we cherish and share our fond memories of our loved ones during the holidays. May the love and comfort of Jesus Christ surround us this Christmas.

