

The Decision!

by
Unknown

After a few of the usual Sunday evening hymns, the pastor of the church slowly stood up, walked over to the pulpit, and before he gave his sermon, he briefly introduced a guest minister who was in the service that evening. In his introduction, the pastor told his congregation that the guest minister was one of his dearest childhood friends, and that he wanted him to have a few moments to greet the church and share whatever he felt would be appropriate for the service.

With that, the elderly man stepped up to the pulpit and began to speak. “A father, his son, and a friend of his son were sailing off the Pacific coast,” he began, “when a fast approaching storm blocked any attempt to get back to the shore. The waves were so high, that even though the father was an experienced sailor, he could not keep the boat upright and the three were swept into the ocean as the boat capsized.” The old man hesitated for a moment, making eye contact with two teenagers who were, for the first time since the service began, looking somewhat interested in his story.

The aged minister continued with his story, “grabbing a rescue line, the father had to make the most excruciating decision of his life: to which boy would he throw the other end of the life line? He only had seconds to make the decision. The father knew that his son was a Christian, and he also knew that his son’s friend was not. The agony of his decision could not be matched by the torrent of waves. As the father yelled out, “I love you, son,” he threw out the life line to his son’s friend. By the time the father had pulled the friend back to the capsized boat, his son had disappeared beneath the raging swells into the black of night. His body was never recovered.”

By this time, the two teenagers were sitting up straight in their pew, anxiously waiting for the next words to come out of the old minister’s mouth. “The father,” he continued, “knew his son would step into eternity with the Lord Jesus Christ and he could not bear the thought of his son’s young friend stepping into an eternity without Jesus. Therefore, he sacrificed his son to save the son’s friend. How great is the love of God that he should do the same for us? Our heavenly Father sacrificed His only “begotten” Son, that we could be saved. I urge you to accept His offer to rescue you, and for you to take hold of the life line He is throwing out to you in this service.” With that, the old man turned and sat back down in his chair as silence filled the room.

The pastor again walked slowly to the pulpit and delivered a brief sermon with an invitation at the end. However, no one responded to his appeal. Within minutes after the service ended, the two teenagers were at the old man’s side. “That was a nice story,” politely stated one of them, “but I don’t think it was very realistic for a father to give up his only son’s life in hopes that the other boy would become a Christian.” The old man replied, while glancing down at his worn

Bible, “Well, you’ve got a point there.” Then a big smile broadened his narrow face. He once again looked up at the boys and said, “It sure isn’t very realistic, is it? But, I’m standing here today to tell you that story since it gives me a glimpse of what it must have been like for God to give up His Son for me. You see, I was the father in that story, and your pastor was my son’s friend.”