

Pastor Brian's
Midweek Message
January 19, 2022

"TAKE COVER!"

Above all, love one another deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. (1 Peter 4:8)

Today marks the beginning of our house painting project, the exterior. Kay and I can handle the interior stuff, and we already have. Now it's time to slap a fresh coat or two on the outside of the house and change the color palette in doing so. Right now, the walls are kind of a yellow beige color, and the doors are a somewhat strange looking blue. Neither color agrees with Kay's tastes, and I'm not a big fan of them either, big, but not a fan. Once the project is complete our house will appear in a light gray tone with white doors and antique bronze on the soffits. When the job is done, I'll post a picture. It's going to look SO SPIFFY! In reality the old color is not going away. It will still be there, just under a cover of the new color. A week from now anyone looking at our house from the outside will not see the old, just the new. That's kind of what God is telling us in the passage above from 1 Peter chapter 4. "Love covers a multitude of sins." We talked about this in our 10 o'clock Tuesday Bible study session yesterday. The topic of discussion from the book "The Christian Atheist" was believing in God but not being sure that He loves you. We believe that God loves others, even the whole world (He tells us that in John 3:16), but when it gets personal, we have a hard time grasping the love the God has for us personally, as individuals. I asked the question to the group on Tuesday morning, "How is it that love can cover sins?" The best place to find the answer is somewhere else in God's Word, because Scripture interprets Scripture. I would suggest that we go first to Romans 5:8-9; *"God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God."* God's love is made known to us as Christ dies for us, in our place, because of our sin. Notice the word "justified" in verse 9. Justified means that we are made right with God, judged to be just and righteous. That comes through the shed blood and death of Christ. In Christ and by faith in Him our sins don't go away...we're still sinful sinners...but they are covered by the righteousness of Christ. When God looks at us in His love, He no longer sees the filth of our sins, but rather the purity of Jesus. The Apostle Paul wrote the Book of Romans, inspired by God the Holy Spirit, and he also wrote the Letter to the Galatians. There he tells us, *"And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes."* (Galatians 3:27) That's from the New Living Translation. This image goes back into the Old Testament as well, which points to the coming salvation that God will provide through "Messiah". *I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness.* (Isaiah 61:10) And Psalm 32:1, *Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.* In this life God covers our sins with the righteous robe of Christ's perfection. That brings with it great blessing as the righteousness of Jesus Christ becomes our righteousness by faith in Him, in all that He has done for us. Trusting in His perfect life, sacrificial death to atone for all sin on the cross, and His glorious resurrection we are "made right with God" and reconciled to Him. We are adopted back into God's family as His beloved children and made heirs to everything that He has, even equal heirs with Christ himself! That is indeed an incredible blessing. Before we moved to Florida about four years ago, when we lived in Spokane, Washington, I tried to picture the fresh snowfalls that we were all too often subject to as an image of just this. The bright white and clean snow would cover all of the mud, and other grubby dirty stuff and paint a picture of the of Christ's righteousness covering my sins. I tried to picture that, I really did, but it never seemed to work. No matter how hard I tried I just couldn't stand the sight of snow, white as it may be. I will soon have a better example to remind me of this. Every time I look at our freshly painted house, I can think about the old yucky stuff being covered in a new fresh coating. It will be a color that makes my bride leap for joy! I'll know that God has covered my sin, all of it, under Jesus' robe of righteousness. That will be especially true as I gaze upon the white colored garage door...until I scrape it with one of our yard tools or the bumper of the car. Good thing we bought plenty of paint for touch up!