**7th SUNDAY OF EASTER [1st June, 2014]**

READINGS: Acts 1:12-14 / 1 Peter 4:13-16/ John 17: 1-11

THEME: ETERNAL LIFE ASSURANCE

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INTRODUCTION

Beloved, Jesus did **not** bequeath to us **any material** inheritance (e.g. land, house, car), for it could be stolen, misused, destroyed or litigated. Rather, he left ETERNAL LIFE, AN EVERLASTING HAPPY LIFE IN HEAVEN as our inheritance! And we could say that it was in his priestly prayer at the Last Supper (John 17, from which we took our gospel reading) that Jesus registered us on the ETERNAL LIFE ASSUURANCE POLICY (**ELAP**). Hence, the theme of this message is ‘ETERNAL LIFE ASSURANCE.’

REGISTRATION

Jesus, at the Last Supper, after eating with his disciples, washing their feet and giving them his farewell message, prayed what we call his ‘priestly prayer.’ In this prayer, he prayed for: (a) his glorification through the cross, (b) his disciples, and (c) all of us who would later come to believe in the good news through the preaching of his disciples. For what did he pray for us? He prayed to the Father to grant **eternal life** to the disciples and all of us who would believe in him, so that we would be with him happily forever in heaven, (John 17:24). Thus, even before his death and even when we were yet to be born, Jesus registered us on the ETERNAL LIFE ASSURANCE POLICY [**ELAP**].

PREMIUM

When one registers with a LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY, he/she has to indicate the premium of his choice. That is, the amount of money to be paid; how often to pay it [monthly, quarterly, annually, etc]; and, the mode of payment [by cash, cheque, bank order, etc]. Beloved, in our case, the **amount** Jesus paid is **priceless**, the **frequency** is ‘**once and for all**,' and the **mode of payment** is through his most **precious blood**.

PRICELESS: Beloved, if one has to pay a huge sum of money as premium for just the 10, 20 or 30 years after his/her retirement, then the premium sum for ETERNAL or EVERLASTING LIFE is certainly PRICELESS. It is an amount no human being can pay, but the good news is Jesus has paid it for us!

FREQUENCY: He who is infinitely rich, he to whom the heavens and universe belong, does not waste time to pay the premium in bits [monthly, quarterly or annually]; he has paid it ONCE AND FOR ALL for all of us!

MODE OF PAYMENT: Jesus paid the premium for us, not by cash, nor by cheque nor by bank order, but by the blood he shed through his sacrificial death. O, how blessed we are to have the most priceless premium paid once and for all by the precious blood of Jesus!

BENEFITS

Eternal happiness in heaven is the ultimate benefit we receive from the ELAP Jesus has registered us on and fully paid for us. Some people invest with a life assurance company, but they do not live long enough to enjoy their benefits [they die before retirement], but with ELAP death does not mean forfeiting the benefits, but **the beginning of enjoying the ultimate benefit.**

Others invest in earthly life assurance and they live long enough to enjoy the benefit, but depreciation sets in the longer they live on after retirement; but with what God is offering us through ELAP, the **value remains the same for ever** because nothing in heaven changes value [it is not like the Ghana Cedi, whose values was promised to be the same but we experience the contrary].

CLAIMING THE BENEFITS

Beloved, though we are not expected to contribute towards the premium for eternal life, Jesus expects us to keep well the ‘**certificate of registration**.’ By a life rooted in faith, love and obedience to the Lord, we keep the ‘**certificate of registration**’ intact. Therefore, beloved, I pray that the **Holy Spirit**, the **CEO of ELAP,** will enable us to keep our **certificates** intact, through an ever renewed **faith** in, **love** of and **loyalty** to the Lord. Then, after this life, we will claim the ineffable benefits of eternal life assurance, in the great jubilation of the angels and saints, to the glory of God! Amen!

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