

2 Corinthians 4:17, 18 THE REWARD AND LOOK OF FAITH

INTRO/REVIEW:

READ: 16-18.

THE AMPLIFIED: 17. For our light, momentary affliction (this slight distress of the passing hour) is ever more and more abundantly preparing and producing and achieving for us an everlasting weight of glory [beyond all measure, excessively surpassing all comparisons and all calculations, a vast and transcendent glory and blessedness never to cease!],

- These two verses explain the third reason why Paul does not lose heart. The first was the fact that he would be raised with Jesus. (vs 14)
- The second is; even through his body was deteriorating from age and adversity, his inner man was being daily transformed being conformed to the image of God's Son. (vs 16)
- And the third reason, which we look at today is; his trials, afflictions, sufferings and labors are working for him something eternally glorious.
- 1) AFFLICTIONS ARE LIGHT.
- 2) AFFLICTIONS ARE TEMPORARY.
- 3) AFFLICTIONS ARE WORKING.
- 4) AFFLICTIONS REWARDS.
- 5) THE DISCIPLINE OF LOOKING.

4) THE REWARD OF THE BELIEVER.

- THE AFFLICTION IS LIGHT, THE REWARDED GLORY IS WEIGHTY!
- This afflictions work for us a "FAR MORE EXCEEDINGLY AND ETERNAL WEIGHT OF GLORY."
- "FAR MORE" Hyperbolay, a throwing beyond. (vs 7)
- FAR MORE EXCEEDING: Excess of excellency and eminence. Beyond the ability to measure, basically to exceed exceedance, exceedingly exceeding, excess to excess, glorious in the highest possible degree.
- This was a special decree. It was not enough for Paul to use the ordinary highest expression for the superlative to confer the value of this object in his eye, He therefore coins a new expression that exceeds what was the highest ..
- All other known hyperboles fall short of expressing that eternal glory which awaits the faithful Christian. Selah
 - 1 Cor. 2:9, 10
- Paul is writing about trials experienced in the will, walk and work of God. God turns sufferings into glory but God does not turn sin and disobedience into glory. There is no glory in sin, sin is judged.

- Sufferings in themselves do not make us more Christ like, but the humble yielding of our souls to God must be the attitude.
- For some going through trials only come out harder, bitter, more critical and unloving. Heart attitude, submission, faith and trust is everything.
- In the Christian the effect of these afflictions is to produce, in time, Christ likeness. (Jesus must increase, I must decrease.)
- And in glory, to be endued with a reward, a glory which far more exceeds the trials and this glory is eternal.
- The trials of the present life and the glories of what awaits us in heaven are inseparable linked together. They are only separated by time and sight. Yet they are joined together inseparable. The one outfitting the other.
- Laying up treasure in heaven even while on earth.
 - Do you have an off-shore bank account? Mt. 6:19-21, ¹⁹ "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
- We see something of reward mentioned in Mt. 25, Rev. 7, 15, 21, and 22.

What forms may affliction arise in my life?

- Home, prioritizing, noncompromising, living a kingdom life. Self-dying

5) THE DISCIPLINE OF "LOOKING:

THE Christian in every state, whether of prosperity or adversity, differs widely from the unconverted world. While others are elated by the one and depressed by the other, he is kept in an equable frame of mind. As he does not place his happiness in earthly things, he is not much affected either with the acquisition or the loss of them. He is thankful for success, but not overjoyed, as though some great thing had happened unto him; and is patient in tribulation, knowing that in the issue it shall work for his good. To this effect the Apostle speaks in the text, in which he assigns the reason why, notwithstanding the greatness of his afflictions, he was kept from fainting under them. And his words afford us a proper occasion to consider, (Charles Simeon)

READ VS 17, 18

- To protect our faith from the encroachments of pride, which would turn spiritual renewal into a human achievement instead of accepting it as a gift of grace, God has provided that the process (of faith maturing) be concealed within an 'earthenware vessel,' a perishable body subject to pain and decay

- **LOOK**: Means to scope, (telescope) meaning the mark or goal on which the eye is fixed. Phil. 3:14. I press toward the goal/mark of the prize of the upward call
- The end to which our attention, desires, and efforts are directed. To take aim. To keep in one's eye.
- The word look, as used here is seen also in the O. T. in Gen. 3 when Eve saw that the fruit was good to eat.... More than just a glance. 2 Sam. 11:2, 3, When David looked on Bathsheba and in Isa. 45:22; "Look to Me, and be saved all you ends of the earth! For I *am* God, and *there is* no other. .
- Not the things of this world, but the things of eternity.
- Things that are seen.
 - Wealth, pleasure, fame, and here afflictions.
- Things unseen.
 - The love and favor of God, the renewing and renovation or transformation of the inner man, and the glory and joy of heaven.
- Paul has learned to look off unto Jesus, looking off of the temporal to the eternal. To run the race looking off unto Jesus Heb. 12:2
- Trials and afflictions refine the soul and teach it to look, revel in, the unseen.
- If the mind be set on carnal, when it is robbed of these, it will be cast down.
- The apprehending of that which is unseen becomes a renewing to the inner man.
- The burden, the affliction only becomes light while we "look."
- Afflictions and hardships become light when the Christian compares them with the weight of glory to come.
- The seemingly long duration of sorrow and hardships becomes short when compared to the eternal realities of eternity.
- Those whose eyes are not on the seen and transient, but on the unseen and eternal, can detect beneath the decay of the outer nature an inner life which is being daily renewed
- Paul's secret of joy came from his discipline of looking, contemplating, and enjoying the realities of eternity.
- His strength, endurance and perseverance in life came from the place he habitually looked to, where he had set and anchored his heart and mind. Eternity, heaven, the face of Christ, the reward to come, these realities refreshed and strengthened his soul.
- He lived as Moses did, seeing Him who is invisible. Heb. 11:24-27
- This habit of looking was Paul's secret for not losing heart, not fainting.
- This is how Paul ran the race set before him, how he was continually being filled, of pressing on, of fighting the good fight.
- Paul's practice of looking to the eternal made light that which would normally be heavy, and makes brief and momentary that which would seem endless.
- What a lesson for us to learn: To look into that which is eternal and real, the unseen, lightens the weight of our burden, making it light. To fix our minds on that which is seen, the "now", causes us to bear, to feel the full weight of the trial. **Mt. 11:28, 29**

- The inner man is renewed daily by looking off unto that which is invisible.
- For the Christian death does not terminate our joy but becomes the entrance into our full possession of that glory which our present blessedness is just a pledge, a small token of the joy to come.
- While we look: "this is a secret process, invisible both to the outsider and to the believer himself, known only to faith. Heb. 11:1
- The "while we look" is the normal Christian life, atmosphere, discipline of life, so while we look to the eternal the unseen the things that are seen grow light. It must become a habit, our way of thinking and living.
- Am I learning to look off from my trials, am I training myself to not focus on my afflictions but to gaze on the eternal realities of God and the glory of the world to come?

CONCLUSION:

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- **ROMANS 8:18**; For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.